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Republics, Passions, and *Patria*:

Love of Country in Eighteenth Century Political Thought

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy  
in Political Science

by

Megan Elizabeth Gallagher

2014

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## ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Republics, Passions, and *Patria*:

Love of Country in Eighteenth Century Political Thought

by

Megan Elizabeth Gallagher

Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

University of California, Los Angeles, 2014

Professor Kirstie M. McClure, Chair

The contemporary revival of interest in republican political thought requires a substantive account of civic virtue as its motivating factor. Whereas liberalism will replace the burden of virtue with the burden of dispassionate judgment, republicanism clings to the potential of its citizenry's virtuosity and the idea that something akin to character is required to participate in politics. I argue that to enliven virtue, we must consider its relationship to the passions and their place in the historical republican tradition. Civic virtue's influence on republican practices derives not from juridical principles or institutional safeguards but from ethical and emotional commitments to extra-legal concepts such as duty, respect, and responsibility. Yet the contemporary literature on republicanism, suffering from what I call an affective deficit, largely fails to account for this emotional dimension. Building on the theory of emotives developed by historian William Reddy in *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions*

(2001), and through a series of close readings of republican political thought from the eighteenth century, I develop a distinct theory of affective practices, defined as the ways in which feelings of devotion to one's country and fellow citizens are cogitated upon, judged, enacted in the body and communicated to others. I apply this theory of affective practices to provide interpretations of Montesquieu on fear; Diderot on despair and respect; and Rousseau on love and sympathy. Through these explorations, we may better understand how the passions, and a "re-politicized" sense of civic virtue, are, and ought to be, employed in the pursuit, maintenance, and critique of republican politics by its contemporary defenders and detractors alike, particularly in Philip Pettit's work on neo-republicanism and Jürgen Habermas's on constitutional patriotism.

The dissertation of Megan Elizabeth Gallagher is approved.

Anthony Pagden

Giulia Sissa

Peter Stacey

Kirstie M. McClure, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2014

*For Johanna Shortall Gallagher  
and in memory of Winifred Seery Murphy*

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Image 2: Unattributed. *Vue des travaux du Champ de Mars, par les patriotes*. 1790. Print. Courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France and the French Revolution Digital Archive. <http://purl.stanford.edu/qx733cc6971>

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### **Note on Sources and Translations**

For works by Diderot, Montesquieu, and Rousseau, I have utilized both the modern, standard editions in English and French, as well as the first printed editions when they were available digitally. Database information (and permanent hyperlinks, when available) is listed in the bibliography. I have not attempted to standardize capitalization, punctuation, or spelling in the eighteenth century editions, though when a particularly arcane word (or spelling) is used, I have included the modern French equivalent. Unattributed translations of these and other French materials are my own. I have standardized other modern sources, excluding titles, for consistent American English spelling throughout.

## Acknowledgments

For their collective erudition, generosity, guidance, and good humor, I thank the members of my committee, Joshua Foa Dienstag, Anthony Pagden, Giulia Sissa, and Peter Stacey. I owe them a debt of gratitude. My advisor and chair, Kirstie McClure, whose dedication to all of her students continues to stagger the mind, has mentored me since I wrote to her as a prospective student. I will continue to measure my work by her standards. It is because of Molly Shanley and Peter G. Stillman's teaching that I first became passionate about political theory as an undergraduate. Lastly, I had the good fortune to study with Victor Wolfenstein at the beginning of my graduate career. I like to think that, on a good day, the depth of his ethical commitments and his dedication to teaching guide my own.

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My family often had more confidence in me than I did in myself. For that, and much more, I owe them a debt I cannot repay.

## Vita

Megan Elizabeth Gallagher graduated with honors from Vassar College in May 2005 with a B.A. in French and Francophone Studies and Political Science. She earned an M.A. from the Department of Political Science at the University of California, Los Angeles, in September 2008. As a graduate student, she received the Edwin W. Pauley Fellowship in 2009; worked as an Editorial Assistant for the *American Political Science Review* from September 2008 through January 2010; and chaired Ethos, the association of UCLA political theory graduate students, from 2008 through 2012. She attended the School of Criticism and Theory at Cornell University during the summer of 2012 with financial support from the UCLA Political Science Department and received a scholarship to attend the California Rare Book School during the summer of 2013. She was awarded a Dissertation Fellowship from the UCLA Center for Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Studies to complete her dissertation during the 2013-2014 academic year at the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library. She will be a lecturer in the Department of Political Science at UCLA in 2014-2015, offering courses on the history of feminist thought; politics and the passions; and Enlightenment politics and literature.

## INTRODUCTION | The Lost Passions of Republican Political Thought

A man devoid of all passions would certainly be a very bad citizen.  
– Rousseau, *Discourse on Political Economy*<sup>1</sup>

### I. Republican Thought and the Emotional Turn in Political Theory

Civic virtue figures as a fundamental concern of republican discourse and political thought.<sup>2</sup> This concern is not detached from more “worldly” or explicitly political issues, such as justice or liberty, but rather is central to them. Moreover, I argue, it is through consideration of civic virtue that republicanism addresses the role of the passions in political life. Whereas liberalism will come to replace the burden of virtue with the burden of dispassionate judgment, republicanism clings to the potential of its citizenry’s virtuosity and the idea that something akin to character is required to participate in politics.<sup>3</sup>

Yet civic virtue as it is treated in contemporary discourses is something of an animated corpse, going through the motions but rather detached from the proceedings. Our intellectual inheritance is such that studies of civic virtue have not, to this point, adequately thought through the relationships between virtue, reason, and the passions. This, in spite of the fact that civic virtue’s claim on republican practices derives not from juridical principles but from ethical and, I argue, emotional commitments.<sup>4</sup> In other words, the basis on which virtue can make claims to

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<sup>1</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on Political Economy*, in *The Social Contract and Other Later Political Writings*, ed. and trans. Victor Gourevitch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 20. “... un homme qui n’auroit point de passions seroit certainement un fort mauvais citoyen...” In *Œuvres complètes*, vol. 3, ed. Bernard Gagnebin and Marcel Raymond (Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1964), 259. Hereafter *OC* III.

<sup>2</sup> The central figures to whom I am alluding are of course J.G.A. Pocock and Quentin Skinner, whose work I discuss in more detail below. But a number of other scholars interested in republican political theory consider the role of civic virtue, as well, including, but not limited to Richard Dagger, Sharon Krause, and Cécile Laborde.

<sup>3</sup> For a defense of liberalism’s capability to integrate the passions into deliberative practices, see Sharon Krause, *Civil Passions: Moral Sentiment and Democratic Deliberation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008). But compare Jean-Fabien Spitz, “Républicanisme et libéralisme dans le moment révolutionnaire,” *Annales historiques de la Révolution française* 358 (2009): 19-45.

<sup>4</sup> I use ‘virtue’ and ‘civic virtue’ interchangeably and the former should not be taken to mean Christian or cardinal virtue, for instance, unless specified.

play an active role in republican political theory is almost wholly dependent upon extra-legal concepts of duty, responsibility, and honor. By accounting for the emotions' ability to motivate, a developed theory of the passions offers a means to bridge these somewhat ephemeral ideas surrounding virtue to everyday republican practices. Yet remarkably little attention has thus far been paid to the function of civic virtue in republican political thought.

This aporia is particularly egregious in the case of the long eighteenth-century, in light of both the period's reputation as both the age of sentiment and burgeoning romanticism and a stronghold of the republican tradition. Indeed, the collapse of absolutist monarchies, beginning with England's Glorious Revolution and culminating in the French Revolution of 1789, was both cause and effect of a resurgence of republican theorizing. Republican ideologies infiltrated every aspect of cultural and intellectual life, from the decorative and visual arts to popular and "high" literature. Simultaneously, a new ethic of sentimentality and sociability arose in the newly minted public sphere. Much excellent work has been done on the rise of sentiment and sociability, but little has been done to connect it to the passions more broadly considered, let alone the new (or, more accurately, revived) mode of political thought.<sup>5</sup>

The contemporary literature on republicanism (to say nothing of much writing within the republican tradition itself) suffers from what I will call an affective deficit. The language of civic virtue abounds – but that of the passions remains undeveloped. In other words, what remains curiously absent from contemporary analyses of civic virtue is the emotional dimension of republican citizenship: specifically, what does it mean to love one's country, one's *patria*? The

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<sup>5</sup> On the emergent public sphere, though not the affective dimension, see John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1997); Brian Cowan, *The Social Life of Coffee: The Emergence of the British Coffeehouse* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005); Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991 [1962]); and James Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).



sentimental, and possibly even rapacious, dangerous, and violent, connections to one's state and fellow citizenry that republican virtue is presumed to navigate is strangely bloodless, even in discussions ostensibly devoted to theories of civic virtue and the emotions most relevant to patriotic devotion, such as honor.<sup>6</sup> Instead, the positive qualities of civic virtue (its call for selflessness, for example) are made to form a synecdoche for the whole and virtue eventually becomes associated with austerity, asceticism, and a misinformed view of Stoic detachment.<sup>7</sup> As I discuss more extensively in chapter 1, the historical alignment of virtue and reason has severed the emotive connection between the duties of the virtuous citizen and the passions. The latter are generally believed to compromise the ability of the citizen to execute his role as the state and community require: dispassionately.<sup>8</sup>

This is true strictly within political theory and the history of political thought. However, it is also true of our shared daily experience of the world, and in addition to the dissertation's intervention in theoretical debates, this connection between theory and lived politics is a secondary, but valuable aspect of the project. The relationship between an ethos of detached, fully rational civic virtue, as typically advocated by republicanism, and a passionate, sentimental attachment to one's homeland and fellow countrymen, the acknowledged ways in which we are embedded as citizens in the world, is not easily navigable. The extreme version of either case is normatively undesirable for democratic politics. The first is difficult to imagine existing outside

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<sup>6</sup> Jan-Werner Müller, who, aside from Habermas, has done the most to theorize and promote constitutional patriotism, objects to the ascription of bloodlessness as "a particularly inappropriate metaphor." As I discuss below, it is fact quite apt. Müller, "Three Objections to Constitutional Patriotism," *Constellations* 14 (2007), 195.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, Shelley Burt, "The Politics of Virtue Today: A Critique and a Proposal," *American Political Science Review* 87 (1993): 360-368; as well as Christopher Duncan's reply and Burt's response, "Civic Virtue and Self-Interest," *American Political Science Review* 89 (1995): 147-151.

<sup>8</sup> Given that my concern is, in large part, with historical accounts of republican citizenship from which women were routinely excluded, it would be anachronistic and misleading in those cases to use gender-neutral language. For the sake of continuity, I also use masculine pronouns even when discussing contemporary republican philosophy. In fact, given the long-standing association of men with reason and women with emotions, using masculine pronouns in fact performs a coincidentally pleasing function in so far as it invites us to break with that binary. Passionate (male) citizens need not be considered effeminate or susceptible to "feminine traits" with the reintegration of emotion into republican thought.

the realm of ideas – perhaps Sparta might approach it in its rationalistic, driven attention to excellence, but its military oligarchy does not translate into democratic practices. Likewise, an impassioned attachment to the homeland and one’s fellow citizens and “brothers”, however they are defined, has led to some of the most violent clashes of the twentieth century under the banner of nationalism – for instance, the now fractured Balkans; ETA’s campaign for Basque separatism; the complex relationship between Sinn Féin, the Provisional Irish Republican Army, and the Irish and British governments; or the ongoing battle between Sri Lanka’s government and the Tamil nationalists. Each of these four engagements was or is drawn out and has incurred significant civilian casualties. Such is the dangerous potential of nationalism, the most frequent iteration of patriotism. And so the question remains as to whether civic virtue and the passions might in some way, to some degree, be compatible. Is a form of passionate attachment to one’s *patria* possible within the boundaries of a republican ethos, without devolving into chaotic violence driven by ethnic, religious or national identities?

This dissertation thus pulls together several linked but distinct literatures: contemporary theories of republicanism; the history of republican thought; and the passions in political thought, specifically French thought in the pre-revolutionary eighteenth century. It does so in order to develop a theory of affective civic virtue more responsive to the passional aspects of political life than readings in the history of republicanism can currently claim to be. The revival of republican civic virtue that we have experienced in political theory, particularly over the past twenty or so years, requires a substantive account of political feeling. Political affect is the tether that links citizen to state and we ought to be wary of any approach that leads to its immediate excision from politics in the name of reason or caution. I ask, how have the passions historically inflected theories of republican citizenship and the formation of communities built upon

republican premises, and what can those accounts contribute to contemporary republican politics? I demonstrate that the republican tradition offers an alternate understanding of the role of passions in political life, which has been unduly neglected. The alignment of reason and virtue has deep historical roots but there also exists a thread, often overlooked, within the republican literature that binds virtue to emotion.

While this particular project is bounded by an interest in republican virtue, the affective deficit is by no means limited to the republican tradition. Such concerns are part of a larger movement within political theory and the history of political thought, as well as academia writ large, the so-called “emotional turn.” As Susan James argues in her introduction to *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth-Century Philosophy* (1997), modern philosophy has, until this recent emotional turn, largely ignored the theories of the passions one finds throughout the works of such diverse thinkers as Descartes, Mandeville, Spinoza, and Pascal. James suggests that this inattention has several self-perpetuating causes, including the increasing fragmentation of academic studies into ever-narrower academic disciplines: one studies philosophy or psychology but not both. Ergo, one studies Spinoza’s *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* for its defense of secular government or one studies the *Ethics* for its account of moral psychology but one does not necessarily read both without the intention of becoming a “Spinozist.”

A second cause is the reification of one’s subject matter: the long-held truism of Descartes’s division between body and mind, for instance, reinforced the notion that an understanding of his philosophy of (the rational) mind did not require his readers to address the less-than-rational (passions) if they did not wish to. Moreover, concepts somehow now ‘outside’ the field of philosophy or history of mind were not integral (or were less integral) to understanding Descartes. Emotions, in other words, were ejected from “the canon” of important

ideas early in the canon's formative years.<sup>9</sup> Though important to the writers who dedicated time and texts to working through complicated moral psychologies, the works themselves were awarded secondary status by later interlocutors.

Yet we now find ourselves experiencing an emotional turn in both the humanities and social sciences.<sup>10</sup> The shared task of the turn, which spans disciplines, academic methodologies, and sources of interest, is to reconsider the passions that have largely been excised as matters of importance from decades of discussion. Beginning in the 1980s, and in tandem with the rise of "microhistory," sociologists and historians began examining the emotional lives of their subjects— as in, for example, Arlie Hochschild's *The Managed Heart: The Commercialization of Human Feeling* (1983) or Carol Stearns and Peter Stearns's *Anger: The Struggle for Emotional Control in America's History* (1986).<sup>11</sup> Simultaneously revived with emotions was an overlapping interest in the physicality of emotion, or what is often differentiated as affect or sensation studies.<sup>12</sup> What was at first a discrete interest of individual scholars developed into a full-fledged trend and is presently the source of multiple conferences, several new journals, and many edited volumes.

This dissertation participates in the emotional turn and actively seeks to avoid the two traps of the affective deficit drawn from James above. On the first point, of disciplinary blinders, I consciously move between fields that are today allotted to various departments but were actively pursued by the figures I discuss. In other words, while my own concern is political theoretical, it is informed by intellectual history of the eighteenth century, literature both read

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<sup>9</sup> See Susan James, *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth-Century Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), especially 15-18.

<sup>10</sup> For an overview of the turn, see Jan Plummer, "The History of Emotions: An Interview with William Reddy, Barbara Rosenwein, and Peter Stearns," *History and Theory* 49 (2010): 237-265.

<sup>11</sup> There has been a simultaneous move within the 'hard sciences,' primarily neuroscience and neuropsychology, to understand the biology of emotions. Adequate treatment of this work lies beyond the purview of this dissertation. See, though, Antonio Damasio's *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain* (New York: Putnam Publishing, 1994) and Joseph LeDoux's *The Emotional Brain: The Mysterious Underpinnings of Emotional Life* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996) for accessible mappings of the field which I discuss briefly in chapter 1.

<sup>12</sup> I return to affect theory, and the challenges it poses for political theory, in chapter 1.

and written by those individuals I address, and political science work on nationalism. On the second point, of the reification of the subject, particularly the mind/body division that informs much work on the passions in the wake of Descartes, I discuss below my effort to reintegrate the body into the cognitive process by which passions are experienced and communicated.

Nonetheless, I bracket the neuroscience debate and a large part of the affect literature that speculates upon it, in favor of treating passions as a combination of innate reaction and cognitive judgment that is then communicated by the subject as he or she sees fit. I discuss this in greater detail in chapter 1.

## **II. Contemporary Republican Political Theory and the Absence of the Passions**

While neither the history of republican thought nor republican political philosophy has suffered for lack of attention in academic circles, a certain rigidity of academic boundaries has remained, if not increased, between the history of thought and political philosophy. As I discuss below, contemporary approaches in political theory to republican thought (known as neo-republicanism) are profoundly ahistorical. While some practitioners of historical approaches (such as the Cambridge School's Quentin Skinner) have engaged with the more analytical contemporary approaches, they have not taken an interest in the political application of republican theory in the way that some thinkers, such as neo-republicanism's Philip Pettit, have.<sup>13</sup> While each subfield has done excellent work irrespective of the other, there is a willful and lasting parochialism in the refusal to cross academic boundaries.

Though this project is deeply historical, I argue that it reveals something essential about

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<sup>13</sup> Pettit, and a few other scholars including Frank Lovett, do not hyphenate "neorepublicanism," though most scholars writing on the subject do. I prefer the hyphenated form, as it calls attention to the constructed nature of neo-republicanism as a political project rather than a "natural" outcome of republicanism's progression. This is not to declare one way or another about the value of the project but merely to insist on historical transparency.

contemporary republican political theory as well and is thus of interest to political theory more broadly construed. I do not intend to rehash the recent debates over the viability of neo-republicanism and its possible distinctiveness from (or similarities to) liberalism.<sup>14</sup> Rather, I am concerned with one particular marker of republican thought, of which there are several, including freedom defined as non-domination, civic virtue, self-government, and a sustained interest in public life and service. The emphasis of my dissertation is on civic virtue, which is given pride of place in all ancient republican and neo-classical republican literature. In spite of its ubiquity, virtue remains an unsettled idea in the contemporary literature on neo-republicanism and constitutional patriotism, both of which remain uncertain as to how democratic, pluralist societies might instantiate a shared sense of virtue without devaluing or destroying other, competing qualities that resist civic virtue as an external, or top-down imposition.<sup>15</sup> An understanding of virtue which takes into account something as personal and subjective as individuals' emotions as motivating factors in their political behavior may be one way to avoid the imposition of values while still affirming the role of virtue in republican political theory. More broadly, I argue that theories of virtue, integral as they are to republican thought, are stifled when accompanied by underdeveloped understandings of the passions. A reconsideration is thus in order.

Both the content and quality of what is known as “republican thought” or “the republican tradition” vexes most who endeavor to understand it. Indeed, republicanism’s very origins are a

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<sup>14</sup> For the various sides of that debate, see especially Alan Patten, “The Republican Critique of Liberalism,” *British Journal of Political Science* 26 (1996): 25-44 and John Maynor’s “Another Instrumental Republican Approach?” *European Journal of Political Theory* 1 (2002): 71-89.

<sup>15</sup> Burt foreshadowed this concern with her attempts to distinguish between types of civic virtue in “The Good Citizen’s Psyche: On the Psychology of Civic Virtue,” *Polity* 23 (1990): 23-38 and “The Politics of Virtue Today.” M. Victoria Costa dissects the issue neatly in her “Neo-Republicanism, Freedom as Non-Domination, and Citizen Virtue,” *Politics, Philosophy, and Economy* 8 (2009): 401-419. Lovett and Pettit respond to the criticism (though not Costa’s paper specifically) in their “Neorepublicanism: A Normative and Institutional Research Program,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 12 (2009): 11-29.

matter of contention. It is arguably as a descendent of classical theories of republicanism, such as that of Cicero, that the twentieth century varieties emerged.<sup>16</sup> Hannah Arendt's republicanism is explicitly referential in this regard (though, as Dario Castiglione notes, Arendt's republicanism is substantively distinct from the neo-republican revival, and including her in parallels may create more problems than moments of clarity).<sup>17</sup> Pocock famously credited Aristotle in *The Machiavellian Moment*, only to see many of that work's claims contested. Fellow Cambridge School member Quentin Skinner proposed Cicero, and the Roman tradition and concern for liberty, as the more likely origins of republican political thought. Eric Nelson and Lea Campos Boralevi have each suggested the importance of republicanism's Hebraic roots.<sup>18</sup> Yet even modern republicanism (and its half-sibling, neo-republicanism) will demonstrate concern with reining in unruly affects. Whether we consider the "traditional" republicanism of Cicero or Machiavelli, or the more idiosyncratic republicanism of Arendt (which, incidentally, is largely ignored by contemporary neo-republicans), developed notions of the passions go hand-in-hand with a concern for their neutralization – with ways of rendering them safe.

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<sup>16</sup> This is, I am aware, something of an overstatement. I refine this claim in chapter 1, where I give a genealogy of republican political thought, focusing on the roles of the passions and virtue.

<sup>17</sup> Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, second edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998 [1972]); Arendt, *On Revolution*, revised edition (New York: Penguin Books, 2006 [1965]); Dario Castiglione, "Republicanism and its Legacy," *European Journal of Political Theory* 4 (2005), 453. Referentiality, however, does not imply a backwards-looking devotion to the past, as some of Arendt's critics have charged. This is a view that can be traced back to Habermas's complicated relationship to Arendt, with whom he has much in common and whose influence he has sometimes been reluctant to acknowledge. See in particular his "Hannah Arendt: On the Concept of Power" in *Philosophical-Political Profiles*, trans. Frederick G. Lawrence (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1985), 173-189; "Hannah Arendt's Communications Concept of Power," *Social Research* 44 (1977): 3-24; "On the German-Jewish Heritage," *Telos* 44 (1980): 127-131; and *Theory and Practice* (London: Heinemann, 1974).

<sup>18</sup> Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003 [1975]); Skinner, *Liberty Before Liberalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Eric Nelson, *The Hebrew Republic: Jewish Sources and the Transformation of European Political Thought* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), especially chapter 1; Lea Campos Boralevi, "Classical Foundational Myths of European Republicanism: The Jewish Commonwealth," in *Republicanism: A Shared European Heritage*, vol. 1, ed. Martin van Gelderen and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 247-262.

Setting aside momentarily the issue of origins, there remains the question of how to speak about republicanism.<sup>19</sup> In the contemporary secondary literature, there are four dominant and distinguishable, though not necessarily mutually exclusive, means of doing so.<sup>20</sup> First, following Skinner, Pocock, and the Cambridge School approach, republicanism constitutes a “language,” a way of talking about ideas and to others. Political languages, or discourses, are specific to various times and places but, as in the case of republicanism, may share commonalities across time and space established by the central concerns that the language is elaborated in order to address.<sup>21</sup> The notion of political languages is not, of course, specific to republicanism but may be applied to any number of phenomena.

Within contemporary academic work on republican political thought, one can identify a shift away from narratives of progressive history toward a concern for political ideologies, as expressed, negotiated, and reconstituted through political discourse and languages. In particular, the notion of political languages was taken up by a group of scholars loosely associated and known as the Cambridge School and political languages emerged as fundamental to the study of republicanism.

In spite of a great deal of differences in approach and interests, Skinner and Pocock remain the towering figures in the Cambridge School and in any historical approach to republican thought.<sup>22</sup> In addition, each is highly attentive to the importance of historical context

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<sup>19</sup> I return to the question of republicanism’s origins in chapter 1.

<sup>20</sup> This list is not meant to be exhaustive but to identify the major trends.

<sup>21</sup> See Anthony Pagden, ed., *The Languages of Political Theory in Early-Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987). The interest in “political language” has spread beyond the Cambridge School; see also Kirstie M. McClure, “Reflections on Political Literature: History, Theory and the Printed Book,” in *British Political Thought in History, Literature and Theory, 1500-1800*, ed. David Armitage (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 235-253.

<sup>22</sup> Skinner’s central writings on republicanism include *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought: The Renaissance*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), particularly chapter 8, “The Centrality of Virtues,” 228-236; *Visions of Politics: Renaissance Virtues*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), especially chapter 5, “Republican Virtues in an Age of Princes,” 118-159; his chapters, “Machiavelli’s *Discorsi* and



and of how political discourses are necessarily responsive to the contexts out of which they emerge. As Anthony Pagden writes, “linguistic changes...were brought about by agents who clearly intended to say some things and not others, and who *employed* the discourses which they had, in part at least, inherited.” Yet political languages are not “self-limiting... Nor, of course do languages remain unchanging over time.”<sup>23</sup> According to Pocock, “[t]he languages of politics... must be thought of as plural, flexible and non-final; each must permit both of responses and other speech acts which will modify it from within, and of various forms of interaction with other language structures which will modify it from without.”<sup>24</sup> The language of the passions is in many ways a paradigmatic problem: *pathos* (πάθος), *apatheia* (ἀπάθεια), *eudaimonia* (εὐδαιμονία), affect, emotion, feeling, passion, and sentiment are terms that fell in and out of favor in both common and academic usage, occasionally referring to overlapping phenomena, but not necessarily capturing the same meaning.<sup>25</sup>

Skinner’s work on the language(s) of classical republicanism is a benchmark in its attentiveness to context and political discourse. In a 1984 lecture, Skinner offered a unifying definition of civic virtue, “that crucial quality which Cicero had described as *virtus*, which the Italian theorists later rendered as *virtù*, and which the English republicans translated as civic virtue or public-spiritedness,” as “the range of capacities that each one of us as a citizen most needs to possess: the capacities that enable us willingly to serve the common good, thereby to

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the Pre-humanist Origins of Republican Ideas” and “The Republican Ideal of Political Liberty,” in *Machiavelli and Republicanism*, ed. Gisela Bock, Skinner, Maurizio Viroli, 121-142 and 293-309 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); and *Liberty Before Liberalism*. For Pocock, see *The Machiavellian Moment*; “Virtues, Rights, and Manners: A Model for Historians of Political Thought,” *Political Theory* 9 (1981): 353-368; and *Virtue, Commerce, and History: Essays on Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

<sup>23</sup> Pagden, “Introduction,” *The Languages of Political Theory*, 2.

<sup>24</sup> Pocock, “The Reconstruction of Discourse: Towards the Historiography of Political Thought,” *MLN* 96 (1981): 967.

<sup>25</sup> A number of works attempt to sort a part of this puzzle out; a comprehensive study is well overdue. A particularly good piece is Amélie Oksenberg Rorty’s “Aristotle on the Metaphysical Status of ‘Pathe,’” *The Review of Metaphysics* 37 (1984): 521-546.

uphold the freedom of our community, and in consequence to ensure its rise to greatness as well as our own individual liberty.”<sup>26</sup> These “capacities” are the Ciceronian virtues of wisdom and prudence. Yet in spite of his extensive discussion of virtue, Skinner’s writings are marked by a conspicuous absence: affect. The absence is conspicuous, but not surprising, in so far as Skinner’s methods, as described in such essays as “Interpretation, Rationality, and Truth” and “Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas,” warn against reading into historical documents what their creators themselves did not place there.<sup>27</sup> In one sense, then, to remark on the absence of affect in his work is a compliment, acknowledging that in this particular regard Skinner has perhaps simply upheld his own standard.

A third and final member of the Cambridge School bears mentioning at this juncture. Maurizio Viroli is an important figure responsible for the most extensive theoretical examination of the relationship between republican virtue and patriotism, in his pair of essays *For Love of Country: An Essay on Patriotism and Nationalism* and *Republicanism*.<sup>28</sup> In both works, Viroli argues for an understanding of patriotism that is rooted in the republican tradition and characterized by a “charitable” sense of civic virtue. Per Viroli, civic virtue is a specifically republican *passion* necessary to the enactment and preservation of liberty.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, he argues, it is an artificial passion that requires constant tending.<sup>30</sup>

While Viroli’s claims appear at first glance to reintroduce affect and the passions into republican theory, this impression is, alas, misleading. Passional language appears: Viroli asserts that a “virtuous citizen does not suppress passions with reason but allows one passion,

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<sup>26</sup> Skinner, “The Paradoxes of Political Liberty,” 242. Delivered at the annual Tanner Lectures on Human Values, Cambridge, Harvard University, October 24-25, 1984.

<sup>27</sup> Both are found in *Visions of Politics: Regarding Method*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 27-56 and 57-89.

<sup>28</sup> Maurizio Viroli, *For Love of Country: An Essay on Patriotism and Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995) and *Republicanism*, trans. Antony Shugaar (New York: Hill and Wang, 2002).

<sup>29</sup> Viroli, *Republicanism*, 12.

<sup>30</sup> Viroli, *Republicanism*, 15, 82.

civic charity, to prevail over the others and tries to balance civic virtue, and service to the republic, with private life.”<sup>31</sup> Yet the content of the passion advocated as “most” republican by Viroli, civic charity, is in fact not an emotive response, but a tamping down of emotions. Viroli proposes, as does Cicero, an orientation of the passions, rather than an account of republican passions themselves, yet unlike Cicero, he suggests that a place for them within political life.<sup>32</sup> Sharing the same historical attentiveness as Skinner and Pocock (though, arguably, less attention to the particularities of language- he paints with a wide brush), Viroli likewise neglects to dissect the relationship between emotion and virtue, instead conflating the two in a particularly problematic fashion.

Yet the Cambridge School’s concern for historiography and political languages is only one current approach to republican thought. Out of the School’s historical work has emerged a specifically analytic project, primarily under the aegis of Philip Pettit, who initiated the debate with a series of essays that culminated in his 1997 text, *Republicanism: A Theory of Freedom and Government*.<sup>33</sup> The second approach to republicanism is the inverse of the first and treats republicanism as a project, or “program,” with a particular political vision and therefore an allegiance to a specific form of government.

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<sup>31</sup> Viroli, *Republicanism*, 73.

<sup>32</sup> While I cannot fully address the issue here, it is worth noting that Viroli’s distinction between patriotism and nationalism has also been challenged. See Nicholas Xenos, “Civic Nationalism: Oxymoron?” *Critical Review* 10 (1996): 213-231, and his “Questioning Patriotism: Rejoinder to Viroli,” *Critical Review* 12 (1998): 197-201, as well as Bernard Yack’s “Can Patriotism Save Us From Nationalism? Rejoinder to Viroli,” *Critical Review* 12 (1998): 203-206, and “The Myth of the Civic Nation,” *Critical Review* 10 (1996): 193-211. Viroli responds in “On Civic Republicanism: Reply to Xenos and Yack,” *Critical Review* 12 (1998): 187-196.

<sup>33</sup> Philip Pettit, *Republicanism: A Theory of Freedom and Government* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997). See the earlier “The Freedom of the City: A Republican Ideal,” in *The Good Polity*, ed. Alan Hamlin and Pettit (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1989), 141-168; “Negative Liberty, Liberal and Republican,” *European Journal of Philosophy* 1 (1993): 15-38; and with John Braithwaite, *Not Just Deserts: A Republican Theory of Criminal Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990). *Republicanism* remains the essential work but see also “Republican Liberty: Three Axioms, Four Theorems,” in *Republicanism and Political Theory*, ed. Cécile Laborde and John Maynor (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), 102-130; “A Republican Law of Peoples,” *European Journal of Political Theory* 9 (2010): 70-94; *On the People’s Terms: A Republican Theory and Model of Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); and *Just Freedom: A Moral Compass for a Complex World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2014).

In its weakest form, this second approach simply makes clearer what forms of government are ruled out than in - certain forms of government are ruled out but no positive program or regime is affirmed. In its strong form, a program such as the philosophical neo-republicanism associated with Philip Pettit emerges. Former Spanish Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero adopted Pettit's republican program, explicitly using Pettit's writings as a guide to his government's actions, and invited Pettit to judge its success in meeting the program's criteria.<sup>34</sup> Arguably, the entire neo-republican project, of which Pettit is the undisputed head, understands republicanism according to this third characterization. He has been joined and challenged in this project by a significant coterie, including Richard Dagger,<sup>35</sup> Cécile Laborde,<sup>36</sup> and Frank Lovett.<sup>37</sup> Neo-republicanism, as this 'school' is typically called, or republican philosophy, has been engaged in a long, sometimes bitter, sometimes sterile debate as to whether and to what degree republicanism is a viable project in the modern world.<sup>38</sup> In spite of a decidedly ahistorical bent,<sup>39</sup> it has also revitalized a set of questions to which the liberal answers had grown rote, such as the nature of freedom, in part by seeking answers from a different set of

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<sup>34</sup> For Pettit's account of his encounters with Zapatero, see José Luis Martí and Philip Pettit, *A Political Philosophy in Public Life: Civic Republicanism in Zapatero's Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University, 2010). There is some debate over whether the Spanish political leader ought to be referred to as president or prime minister – though Spain has a parliamentary system, the official title is “el presidente del Gobierno.” Pettit uses the latter so I have followed his usage.

<sup>35</sup> Richard Dagger, “Autonomy, Domination, and the Republican Challenge to Liberalism,” in *Autonomy and the Challenges to Liberalism*, ed. John Christman and Joel Anderson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 177-203; “Neo-Republicanism and the Civic Economy,” *Politics, Philosophy, and Economics* 5 (2006): 151-173.

<sup>36</sup> Cécile Laborde, *Critical Republicanism: The Hijab Controversy and Political Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); “The Culture(s) of the Republic: Nationalism and Multiculturalism in Contemporary French Republican Thought,” *Political Theory* 29 (2001): 716-735; “From Constitutional to Civic Patriotism,” *British Journal of Political Science* 32 (2002): 591-612; “What's New, and What's Different? On the Republican Contribution to Political Theory,” *Transnational Legal Theory* 1 (2010): 639-644.

<sup>37</sup> Frank Lovett, *A General Theory of Domination and Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); “Harrington's Empire of Law,” *Political Studies* 60 (2012): 59-75; “Milton's Case for a Free Commonwealth,” *American Journal of Political Science* 49 (2005): 466-478; and with Philip Pettit, “Neorepublicanism.”

<sup>38</sup> See Robert Goodin, “Folie Républicaine,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 6 (2003), 55-76, and Lovett and Pettit, “Neorepublicanism,” for representative positions.

<sup>39</sup> Consider that Lovett's *A General Theory of Domination and Justice* relegates “historical notes on domination” to a two-page appendix (236-238).

historical thinkers, such as Harrington, Machiavelli, and Sidney.<sup>40</sup>

The specific impetus for late twentieth century theories of republicanism was Isaiah Berlin's 1958 lecture and essay, "Two Concepts of Liberty."<sup>41</sup> Berlin, its best-known advocate, defines negative liberty as the ability to act without obstruction and argues that liberalism embraces just such a negative concept of liberty.<sup>42</sup> Neo-republicanism's initial function in the literature of the 1990s was primarily critical, drawing contrasts between its own philosophical position and that of liberalism, particularly the rights-based individualism of Ronald Dworkin and John Rawls premised on a concept of negative liberty.<sup>43</sup> As John Maynor demonstrates, Skinner and Pettit, among others, presented a distinct variety of negative liberty, a specifically republican liberty, which is to say, freedom as non-domination.<sup>44</sup> The degree to which liberalism and republicanism are truly distinct continues to be an issue of academic, if not

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<sup>40</sup> The ahistorical quality is perhaps somewhat ironic, given that neo-republicanism's intellectual origins can be located in a debate within the academic discipline of history, particularly early American history. In the last third of the twentieth century, historians of colonial and revolutionary America became dissatisfied with the dominant account, advanced by the likes of Charles Beard, in which the founding was interpreted as a materialist exercise in purely Lockean liberalism, driven by a concern for individual rights, especially property rights. Scholars such as Arthur Schlesinger, Sr., and Louis Hartz, had advanced this claim, particularly in the latter's classic *The Liberal Tradition in America: An Interpretation of American Political Thought since the Revolution* (1955). Rejecting this particular idealist argument, some historians began to reconsider another ideology's place in early American history, turning specifically to republicanism. Bernard Bailyn's *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (1967), Gordon Wood's *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787* (1969), and Pocock's *The Machiavellian Moment* initiated a new moment in the study of American history. But taken together (and as interrogated by the work of Joyce Appleby), their work also initiated a debate about the relationship between liberalism and republicanism. Though liberalism has never been at a loss for advocates, the end of the twentieth century marks the ascendancy of republicanism as a viable and fertile field of study. See in particular Joyce Appleby, *Liberalism and Republicanism in the Historical Imagination* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992). Joshua Foa Dienstag argues that the debates are frequently begun on faulty grounds, i.e. a poor understanding of Locke and his influence on the founders. See "Between History and Nature: Social Contract Theory in Locke and the Founders," *The Journal of Politics* 58 (1996): 985-1009 and "Serving God and Mammon: The Lockean Sympathy in Early American Political Thought," *American Political Science Review* 90 (1996): 497-511. For accounts of the 'republican takeover,' see Philip Gould, "Virtue, Ideology, and the American Revolution: The Legacy of the Republican Synthesis," *American Literary History* 5 (1993): 564-577; Steven J. Ross, "The Transformation of Republican Ideology," *Journal of the Early Republic* 10 (1990): 323-330; and Robert E. Shalhope, "Republicanism and Early American Historiography," *William and Mary Quarterly* 39 (1982): 334-356.

<sup>41</sup> Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty," in *The Proper Study of Mankind: An Anthology of Essays* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1998 [1958]), 191-242.

<sup>42</sup> Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty," 194.

<sup>43</sup> See Patten, "The Republican Critique of Liberalism," for an early critique of the republican criticism of liberalism.

<sup>44</sup> Maynor, "Another Instrumental Republican Approach?," especially 72-73.

general, interest, though the case for their differentiation is, I would argue, persuasive.

The initial split made, the neo-republicans looked for an intellectual lineage distinct from that of liberalism. Nonetheless, in the neo-republican literature of the 1990s and 2000s, there is a relative inattentiveness to the historical development of the ideas under examination. Ultimately, the claims made in a book such as Richard Dagger's *Civic Virtues: Rights, Citizenship, and Republican Liberalism* (1997) would be untenable were they not assumed to be standing on the shoulders of historical work establishing the distinct historiographical literatures of liberalism and republicanism.<sup>45</sup>

This is not to suggest that the extant neo-republican literature is more attuned to the passions than its antecedents. In his thoughtful *Civic Virtues*, Richard Dagger even engages Rousseau on the difficulties that civil religion and the legislator<sup>46</sup> pose for his politics but without so much as a gesture made toward what most commentators cannot help but remark upon, the emotional volatility apparent even in his most measured work.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, Dagger reinscribes virtue, purposefully reorienting it away from the ancient 'cardinal' virtues and the Christian additions of faith, hope and charity, in order to produce six entirely new virtues specific to his form of republican liberalism. These six virtues emphasize civic life but are arguably more concerned with form than with content.<sup>48</sup> Dagger turns values, or ways of orienting oneself in the world, into procedural solutions.

Similarly, Pettit refers twice within the space of a page to the "the hearts of the people" in the final chapter of *Republicanism*, which is devoted to "Civilizing the Republic." Yet the

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<sup>45</sup> Richard Dagger, *Civic Virtues: Rights, Citizenship, and Republican Liberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

<sup>46</sup> Rousseau's "lawgiver" – Dagger defangs him somewhat by referring to him as a legislator, which conjures up images of procedures and resolutions rather than Moses.

<sup>47</sup> Dagger, *Civic Virtues*, 83-97.

<sup>48</sup> Dagger claims that "the republican-liberal citizen is someone who respects individual rights, values autonomy, tolerates different opinions and beliefs, plays fair, cherishes civic memory, and takes an active part in the life of the community" (*Civic Virtues*, 195-196).

chapter almost immediately turns to the need to align the law and social norms. Norms are later explicitly equated with “republican forms of virtue or good citizenship or civility,”<sup>49</sup> which might otherwise seem to be terms with substantive distinctions but which remain placeholders in Pettit’s texts. M. Victoria Costa has similarly criticized Pettit’s form of republicanism for failing to draw a distinction between “established civil norms and the personal virtues of citizens.”<sup>50</sup> It is indeed the case that “Pettit never talks about civility in a way that indicates that it might be a merely personal virtue... because he understands civility in terms of established norms.”<sup>51</sup> This loose equating, however, infringes on the domain of the passions practically to the point of its erasure.<sup>52</sup>

Neo-republicanism is not, however, the only philosophy to take up republicanism as a program under this second approach to republicanism as I have defined it. Constitutional patriotism (CP) is an attempt to adjust the affective imbalance in modern democratic thought via a reconfigured form of republican principles. Its advocates argue that rather than a historical notion of the nation, or a reliance on bonds of kinship, blood, or soil, republican citizens can pledge their allegiance to a constitution, directing their emotive bond to a shared declaration of principles, based in the rule of law, by which to live. CP is, moreover, a distinct attempt to avoid the criticisms directed at cosmopolitanism, specifically Rousseau’s searing stab at “those supposed Cosmopolites who, justifying their love of fatherland by their love of mankind, boast of loving everyone so that they might have the right to love no one.”<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Pettit, *Republicanism*, 251.

<sup>50</sup> Costa, “Neo-Republicanism,” 403.

<sup>51</sup> Costa, “Neo-Republicanism,” 408.

<sup>52</sup> The only sentiment mentioned by Pettit is trust and even then: “I see no tension between the republican belief in a dispensation of widespread civility and personal trust and the emphasis on maintaining eternal vigilance” (Pettit, *Republicanism*, 264).

<sup>53</sup> Rousseau, *Geneva Manuscript*, in *The Social Contract and Other Later Political Writings*, 158 (OC III, 287): “Par où l’on voit ce qu’il faut penser de ces prétendus Cosmopolites, qui justifient leur amour pour la patrie par leur amour pour le genre humain, se vantent d’aimer tout le monde pour avoir droit n’aimer personne.”

Jürgen Habermas is the best-known proponent of CP, having argued during the *Historikerstreit* that attempts to encourage German national pride in the wake of the Holocaust were ethically compromised and that an alternative basis of political and civic identification was needed.<sup>54</sup> Thus, according to an ideal practice of CP,

[u]nconditional or even unreflective identification becomes replaced by dynamic and complex processes of identity formation — or, put differently, by open-ended political and legal learning processes. There is no unchanging object of identification — whether the nation or, for that matter, a historical constitution. In fact, the precise object is less important than the appropriately ‘post-conventional’ stance that subjects attachments and loyalties to critical reflection and, if necessary, revision.<sup>55</sup>

It is this very flexibility that permits CP, according to its advocates, to avoid the pitfalls of nationalism, particularly its rigidity. This is necessary because of the fundamental condition of modernity, pluralism: “If...different cultural, ethnic and religious subcultures are to coexist and interact on equal terms within the same political community, the majority culture must give up its historical prerogative to define the official terms of the generalized political culture that is to be shared by all citizens... The majority culture must be decoupled from a political culture all can be expected to join.”<sup>56</sup> These ideas were taken up, in earnest, by Jan-Werner Müller and others interested in the question of pan-European citizenship.

Yet CP has been criticized for not effectively reconciling the specificity and detachedness

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<sup>54</sup> Now it was the case that “individual and collective identities [were] no longer formed by internalizing religious or, for that matter, nationalist imperatives. Put differently, an unproblematic reference to quasi-sacred objects — including the *patria* — [was] no longer available.” Müller, “On the Origins of Constitutional Patriotism.” *Contemporary Political Theory* 5 (2006), 286. Elsewhere, Müller points out that Habermas is not in fact the “founder” of CP — indeed, he seeks to downplay Habermas’s role as standard bearer for the concept. See “Constitutional Patriotism Beyond the Nation-State: Human Rights, Constitutional Necessity, and the Limits of Pluralism,” *Cardozo Law Review* 33 (2011-2012), 1925.

<sup>55</sup> Müller, “Origins of Constitutional Patriotism,” 287.

<sup>56</sup> Habermas, “The European Nation State: Its Achievements and Its Limitations. On the Past and Future of Sovereignty and Citizenship,” *Ratio Juris* 9 (1996), 133. See also his “Citizenship and National Identity: Some Reflections on the Future of Europe,” *Praxis International* 12 (1992): 1-19.



required by constitutionalism with the passionate ties of the patriot.<sup>57</sup> As one of its defenders justly comments, “[i]n one form or another these objections turn on whether constitutional patriotism strikes an appropriate balance between the universalism of principles and the particularism of identity and attachment.”<sup>58</sup> Its universal qualities, meant to blunt the hard edges of nationalist pride, prevent CP from appealing to the particularisms that nationalism embraces and perpetuates. Even if the substance of that appeal were “made safe” by a shift from nationalism to civic patriotism, “even the reproduction of civic affect proceeds by tying citizens to historical institutions and concrete cultures that never are quite equivalent to the universal principles they purport to embody.”<sup>59</sup> Theories of CP are currently trapped in this dynamic, caught between “two sets of critics: those who claim constitutional patriotism is too thin – i.e., that it cannot perform the integrative work democracy demands from civic identity – and those who claim it is too thick – i.e., that even principled forms of civic identity always implicitly rely upon ethno-culturally particularistic solidarities and allegiances.”<sup>60</sup>

I suggest, though it is beyond the scope of the dissertation to fully develop the argument here, that CP’s identity problem is rooted in the fact that civic virtue is largely absent from the debate. There is little talk within the literature of what citizens may owe the state and one another; rather, the focus rests on how to persuade citizens to develop a connection to the state. While that connection takes into consideration affect in a way that neither the historiographical account of republicanism nor neo-republicanism do, it is enfeebled by its failure to reckon with

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<sup>57</sup> See Vito Breda, “The Incoherence of the Patriotic State: A Critique of Constitutional Patriotism,” *Res Publica* 10 (2004): 247-265; Antonino Palumbo, “Patriotism and Pluralism: Identification and Compliance in the Post-National Polity,” *Ethics and Global Politics* 2 (2009): 321-348, and Maurizio Viroli’s introduction to his and Norberto Bobbio’s *The Idea of the Republic*, trans. Allan Cameron (New York: Polity, 2003), 4.

<sup>58</sup> Ciaran Cronin, “Democracy and Collective Identity: In Defence of Constitutional Patriotism,” *European Journal of Philosophy* 11 (2003), 1.

<sup>59</sup> Patchen Markell, “Making Affect Safe for Democracy? On ‘Constitutional Patriotism,’” *Political Theory* 28 (2000): 39.

<sup>60</sup> Clarissa Rile Hayward, “Democracy’s Identity Problem: Is ‘Constitutional Patriotism’ the Answer?” *Constellations* 14 (2007): 183.

the reciprocal relationship between state and citizen, one profitably theorized in terms of civic virtue.<sup>61</sup>

Constitutional patriotism aside, civic virtue is thus alive and well within the discourses of republicanism – both the historiographical and the analytic. Yet so long as virtue is equated exclusively with reason and the failure of reason with its corruption, the passions will continue to be evacuated from theories of virtue and thus from understandings of republicanism. This seems a great loss, given the inevitability of passions in human life and the presumed desirability of political theory to speak to the lived experience of individuals and political communities, rather than a sanitized and, one may suggest, dehumanized, version.

The third approach diagnoses republicanism as “mere” rhetoric – a means of opposition without a particular positive vision attached – this being a criticism often directed at, for example, the seventeenth century’s English republicans, whose politics were not necessarily easily distinguished from so-called “commonwealth principles.”<sup>62</sup> What distinction existed was easily painted with the same brush: “the word [commonwealth] itself emerged as a late-medieval equivalent of the term *respublica* – devoid of those antimonarchical overtones that were to become implicit in the more literal translation, ‘republic.’” In other words, in this second version, republicanism is depicted as cheap talk, as criticism without positive substance.

A fourth approach regards republicanism as a set of philosophical or moral values, in which regime preference is of, at most, secondary concern. Jonathan Scott, historian of

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<sup>61</sup> This is the direction some of the most recent distributive and global justice literatures have taken, focusing on what, for instance, wealthy countries owe to poorer ones and environmental issues as matters of justice. See, *inter alia*, Darrel Moellendorf, *The Moral Challenge of Dangerous Climate Change: Values, Poverty, and Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Mathias Risse, “The Human Right to Water and Common Ownership of the Earth,” *Journal of Political Philosophy* 22 (2014): 178-203; and Laura Valentini, “Justice, Charity, and Disaster Relief: What, if Anything, Is Owed to Haiti, Japan and New Zealand?,” *American Journal of Political Science* 57 (2013): 491-503.

<sup>62</sup> Whitney R.D. Jones, *The Tree of Commonwealth, 1450-1793* (Cranbury: Associated University Presses, 2000), 14. See also Jonathan Scott, “What Were Commonwealth Principles?” *Historical Journal* 47 (2004): 1-23.

seventeenth-century English politics, associates this understanding of republicanism with Skinner's interpretation of the Roman tradition as it derives from Cicero, whose written work, particularly *De officiis*, privileges issues of virtue over rule of law and the mechanics of government.<sup>63</sup> However, this fourth approach is not specific to the Cambridge School, but rather to any interpretation of republican political history and thought primarily concerned with the moral life of its citizens.

In this dissertation, I treat republicanism as an ongoing discourse, one particularly attuned to its historicity and explicitly interested in modeling itself on previous, if ultimately fictional or mythologized, republics – especially Rome and Sparta.<sup>64</sup> According to my own taxonomy, I primarily engage the first approach to republicanism, with an explicit interest in subject matter central to the fourth approach: the shared civic life of republican citizens, in this case, the shared passionate life of republican citizens.

Fortunately, there are some republican theorists who have recognized the value, or at least the inevitability, of the passions in political life. In the following section, I make a preliminary argument in favor of reading particular of their works, specifically by engaging the political languages of the passions and of virtue within each operates and to which each contributes. In doing so, I hope to demonstrate that a form of affect, particularly affective civic virtue, can be productively reincorporated into republican political theory.

### **III. Organization of the Dissertation**

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<sup>63</sup> Scott, "What Were Commonwealth Principles?," 593, 609. Scott emphasizes Aristotle's influence on the seventeenth-century English republicans, however, in addition to that of Cicero.

<sup>64</sup> That Sparta was a military oligarchy did not prevent it from becoming a model of "republican virtues" for some in the early modern period. Milton notably dissented, privileging Athens. See David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1627-1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 129, 132 and Scott, "What Were Commonwealth Principles?," 609. However, see Eric Nelson, *The Greek Tradition in Republican Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) for a compelling account of the influence of Athens on republicanism, particularly his chapter on Harrington.

This project sits at the intersection of political theory, with its engagement in republican political theory and contemporary iterations of cosmopolitanism, nationalism and patriotism, and the history of political thought, with its archive of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century thinkers on these subjects. Moreover, because earlier generations were not confined by our contemporary disciplinary boundaries, the dissertation is likewise interdisciplinary in terms of the texts it takes up, particularly in its incorporation of literary works.

More particularly, the following chapters cut across genres, considering political philosophy, more “practical” political writings such as draft constitutions, epistolary novels, short fiction, travel memoirs, poetry, and letters. Nonetheless, the texts are bound by their concern for the republican project – usually, though not always, advocating for it against monarchical or insufficiently liberal constitutional governments. (Some, like Montesquieu, may be more interested in diagnosing the ills of corrupt monarchy than championing republicanism, as we will see.) The cross-genre consideration also demonstrates the ubiquity of the problematic of the passions across the period. In the Introduction, I have argued that that virtue, reason, and the passions have been intimately, and problematically, intertwined throughout republicanism’s long history. And I have interrogated the contemporary republican landscape in order to argue for the theoretical necessity of providing a substantive treatment of the passions to bolster the lip service paid to civic virtue.

Moving forward, I begin in chapter 1 to “re-politicize” the passions, or, more properly, to recapture the political sense that has always been there. In order to do so, I first present a genealogy of republican virtue in the classical republican tradition, reaching back to Aristotle and traveling back to the present. In considering the dissertation’s historical present, the long eighteenth century, I dissect the etymology of the language of the emotions and suggest that the

linguistic history of commonly used words points to a political valence often overlooked by later interlocutors. Turning to the present, I consider the contemporary rise of affect theory, much of which continues to be informed by the work of mid-century psychologist Silvan Tomkins. In its manifestation within political theory, affect theory is concerned with introducing neuroscience, broadly conceived, into political discourse. Paradoxically, however, and as numerous critics have pointed out, a biologically based notion of politics runs the great risk of (genetic) determinism and restrictions on freedom. Yet critics have not, to this point, offered much by way of an alternative.

Taking seriously the animating concerns of affect theorists, as well as the apolitical paradox pointed out by their critics, I devote the rest of the chapter to developing an alternative model of performative emotion fit for contemporary republican political thought, which I call *affective practice*. Drawing on the work of William Reddy, I argue that republicanism's emphasis on the role of public virtue opens a space – indeed, that it *requires* a space – for the public performance of specifically political passions associated with the fulfillment of republican duties, rooted in republicanism's emphasis on civic virtue. This general theory serves as the foundation for examining manifestations of specific passions in the following chapters.

Each of the following chapters serves as a “case study” by which I further develop the principal idea of affective practices. In each chapter, I consider one passion (or several closely implicated passions) as it appears in a classic work of the French Enlightenment. The works chosen are, I argue, either explicitly concerned with developing a republican political theory or with developing an understanding of republicanism as a political system capable of countering despotism. Some choices are less controversial than others: Rousseau's constitutional writings on Corsica and Poland (both 1772), the *Contrat social* (1762), and even the *Discours sur l'inégalité*

(1755) are firmly within the republican tradition. Montesquieu's *De l'esprit des lois* (1748) tasks itself with theorizing several types of government, including republicanism, regardless of Montesquieu's own allegiances. His *Lettres persanes* (1721), however, are usually attributed to a youthful flirtation with republicanism in pursuit of a good story. Nonetheless, I argue that there is a philosophical continuity between the two texts that stems from his consideration of the passions motivating his characters in the *Lettres* and his regime types in the *Lois*. My remaining central text is Diderot's *Supplément au voyage de Bougainville* (1772). Explicit republican themes are scarcest here, but I argue that *Bougainville* offers lessons on hospitality that neo-republican political theory, in particular, would be wise to heed.

In chapter 2, I develop a close reading of the intersection of republicanism with fear in the *Lettres persanes*. I offer an interpretation of the *Lettres* as a textual performance of the excess it simultaneously critiques as one of two primary characteristics of despotism. The excessive emotionality and sensuality of the text is matched by its formal excess, by which it overflows generic boundaries. The *Lettres* is, after all, a work of literature, philosophy, even a titillating thrill for eighteenth-century readers of fiction. It disregards formal strictures in a way that parallels the grasping, ceaselessly desirous manner of despotism. In addition to excess, the secondary primary characteristic of despotism is fear: specifically, those subjected to despotic authority are forced to live in a condition of fear because they exist according to the whims of the prince. I propose that Montesquieu, whom contemporary literature tends to characterize as a moderate monarchist on the basis of the *Esprit des lois*, offers the *Lettres* as a republican alternative to despotism and as an exploration of the possibility of developing republican virtue under hostile conditions.<sup>65</sup> Thus I argue in favor of reading the *Lettres persanes* as an attempt on

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<sup>65</sup> Montesquieu as moderate monarchist is the strongest recent trend in the scholarship and a marked move away from early interpretations of Montesquieu as advocate of a commercial republic or a liberal state in the English

Montesquieu's part to theorize a virtuous alternative to fear, which, as he would later demonstrate in *De l'esprit des lois* (1748), is characteristic of despotic regimes. The *Lettres persanes*, through their diagnosis of despotic fear, serve as a critique of despotic excess that prefigures Montesquieu's positive argument in favor of moderation in *De l'esprit des lois*.

The focus of chapter 3 is the ability of love to motivate virtuous republican behavior. I turn to love of country and its cultivation through the careful administration of civil ceremonies and rituals, specifically in the work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. I argue that Rousseau relies on ceremony and ritual to recreate moments of republican (re-) founding and to infuse civic virtue with a depth of emotion beyond an easy and unconvincing moralism. Civic rituals provide the opportunity for citizens to continually recommit to their shared political project through the cultivation of shared affective practices when the allure and commanding presence of the lawgiver no longer suffices, as, for instance, several generations after the original founding. I identify three components of civic ceremonies – the performative, the affective, and the temporal – and examine in turn how each is essential to, and unique in, Rousseau's discussion of ceremony, as well as the role that civic education plays in the development of citizens capable of performing their roles as imagined.

In chapter 4, I turn to a cluster of affective dispositions and emotions related to the practice of hospitality: generosity, respect, and sociability on the one hand and despair, disgust, and disrespect on the other. I interpret the encounter between the Tahitians and the French sailors in Diderot's *Supplément au voyage de Bougainville* as a violation of the ethic of hospitality.

Turning to the *Encyclopédie* entry on hospitality authored by frequent contributor Louis de

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tradition. See Andrea Radasanu, "Montesquieu on Moderation, Monarchy and Reform," *History of Political Thought* 31 (2010), especially 283-285, for a summary of this view with extensive citations. For a particularly thoughtful reading of Montesquieu as an "orthodox monarchist," see Annelien de Dijn, "Montesquieu's Controversial Context: *The Spirit of the Laws* as a Monarchist Tract," *History of Political Thought* 34 (2013): 66-88.

Jaucourt (which appeared a few years before Diderot began work on the *Supplément*), we find that the ethic of hospitality provides a code of behavior, ideally to be accompanied by certain affective dispositions (generosity, respect, sociability), but which the new rules of commerce and conquest arising in the eighteenth century put in jeopardy. As mentioned above, unlike in my discussions of Montesquieu and Rousseau, I do not argue for an explicitly republican thread within Diderot's *Supplément* – though I do suggest that, through A and B, Diderot advocates the cultivation of a rejuvenated form of hospitality. Instead, I turn to the contemporary neo-republican literature on the international politics to see what resources this recuperation of hospitality between unequal parties may provide.

In the conclusion, I return to the questions about contemporary republican political theory raised here and in the concluding sections of chapter 4. Specifically, I demonstrate that the explorations of “soft power” in chapters one through four offer resources to the affective and motivational deficits facing contemporary republicanism. The cultivation of other-regarding practices, civic ceremonies and rituals, and a republican model of hospitality would all contribute to a more comprehensive, and emotional, theory of republican virtue, both nationally and internationally. Above all, we will seek to avoid the fate of a would-be republican, the young William Wordsworth, who, “unprepared/ With needful knowledge”, was left to “[look] for something that I could not find,/ Affecting more emotion than I felt.”<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> William Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, in *Poetical Works*, ed. Ernest de Selincourt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936 [1904]), Book IX, lines 72-73 and 92-93, 556.



## CHAPTER 1 | How to Do Things with Emotions

The best signs of passions present are either in the countenance, motions of the body, actions, and ends, or aims, which we otherwise know the man to have.  
- Hobbes, *Leviathan*<sup>67</sup>

### Introduction: Emotional Lexicons

There is a long-standing confusion attached to the language of the passions: seemingly contingent, debatably rooted in biology, there is no standard or necessary frame of reference when discussing emotion. In the large contemporary literature on the subject, authors frequently assume a hierarchical relationship between the passions, emotions, affect, feelings, sentiment, mood, and however many other cognates they wish to include. The hierarchy varies according to the purposes of the author. Nor is this task of categorization and classification a strictly modern project: as I demonstrate below, the inadequacy of language to firmly distinguish between the intangible, metaphysical, and physiological aspects of the passions has troubled the entirety of the republican tradition. The process by which “many use words to signify what they conceive or think and also what they desire, fear, or have any other passion for” has stymied those lacking Hobbes’s enviable certainty.

As Philip Fisher observes, “the passions, as one of the longest uninterrupted, most intricate and necessary descriptive problems in the intellectual life of Western culture, have had time to accumulate waves of damage both from absent words and from the bad surplus of overlapping, once technical, but now informal vocabulary.”<sup>68</sup> Historically, this confusion over emotional lexicons is in keeping with what Dror Wahrman has diagnosed as the “*ancien régime* of identity.” Wahrman contends that prior to the last two decades of the eighteenth century,

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<sup>67</sup> Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Richard Tuck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 46.

<sup>68</sup> Philip Fisher, *The Vehement Passions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 4.

identity and the “self” were concepts in flux and that one ought not “presuppose an essential core of selfhood characterized by psychological depth, or interiority, which is the bedrock of unique, expressive individual identity.”<sup>69</sup> (Per Wahrman, the 1780s and 1790s mark the shift to another identity regime.) Rather, the *ancien régime* of identity permits “people to imagine identities as mutable, assumable, divisible, or actively malleable.”<sup>70</sup> In contrast, the “modern regime of selfhood” essentializes gender, ethnicity and race, and class so that identity is “innate, fixed, [and] determined.”<sup>71</sup>

This modern, rigid regime of selfhood lends itself to predictability and classification of types.<sup>72</sup> More problematically, according to critics, classification and its helpmeet, standardization, could predetermine the domain of acceptable or desirable subjectivities.<sup>73</sup> This concern, over predetermination in particular, recurs with the recent rising interest in neurobiology and evolutionary psychology and the fear that a return to biology in social thought necessarily smuggles in a determinism which cultural studies writ large had successfully undermined in recent decades.

I begin in the next section by situating the project historically with a brief genealogy of the passions in republican political thought. My reason for doing so is, in part, to show that the richest strands of the tradition are those imbued with a thick sense of civic virtue. Neo-

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<sup>69</sup> Wahrman, *The Making of the Modern Self*, xi.

<sup>70</sup> Wahrman, *The Making of the Modern Self*, 275.

<sup>71</sup> Wahrman, *The Making of the Modern Self*, 275.

<sup>72</sup> On classification, Michel Foucault, *Les Mots et les choses : Une archéologie des sciences humaines* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1966) remains essential and Geoffrey Bowker and Susan Leigh Star’s *Sorting Things Out: Classification and Its Consequences* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999) offers a thorough discussion of the many ways in which “to classify is to be human.”

<sup>73</sup> We might view recent debates over revisions to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, long the standard, if controversial, resource for psychiatric diagnoses, as a debate over desirable subjectivities. Most contentious in the revisions between fourth and fifth editions (a lapse of nineteen years) were reclassifications of autism, depressive, and psychotic disorders. Ultimately, the director the National Institute of Mental Health announced that the *DSM* “does not reflect the complexity of many disorders, and its way of categorizing mental illnesses should not guide research.” Pam Belluck and Benedict Carey, “Psychiatry’s Guide Is Out of Touch with Science,” *New York Times*, May 8, 2013. See also Carey, “Psychiatry Manual Drafters Back Down on Diagnoses,” *New York Times*, May 8, 2012.

republicanism and constitutional patriotism's inattention, or lack of commitment, to the interplay of virtue and emotion is a matter of choice and not a necessary outcome of the tradition. Continued neglect of emotion is not merely a case of historical inattentiveness but a significant challenge to both neo-republicanism and constitutional patriotism's sustainability as political projects. This is particularly true if we take seriously their desire to engage with, and influence, concrete political events, as I think we should, given Pettit's work with former Spanish Prime Minister, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, and Habermas's ongoing engagement with the future of the European Union.<sup>74</sup> Lastly, a genealogy of republican passions demonstrates the increasing complexity surrounding discussions of the passions and, as the chapter unfolds, the ways in which recent affect theory has paradoxically reduced that complexity, much to its own impoverishment.

### **I. A Brief History of the Passions in Republican Political Thought**

The history of republican thought and the history of the passions are two threads that rarely find themselves intertwined.<sup>75</sup> However, by bringing these two vast subfields into contact with one another, we stand to learn about both republican political theory and political passions much that would otherwise remain oblique. In this section, I develop a brief genealogy of republicanism with a dual aim: it traces both the central moments of republican thought and essential developments in theories of the passions, emphasizing instances of overlap and noting divergences.<sup>76</sup> Virtue and the passions share important but largely neglected connections but republican political thought has not always been attentive to their respective roles. This

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<sup>74</sup> See Martí and Pettit, *Civic Republicanism in Zapatero's Spain* and Habermas, *Europe: The Faltering Project*, trans. Ciaran Cronin (Malden: Polity Press, 2009) and *The Crisis of the European Union: A Response*, trans. Cronin (Malden: Polity Press, 2012).

<sup>75</sup> I distinguish between affect, emotion, and passion in the following section.

<sup>76</sup> Thus I do not make claims to this being an exhaustive history of either the passions or republican thought.

genealogy is the first step toward reestablishing and making them explicit. This project of recuperation also makes overt the role of the body in republican thought. Until the late seventeenth century, accounts of their physiological origins dominated understandings of the passions. The role of the body is thus an essential and unacknowledged part of the republican story.<sup>77</sup>

In spite of my attention to the aporias of republicanism, I do not want to overemphasize them to the point of making the tradition seem incoherent. It is the case, rather, that republican political thinkers are typically hyper-attentive to their intellectual inheritance and the accompanying sense of tradition. I contend that republicanism's focus on certain principles, such as freedom, have been highlighted at the expense of others but not that republicanism need pay more attention to its own history *tout court* – indeed, even the more analytical branches of contemporary neo-republicanism typified by Philip Pettit arguably demonstrate more attentiveness to historical origins than comparable traditions in other areas of political philosophy. Specifically, each republican revival self-consciously models itself on past exemplars, judging its own success by the degrees to which it succeeds or fails to map on to the Roman ideal. That the Roman ideal failed in practice to meet the lofty standards imposed upon in it retrospect is sometimes acknowledged but not a deterrent – indeed, if one considers that the Roman state endured for as long as it did, though it is the nature of states to eventually die, then it ought to be judged a success than a failure.<sup>78</sup>

Yet a judicious account of republicanism's origins requires attending to Aristotle and it

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<sup>77</sup> I avoid the language of affect in this early period in favor of the physiological and humoral. Affect's linguistic association with somatic experience, though dating back to the seventeenth century, dominates contemporary discourse (witness the burgeoning field of "affective studies") to such a degree that its use risks obfuscating the Galenic language prevalent until fairly recently. I discuss the shift toward affect, and its relationship with embodiment, in the following section.

<sup>78</sup> One might attribute this line of thought to the influence of Polybius, for whom states rose and fell as part of a natural order, and to Machiavelli, for whom the considerable success of the ancient Roman state was a worthy model for emulation.

is republicanism's Greek inheritance, via Aristotle, that is the central story of J.G.A. Pocock's *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (1975). Pocock's unorthodox argument was subject to a serious challenge from Quentin Skinner, who argues that it is primarily Cicero to whom the republican tradition is indebted. Developing the line of thought initiated by Hans Baron in *The Crisis of the Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny* (1955), Skinner makes a persuasive case for the predominant influence of Cicero's *De officiis* (*On Duties*) on the Italian humanists.<sup>79</sup> Without negating the overall significance of *The Machiavellian Moment*, Pocock himself concedes to Skinner's assessment in the afterword to a recently updated edition.<sup>80</sup> Nonetheless, if Aristotle is no republican, his work on virtue remains relevant, if not to the renaissance republicans like Machiavelli, who had limited access to Aristotle's texts and thought, then to their immediate descendants, the English republicans of the seventeenth century. (This is to say nothing of contemporary neo-republicans less devoted to [or bound by] the legacy of Rome.) As Blair Worden notes, English republicans looked to Machiavelli in support of their developing political beliefs but had been schooled in, and formed by, both Aristotle and Cicero.<sup>81</sup>

Therefore, when considering the concept of virtue (if not *republican* virtue), one must

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<sup>79</sup> On the influences on classical republicanism, see especially Hans Baron, *The Crisis of the Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966 [1955]); Skinner, "Machiavelli's *Discorsi* and the Pre-humanist Origins of Republican Ideas;" Peter Stacey, "Definition, Division, and Difference in Machiavelli's Political Philosophy," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 75 (2014): 189-212; and Stacey, *Roman Monarchy and the Renaissance Prince* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

<sup>80</sup> See the new afterword in the 2003 edition Pocock's *The Machiavellian Moment*. For a reevaluation of the Greek influence on republican thought (which does not, interestingly, explicitly defend Pocock), see Nelson, *The Greek Tradition in Republican Thought*.

<sup>81</sup> Blair Worden, "English Republicanism," in *The Cambridge History of Political Thought, 1450-1700*, ed. J.H. Burns and Mark Goldie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), especially 444-446.

begin with Aristotle.<sup>82</sup> Yet, as commentators have frequently noted, Aristotle's own view of the emotions is perhaps best understood as a response to Plato's post-*Republic* writings on the subject, particularly in the *Phaedrus*, *Timaeus*, and *Philebus*.<sup>83</sup> In the *Republic*, Plato asserted that emotion and desire resided in the two lower parts of the soul – the spirited and the appetitive. The rational part of the soul, which was cognitive, ideally governed over these two lesser aspects, regulating the individual's disposition and orienting him toward the good. The spirited part of the soul operated between the appetitive and the rational aspects and though its functions were not as fully cognitive as those of the rational aspect, the spirited aspect of a well-ordered soul would tend towards the rational and away from the appetitive. The latter was primarily irrational and non-cognitive and the well-ordered soul would at best regulate its appetitive aspect. According to Plato, however, the appetitive aspect of the soul was capable of base and biological urges, as well as more complex, cognitive, if crass, strivings, such as the desire for wealth.<sup>84</sup>

While this depiction of the soul largely remains intact in the later works, Plato arguably shifts his position on the importance of eradicating the soul's irrational aspects, accepting instead that the emotions may provide the individual with an evaluative resource otherwise lacking.<sup>85</sup> For Plato, a passion, or emotion, is best understood as the process *and* the result of the soul's reaction toward or away from something or someone, on the basis of some evaluation or judgment. This evaluation is to a greater or lesser degree cognitive, but not necessarily rational. The soul experiences a perturbation – whether the effects are positive or

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<sup>82</sup> Viroli disagrees. See his *Republicanism* for what he calls “a historiographical error” (65), presumably in reference to Skinner's correction of Pocock's account in *The Machiavellian Moment*, on which more below.

<sup>83</sup> See Simo Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 5-47, and Martha Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy*, revised edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001 [1986]), 200-234. On the chronology of the Platonic dialogues, see Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness*, 459n.21.

<sup>84</sup> Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, 7-13.

<sup>85</sup> Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness*, 221-223.

negative depend upon the previous state of the individual's soul (was it well-ordered?) and the tenor of the emotion experienced (was it happiness or profound grief?).<sup>86</sup> The evaluation is essential: it forms what Simo Knuuttila, in respect to Aristotle, has called his "compositional theory of emotions." Without some aspect of judgment, individuals, and animals, may attain "feelings" but not "emotions": "perceptions and imaginings may affect animals and arouse various feelings in them...The emotional evaluative thought makes one see oneself (or others in relation to oneself) in a specific way, and this awareness is qualified as pleasant or unpleasant."<sup>87</sup>

In order that individuals evaluate their emotions correctly and thus use them to their soul's advantage, both Plato and Aristotle advocate the instruction of virtue. In this sense, virtue can be understood as the making public, for the purposes of education, otherwise private emotions – of bringing into the realm of politics the condition of one's soul. In the *Politics* and the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle develops a theory of virtue that is contingent upon his argument that man is a *zoon politikon*. An individual's virtue is developed at home, via the family and through education, but what originates in "private" is the condition upon which one may later participate in the public life of the city.<sup>88</sup> To be virtuous in the Aristotelian sense is commonly understood as doing the right thing at the right time in the right way. But it is more fundamentally about being so habituated via education and experience toward achieving that mean so that one acts effortlessly, without artifice, without dissimulation. For those individuals who join the polity as citizens, civic virtue is an extension of personal, individual virtue.

In spite of his emphasis on the mean, and its connotations of moderation and

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<sup>86</sup> Deborah J. Brown, *Descartes and the Passionate Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 31-32.

<sup>87</sup> Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, 37-38.

<sup>88</sup> For an interesting perspective that correctly, in my view, reads Aristotle as advocating a "passionate attachment to public life" rather than "enlightened self-interest," and then goes on to argue, more problematically, that this is a reason against reading Aristotle on virtue, see Duncan and Burt, "Civic Virtue and Self-Interest," 147-151.

temperance, the passions remain an integral part of Aristotelian moral psychology. Aristotle's citizens are ideally governed by reason, but they are not dominated by it to such an extent that they are dispassionate, unable or unwilling to respond with anger, enthusiasm, terror or whatever emotion a situation might seem to call for. As in Plato, passions for Aristotle are highly cognitive and, moreover, possessed of a critical psychosomatic element.<sup>89</sup> As Giulia Sissa argues, "[a] passion, or an emotion, is made of two components: it is a thought, accompanied by a bodily alternation – one that, today, we would locate in the brain, but one that Homer, Aristotle, or the Stoics would map onto the diaphragm, the heart, the *thumos*, or the blood."<sup>90</sup>

In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle suggests that "we feel anger and fear without choice."<sup>91</sup> Consider moreover his assertion in the *Rhetoric* that one is right to feel angry toward one's friends, "who have usually treated us with honour or regard, if a change comes and they behave to us otherwise," and toward one's inferiors, should one perceive a slight, as an inferior is unjustified in demeaning or disregarding his superiors.<sup>92</sup> These are but a few of the many examples of Aristotle's complex consideration of the passions, which is ultimately lost to the majority of republican thought. The loss is not inexplicable. In spite of the Aristotelian background that is well-evidenced in hindsight, it is primarily via Cicero that republican theory develops a notion of civic virtue. Moreover, Ciceronian virtue maintains a discomfited

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<sup>89</sup> Rorty implies that, as passions (and understandings of the passions) evolve into emotions and, eventually, sentiments, the experience shifts from a somatic occasion to a cerebral exercise, from a brutish experience to a civilized engagement. While the language of the passions echoes this development, the experience of the passions never becomes any less physical than it is in Aristotle. See Rorty, "From Passions to Emotions and Sentiments," *Philosophy* 57 (1982), 159.

<sup>90</sup> Giulia Sissa, "Political Animals: Pathetic Animals," in *A Companion to Greek and Roman Political Thought*, ed. Ryan Balot (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 283.

<sup>91</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1106a.1. His larger purpose here is to draw a distinction between the passions and virtue: "Again, we feel anger and fear without choice, but the virtues are modes of choice or involve choice. Further, in respect of the passions we are said to be moved, but in respect of the virtues and the vices we are said not to be moved but to be disposed in a particular way." See also Sissa, "De l'animal politique à la nature humaine : Aristote et Hobbes sur la colère," *Anthropologie et Sociétés* 32 (2008): 15-38.

<sup>92</sup> Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1378b-1379b.



relationship with emotion: while Cicero never denies the power of the passions, his notion of virtue revolves around the ability to master emotion. In part, this is due to Cicero's intellectual debts: he was not a full-fledged Stoic, as he also purported to adhere to certain teachings of Skepticism. Yet on the subject of the passions, the influence of Stoicism shines through.

The Stoics also view all emotions as highly cognitive.<sup>93</sup> Indeed, an emotion is a judgment that an individual engages in making; it is not, contrary to our common perception, something that happens to, or within, the self spontaneously. In fact, there are two judgments that occur. The first is whether what one reacts to externally is beneficial or harmful. The second judgment is whether it is even appropriate to react to the externality. Most saliently, when emotions are conceptualized as judgments, they may also be considered voluntary and, thus, eradicable.

While Cicero's emotions are also cognitive, they are not quite as firmly regulated as a fully Stoic teaching would hold. For Cicero, the wise man's behavior will be regulated by his reasoning half, but there are nonetheless passionate elements that threaten to subvert the seamliness he seeks to achieve and maintain. Indeed, a central theme of *De officiis* is the importance of restraint to the maintenance of virtue. This emphasis on restraint, as well as Cicero's general authority on issues of law, makes him a figure of great importance for Montesquieu, who links moderation with stability.

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<sup>93</sup> It bears mentioning that we know Cicero was familiar with this way of thinking about emotion in its particulars because of his *Tusculan Disputations*, Book IV. The study of Stoic teachings on emotions has produced a number of significant works in recent years, leading to precise and complex understandings of the various threads of Stoic philosophy. See in particular Tad Brennan, *The Stoic Life: Emotions, Duties, and Fate* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Margaret Graver, *Stoicism and Emotion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); and Martha Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

The cardinal virtues, wisdom, justice, courage (or greatness of spirit), and *decorum*,<sup>94</sup> are best exercised in a rational, measured fashion, unmolested by affect's exigencies. With a measure of irony, Cicero embraces affect to decry it:

What wretched servitude for virtue to wait upon pleasure! ... For how can a man praise restraint when he places the highest good in pleasure? For restraint is hostile to the passions; but the passions are pleasure's adherents.<sup>95</sup>

Rather than pleasure, the individual's highest good (which is commensurate with the highest good of the republic) requires the cultivation of a sense of duty and what Cicero refers to as "restraining the disturbed movements of the spirit (which the Greeks call *pathe*) and making the impulses... obedient to knowledge."<sup>96</sup>

The passions are thus excised from the regime of practical ethics Cicero prescribes to his son and perpetuity in *De officiis*. Yet this is largely unremarked upon in the secondary literature, unless it is the specific context of Cicero's rhetoric and whether it can or cannot be read in tandem with his ethical and political writings.<sup>97</sup> This excision is possible because emotions, though natural, are equated with irrationality. Cicero describes the human "spirit" as divided into two parts: one is impulse "which snatches a man this way and that," while the other is "reason, which teaches and explains what should be done and what avoided. Reason

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<sup>94</sup> The Cambridge edition of *On Duties* translates *decorum* as "seemliness." Cicero, *On Duties*, ed. M.T. Griffin and E.M. Atkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

<sup>95</sup> Cicero, *On Duties*, Book III, §117.

<sup>96</sup> Cicero, *On Duties*, Book I, §4 and Book II, §18.

<sup>97</sup> This is by no means an unimportant sub-literature, but there is a distinction between reading Cicero's politics for the passions and reading his rhetoric and politics for their possible in/congruities. Most important among the latter, to which I will likely have recourse, are Bryan Garsten, *Saving Persuasion: A Defense of Rhetoric and Judgment* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006); Daniel Kapust, "Acting the Princely Style: *Ethos* and *Pathos* in Cicero's *On the Ideal Orator* and Machiavelli's *The Prince*," *Political Studies* 58 (2010): 590-608, and "Cicero on Decorum and the Morality of Rhetoric," *European Journal of Political Theory* 10 (2011): 92-112; and Gary Remer, "Cicero and the Ethics of Deliberative Rhetoric," in *Talking Democracy: Historical Perspectives on Rhetoric and Democratic Theory*, ed. Remer, Benedetto Fontana, and Cary Nederman, 135-161 (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2004), "Political Oratory and Conversation: Cicero versus Deliberative Democracy," *Political Theory* 27 (1999): 39-64, and "Rhetoric as a Balancing of Ends: Cicero and Machiavelli," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 42 (2009): 1-28.

therefore commands and impulse obeys. All free action should be free from rashness and carelessness.”<sup>98</sup> What begins as a reorientation of the emotions away from the virtuous life tends toward their virtual obliteration. A Stoic argument, this equation of all passions with irrationality will persist through to the present.

Stoic theories of emotions are intended to teach individuals how to react to, and cope with, “the disturbed movements of the spirit,” in Cicero’s words. Yet after the birth and spread of Christianity, the desires and perturbations that had previously been considered faults or flaws (greed or lust, for instance) that may have been rectified via Stoic “therapy” came to be understood as something more serious: sins. According to the emerging Christian tradition, “[h]uman beings were made according to the image and likeness of God... When human beings chose to ignore God’s command and act according to their own wills, this order and the integrity of human nature were lost...”<sup>99</sup> This reordering of the moral universe made mankind accountable to an external figure, a deity, which required that men pursue virtue not only for the success of their mortal lives but also for that of their immortal souls. “Virtue is not natural, but rather something brought in by instruction to fight the perpetual war with vice.”<sup>100</sup> With this shift in concern came an equally forceful shift in the vocabulary of virtue. As Richard Sorabji remarks, “[t]he Stoic theory of how to avoid agitation,” or Cicero’s disturbances, “was converted by early Christians into a theory of how to avoid temptation.”<sup>101</sup> Virtue takes on a strong moral valence that had been much hazier in classical political thought. In spite of this, Christian virtues retain their identity as passions, if redirected ones: the good Christian must love God, have faith,

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<sup>98</sup> Cicero, *On Duties*, Book III, §101.

<sup>99</sup> Paul Cornish, “Augustine’s Contribution to the Republican Tradition,” *European Journal of Political Theory* 9 (2010), 141.

<sup>100</sup> Cornish, “Augustine’s Contribution to the Republican Tradition,” 141.

<sup>101</sup> Richard Sorabji, *Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), introduction.

practice charity, and maintain hope.

As Christianity began to spread, so too did a Galenic account of the humours, instantiating a longstanding tradition of linking the physical to the passionate.<sup>102</sup> Though the notion that four substances, or humours, exist in the body and that a healthy body requires an equitable balance between the four, likely originated either in ancient Egypt or Mesopotamia, and was later adopted and transformed by Hippocrates, it was the physician Galen who developed a philosophy of the passions in his *On the Temperaments*.<sup>103</sup> According to the Galenic account, each of the humours (black bile, yellow bile, blood, and phlegm) is associated with, variously, a season, an organ or area of the body, a physical condition, and a personality type. Regardless of whether Galen's inheritors adhered closely to, or introduced deviations from, his four-fold schema, the established link between body and personality holds, however tenuously, to this day.<sup>104</sup> In a sense, Galen's thought prefigures contemporary affect theory, for he "had a physicalist view not only of the soul's capacities, but also of the soul itself."<sup>105</sup> Moreover,

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<sup>102</sup> The majority of the secondary literature uses the British spelling 'humours,' rather than the American English, 'humors,' so I have adopted the former usage for the sake of continuity.

<sup>103</sup> The following discussion is indebted to Lawrence Babb, "The Physiological Conception of Love in the Elizabethan and Early Stuart Drama," *PMLA* 56 (1941): 1020-1035; Donald Beecher, "The Lover's Body: The Somatogenesis of Love in Renaissance Medical Treatises," *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme* 24 (1988): 1-11; Thomas Dixon, "Revolting Passions," *Modern Theology* 27 (2011): 298-312; and Rorty, "From Passions to Emotions and Sentiments." Beecher in particular addresses the medieval and renaissance Arab world's treatment of the passions, a subject beyond the scope of this dissertation.

<sup>104</sup> For more on the relationship between the humours and passions in Galen, see James Hankinson, "Actions and Passions: Affection, Emotion, and Moral Self-Management in Galen's Philosophical Psychology," *Passions and Perceptions: Studies in the Hellenistic Philosophy of Mind*, ed. Jacques Brunschwig and Nussbaum (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 184-222. A popular account of the humours is Noga Arikha, *Passions and Tempers: A History of the Humours* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2007). A selection of Galen's own relevant writings on the matter can be found in Galen, *On the Passions and Errors of the Soul*, trans. Paul W. Harkins (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1963).

<sup>105</sup> Sorabji, *Emotion and Peace of Mind*, 254. He continues, "... a theory described and rejected by Plato in the fourth century BC in the *Phaedo*, that the soul is a harmonious attunement (*harmonia*) or blend (*krasis*) of the hot, cold, fluid, and dry in the body."

“Galenic medicine provided a range of writers with a rich and malleable discourse able to articulate and explain the vagaries of human emotion in corporeal terms.”<sup>106</sup>

The passional and the physiological remained intertwined throughout the ancient and medieval periods, so much so that by the renaissance, the language used by popular English playwrights, such as John Ford and John Marston, was “often intelligible only when one knows something of the physiological lore which, at first, second, or third hand, has influenced their thinking on the subject.”<sup>107</sup> The introduction and spread of Christianity, with its dual emphases on the body and virtue, culminated not only with the Resurrection of Christ but also with the Assumption of Mary, uncorrupted, into heaven.<sup>108</sup> Though the republican thread is thin through this period, and will be until the development of small republics in the early renaissance, discussions of virtue remain vibrant in the Neo-Platonic and Christian schools of thought, as well as amongst renaissance humanists interested in reviving the legacies of Athens and Rome and with them, classical virtues.

Machiavelli upends these inherited notions of virtue that associate it with moral conceptions of right and wrong by reinserting the passions into his theory of politics. This is also where he breaks with Cicero, who insists that to act virtuously is to act in a seemly fashion.<sup>109</sup> For Machiavelli, the Ciceronian perspective overlooks the fundamental motives for action that drive most people, which is to say, their self-interest and the interests of those closest to them. Thus politics is more likely to be discordant than it is to be the harmonious

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<sup>106</sup> Michael Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England: Physiology and Inwardness in Spenser, Shakespeare, Herbert, and Milton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 6.

<sup>107</sup> Babb, “The Physiological Conception of Love,” 1026.

<sup>108</sup> See Caroline Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200-1336* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).

<sup>109</sup> For a recent summary of scholarly interpretations of the relationship between Cicero and Machiavelli, see Kapust, “Acting the Princely Style,” especially 590-592.

order envisioned and sought after by Aristotle and even Cicero and the Stoics.<sup>110</sup> While Machiavellian passions are not irrational impulses – indeed, they are, again, highly cognitive – he does not use their rationality as a litmus test for their political relevance. The passions are simply fundamental to each citizen, be he of the *popolo* or the *grandi*, and as such, Machiavelli cannot ignore them but must incorporate them, primarily by channeling the *discordia* that is likely to ensue into a productive form of politics. In this, he shares much with Rousseau, for whom civil society is a reflection of men’s passional relationships with one another.<sup>111</sup>

Moreover, Machiavelli goes on to use this pragmatic understanding of the passions in order to develop an alternative theory of virtue. His concept of *virtù* is notoriously one of his most distinct and should be distinguished from the language of civic virtue as I have used it thus far.<sup>112</sup> As Victoria Kahn has persuasively argued, “the criterion of correct action [for Machiavelli] is not moral goodness or the intrinsically moral judgment of prudence but the functional excellence or effectiveness of *virtù*: a *virtù* we might say, parodying Aristotle, that demonstrates its own excellence by being effective.”<sup>113</sup> Thus a political leader who demonstrates *virtù* would successfully navigate the competing demands of his constituents, competitors and allies, understanding that such demands were driven by passions not to be eradicated but, rather, manipulated to the republic’s advantage. Machiavellian *virtù* reveals itself in the performance of political savvy, in the management of the passions for specific

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<sup>110</sup> For an account of the reception of Aristotle in Machiavelli’s time (though with surprisingly little mention of Machiavelli himself), see David Lines, *Aristotle’s Ethics in the Italian Renaissance (ca. 1300-1650)* (Leiden: Brill, 2002).

<sup>111</sup> “It is man’s weakness which makes him sociable; it is our common miseries which turn our hearts to humanity; we would owe humanity nothing if we were not men.” Rousseau, *Émile or On Education*, trans. Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1979), 221. “C’est la foiblesse de l’homme qui le rend sociable ; ce sont nos misères communes qui portent nos cœurs à l’humanité : nous ne lui devrions rien si nous n’étions pas hommes.” *Émile, ou De l’éducation* (Amsterdam: Jean Néaulme, 1762), vol. 2, 209.

<sup>112</sup> W.R. Newell disagrees that Machiavelli’s notion of *virtù* is particularly distinct. See his “How Original is Machiavelli? A Consideration of Skinner’s Interpretation of Virtue and Fortune,” *Political Theory* 15 (1987): 612-634.

<sup>113</sup> Victoria Kahn, “*Virtù* and the Example of Agathocles in Machiavelli’s *Prince*,” *Representations* 13 (1986): 72.

ends.

Unlike many of his contemporaries, Machiavelli does not emphasize the physiological element of the passions. Perhaps the absence of such a discussion contributes to his works' striking sense of modernity, in comparison to someone like Descartes, who, in his correspondence with Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia and the resulting *Passions of the Soul* (1649), famously located the passions in the pineal gland. (Among other effects of this reorientation was the move away from a strictly Galenic, or humoral, account.) Not acts of volition, Descartes characterizes the passions rather as "perceptions" or "emotions" which "agitate the soul." They have a two-fold purpose, the first directed at the soul, "to move and dispose the soul to want the things for which they prepare the body," and the second at the body, "the same agitation of the spirits which normally causes the passions also disposes the body to make movements which help us to attain these things."<sup>114</sup> Put differently, the passions are for Descartes what bind the mind and the body together.

In spite of the Cartesian model's elaborate structure and the complex interplay between soul and mind that its author details, the structure remains primarily interior. As Amélie Oksenberg Rorty notes almost in passing, Descartes "has no account at all of their social origins and formation. Although some of the basic passions are directed to persons, there is in principle no real difference between loving an object and loving a person. If we are interested in the social and political force of the passions, Descartes holds little interest for us."<sup>115</sup> Yet after Descartes, "the passions could no longer be conceived as impulses of the material organic soul, any more than the conflict between passion and reason could be represented as a struggle between the

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<sup>114</sup> Descartes, *Passions of the Soul* in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, vol. 1, trans. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, and Dugald Murdoch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), §40 and §52. See also Brown, *Descartes and the Passionate Mind*.

<sup>115</sup> Rorty, "From Passions to Emotions and Sentiments," 171.

organic and intellectual souls. And once this landscape was abandoned, the need for a new analysis of the passions, consonant with Cartesian metaphysics, was soon felt.”<sup>116</sup> According to the Cartesian model of perception, the passions were an unavoidable filter through which information passed from the world to the individual.

In one of the most widely read contemporary works on emotions theory, Sara Ahmed suggests that “one could characterize a significant ‘split’ in theories of emotion in terms of whether emotions are tied primarily to bodily sensations or to cognition,” with Descartes as an example of the former and Aristotle an example of the latter.<sup>117</sup> This is correct in the broadest sense but historically inattentive. (As David Schalkwyk points out, what would often be termed an “emotion” in the twenty-first century was more likely referred to as a “passion,” or “agitation of the soul,” in the early modern period – particularly through the seventeenth century.<sup>118</sup>) Though dangerous to generalize, it is fair to note that throughout much of the early modern period, treatises on the passions emphasized their dual nature. It is that case that some were considered to have either cognitive or physiological (or biological) elements, depending upon what aspect of the soul they were believed to have originated in, the rational or the sensitive.<sup>119</sup> As Adrian Johns writes, “the *metaphysical* passions were restricted to the rational soul, and were familiar to divines as the affections appropriate to religious contemplation, while the *physical* passions affected the sensitive soul through material, effluvial mechanisms.”<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Susan James, “The Passions in Metaphysics and the Theory of Action,” in *The Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Philosophy*, vol. 1, ed. Daniel Garber and Michael Ayers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 918.

<sup>117</sup> Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 5.

<sup>118</sup> David Schalkwyk, “Is Love an Emotion? Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night* and *Antony and Cleopatra*,” *symplokē* 18 (2010), 103.

<sup>119</sup> The latter was also referred to as the irrational or appetitive.

<sup>120</sup> Adrian Johns, “The Physiology of Reading: Print and the Passions,” in *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 401.



A more purely mechanistic – better-termed ‘materialist’ – account comes in Hobbes’s *Leviathan* (1651). Debates over the degree and quality of Hobbes’s materialism continue, but for our purposes, it is useful to return to his description of the passions in *Leviathan*’s chapter 6.<sup>121</sup> Influenced by Euclid, Bacon, and Galileo, and provoked but unpersuaded by Descartes’s dualism, Hobbes unites body and passions. The reunion takes a strange path, beginning with an extended analogy: “For what is the *Heart*, but a *Spring*; and the *Nerves*, but so many *Strings*; and the *Joynts*, but so many *Wheels*, giving motion to the whole Body, such as was intended by the Artificer [God]?”<sup>122</sup> If we follow Hobbes’s usage of “heart,” we find that it operates on at least two other dimensions: the physical and the passionate. For in chapter 1, “Of Sense,” Hobbes explains that “the cause of Sense, is the Externall Body, or Object, which presseth the organ proper to each Sense... which pressure, by the mediation of Nerves, and other strings, and membranes of the body, continued inwards to the Brain, and Heart.”<sup>123</sup> In chapter 6, we find that “those things which we neither Desire, nor Hate, we are said to *contemne*: CONTEMPT being nothing else but an immobility, or contumacy of the Heart, in resisting the action of certain things; and proceeding from that the Heart is already moved otherwise, by other more portent objects; or from want of experience of them.”<sup>124</sup>

As Samantha Frost, who advocates a strongly materialist reading of Hobbes, notes, “any description of Hobbes’s account of the subject as ‘mechanistic’ is complicated by his claims that matter takes a variety of forms.”<sup>125</sup> (The inheritance of psychology and affect theory is primarily Cartesian, but had it been Hobbesian there might be less of a need for recuperating the passions

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<sup>121</sup> For a sampling of the recent positions taken on Hobbes’s materialism, see Samantha Frost, *Lessons from a Materialist Thinker: Hobbesian Reflections on Ethics and Politics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008) and Joshua Foa Dienstag’s review, “Man of Peace: Hobbes Between Politics and Science,” *Political Theory* 37 (2009), especially 699-702.

<sup>122</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 9.

<sup>123</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 13.

<sup>124</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 39.

<sup>125</sup> Samantha Frost, “Hobbes and the Matter of Self-Consciousness,” *Political Theory* 33 (2005), 502.

in modern thought.) Given this plurality of forms, “mans Bodys is in continuall mutation” and so “it is impossible that all the same things should alwayes cause in him the same Appetites, and Aversions.”<sup>126</sup> In other words, while the objects of men’s desires and passions change, men are never free of those passions, as it is inherent in their constitution. The political solution presented in Part II of *Leviathan* is in part a means of adjudicating between desires for the sake of everyone’s security.

Much like Hobbes, Spinoza is troubled by the unruliness of the passions. In the Preface to Part IV of his *Ethics*, Spinoza reveals, “man’s lack of power to moderate and restrain the affects I call Bondage. For the man who is subject to affects is under the control, not of himself, but of fortune, in whose power he so greatly is that often, though he sees the better for himself, he is still forced to follow the worse.”<sup>127</sup> Yet Spinoza’s solution, contrary to Hobbes’s turn to the absolute authority of the sovereign, is decidedly more internal and stoic: “the most rigorous and sustained exposition of the neo-Stoic position in this period,” he “portrays virtue as a tranquil and passion-free condition, devoted to what he calls the intellectual love of God.”<sup>128</sup>

This condition is possible through a proper understanding of the passions. Per Spinoza, an affect is man’s understanding of the way external forces act upon him – yet while man is passive in that he is acted upon, he is also capable of reacting. Thus “the reactions that are our passions are a manifestation of a striving to persevere in our being,” or what he refers to as a

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<sup>126</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 39.

<sup>127</sup> Spinoza, *Ethics*, Book IV, Preface, 543. Spinoza differentiates between two kinds of affect, active and passive: “by affect I understand affections of the Body by which the Body’s power of acting is increased or diminished, aided or restrained, and at the same time, the ideas of these affections. *Therefore, if we can be the adequate cause of any of these affections, I understand by the Affect an action; otherwise, a passion*” (*Ethics*, Book III, Definition 3, 493, emphasis in the original). All quotations of Spinoza are from *The Collected Works of Spinoza*, vol. 1, ed. and trans. Edwin Curley (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985).

<sup>128</sup> James, “Reason, the Passions, and the Good Life,” in *The Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Philosophy*, vol. 2, ed. Daniel Garber and Michael Ayers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1374.

*conatus*.<sup>129</sup> Increasingly rationality leads to increasingly refined pleasures, or what Susan James has referred to as “rational emotion.”<sup>130</sup> But while a certain level of detachment from specifics is required in order to attain rational emotion, Spinoza implies this allows one to forge richer connections with others, rather than descend into alienation. As Judith Butler notes, “in the disposition toward others, where the self makes its encounter with another, the *conatus* is enhanced or diminished” so that “the self preserved is not a monadic entity, and the life persevered in is not only to be understood as singular or bounded life.”<sup>131</sup> This is the foundation of the ethical and political life.

The English republicans of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries did not develop materialist and moral philosophies of the passions in the manner of Hobbes and Spinoza but they did struggle explicitly with the relationship between virtue and republican governance.<sup>132</sup> Consider Algernon Sidney’s discussion of the relationship between liberty and virtue in his *Discourses Concerning Governing* (1698).<sup>133</sup> Written as a rejection of Robert Filmer’s defense of absolute monarchy and divine right in *Patriarcha* (1680), Sidney’s response is no simple variation of the themes found in Locke’s *Second Treatise*. Rather, it is a specifically republican defense of the relationship between liberty and virtue. Renaissance humanists had long held

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<sup>129</sup> James, *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth-Century Philosophy*, 146.

<sup>130</sup> James, “Reason, the Passions, and the Good Life,” 1375.

<sup>131</sup> Judith Butler, “The Desire to Live: Spinoza’s *Ethics* under Pressure,” in *Politics and Passions, 1500-1850*, ed. Victoria Kahn, Neil Saccamano, and Daniela Coli (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 112.

<sup>132</sup> The following owes much to *Republicanism, Liberty, and Commercial Society, 1649-1776*, ed. David Wootton (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), especially M.M. Goldsmith’s essay, “Liberty, Virtue, and the Rule of Law, 1689-1770,” 197-232.

<sup>133</sup> Sidney was not the first to take up such issues: consider that Marchmont Nedham’s republican magazine, *Mercurius Politicus* (June 1650-May 1660); James Harrington’s *The Commonwealth of Oceana* (1656); and Andrew Marvell, *An Account of the Growth of Popery and Arbitrary Government* (1677) had already appeared. Henry Neville, a translator of Machiavelli, would publish *Plato Redivivus* in the same year that Sidney’s *Discourses* appeared. Of course, after the Restoration, Nedham fled to the Netherlands; Harrington was imprisoned; and Neville was arrested (though released). Marvell both avoided punishment and landed employment within the Restoration government, elected to serve as MP in the Cavalier Parliament.

Rome up as a model worthy of emulation by this point.<sup>134</sup> Citing the *Discorsi*, Book 1, chapter 17, Sidney observes that

Machiavelli discoursing of these matters, finds virtue to be so essentially necessary to the establishment and preservation of liberty, that he thinks it impossible for a corrupted people to set up a good government, or for a tyranny to be introduced if they be virtuous; and makes this conclusion, *That where the matter* (that is, the body of the people) *is not corrupted, tumults and disorders do no hurt; and where it is corrupted, good laws do no good:* Which being confirmed by reason and experience, I think no wise man has ever contradicted him.<sup>135</sup>

What is particularly intriguing in Sidney's *Discourses* is that the content of virtue is largely unspecified. Rather, Sidney focuses on the formal relationships between corruption and government: if there is no corruption, then discord will be inconsequential. If there is corruption, good laws will be ineffective. Elsewhere, Sidney remarks that "I dare affirm that all that was ever desirable, or worthy of praise and imitation in Rome, did proceed from its liberty, grow up and perish with it: which I think will not be contradicted by any, but those who prefer the most sordid vices before the most eminent virtues."<sup>136</sup> The affective content of these vices and virtues – or even a general description – is lacking.

Still, the eighteenth century was of course the century of sentiment, bearing witness to the emergence of the sentimental novel and, as Jürgen Habermas theorized and historians have borne out, the development of a new kind of public sphere, distinct from the *ekklesia* of the Greeks, the *res publica* of the ancient Romans, and the court life of the middle ages and the renaissance. Most notably, this new public existed as a distinct entity from the state. As

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<sup>134</sup> Just for how long is a matter of debate, particularly in the English context. See Markku Peltonen's *Classical Humanism and Republicanism in English Political Thought 1570-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). I resist the claim that a republican ethos, let alone practices, can be identified as early as Peltonen argues, but it does seem a far more worthwhile project to trace possible continuities than to think republicanism (which is not to say revolution) erupted primarily as a reaction to monarchical overreach during Charles's "Personal Rule," without a previously laid ideological foundation.

<sup>135</sup> Algernon Sidney, *Discourses on Government*, ed. Thomas G. West (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1996), chapter 2, §11.

<sup>136</sup> Sidney, *Discourses on Government*, chapter 2, §12.

Anthony La Vopa succinctly outlines, the appearance of the public was contingent upon people gathering together in ostensibly apolitical settings, such as coffeehouses, theaters, and social clubs, and fostered by an explosion in the print market, particularly newspapers, and their serialized content.<sup>137</sup> This new public was not inherently democratic: there were elite varieties, such as the *salons* of Paris, which advanced the virtues of ‘conversation,’ while remaining closed to the great majority of people. Yet those excluded might frequent increasingly respectable alternate venues, such as the coffeehouse, which offered an environment mingling conviviality with discussion.<sup>138</sup>

Most remarkably, the new ‘public’ was a reading public responsive to, though also wary of, female writers, who were for the first time able to make a living at their chosen craft.<sup>139</sup> The domestic novel and, indeed, the passionate heroine became staples of publications, which found themselves in fiercely competitive markets, jostling for readers. As they infiltrated literature and social discourse, so the passions remained a significant presence in eighteenth century moral philosophy. As the domain of public life grew, personal emotion suddenly shared in that public life.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Anthony La Vopa, “Conceiving a Public: Ideas and Society in Eighteenth-Century Europe,” *The Journal of Modern History* 64 (1992): 79-116.

<sup>138</sup> See Vicki Hsueh, “Intoxicated Reasons, Affected Feelings: Rethinking the Early Modern English Public Sphere,” paper presented at the Western Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Seattle, Washington, April 18, 2014.

<sup>139</sup> On salons and the ‘republic of letters’, see Dena Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994) and Steven Kale, *French Salons: High Society and Political Sociability from the Old Regime to the Revolution of 1848* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004). On the role of female writers, see Elizabeth Goldsmith and Dena Goodman, ed., *Going Public: Women and Publishing in Early Modern France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995); Carla Hesse, *The Other Enlightenment: How French Women Became Modern* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); and Betty Schellenberg, *The Professionalization of Women Writers in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

<sup>140</sup> On the new culture of sensibility, see in particular David Denby, *Sentimental Narrative and the Social Order in France, 1760–1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Eric Gidal, “Civic Melancholy: English Gloom and French Enlightenment,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 37 (2003): 23-45; Anne Vincent-Buffault, *The History of Tears: Sensibility and Sentimentality in France* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991); and Sophie Wahnich, *Révolution et émotion : Pour une histoire de la sensibilité* (Paris: CNRS, 2009). For an overview of the new philosophy of “moral sentiments,” see Michael Frazer, *The Enlightenment of Sympathy: Justice and the Moral Sentiments in the Eighteenth Century and Today* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Victoria Kahn, “‘The

The most widely used vocabulary in the eighteenth century is that of *sentiment*, which comes to English via Medieval Latin and Old French from the Latin verb, *sentire*. Lewis & Short define the latter as “to discern by the senses; to feel, hear, see, etc.; to perceive, be sensible of.”<sup>141</sup> Likewise, of affect (*affectus*), the OED informs that its classical Latin meanings include “mental or emotional state or reaction (especially a temporary one), physical state or condition (especially a pathological one), influence or impression, permanent mental or moral disposition, eagerness, zeal, devotion, love, intention, purpose,” while post-classical Latin adds “evil desire” to the list. Thus from the very linguistic root, there is an ambiguity: is the subject active or a passive receptor of impulse and information? Does “feeling” involve making judgments or acting upon cognitively processed decisions? And if one can adequately sort through these distinctions, how is one to understand the relationship between sentiment, affect, and reason?

In particular, I am interested in the shared aspect of affective experiences and how they contribute to the formation, maintenance, and dissolution of political communities via the exercises of discipline, power, and regulation they may permit. Here, the etymology of *emotion* is instructive. The word comes to us in English from the confluence of classical and post-classical Latin declensions of *ēmovēre* (to remove, expel, to banish from the mind, to shift, displace) and Middle French’s *esmocion* and *esmotion* (agitation of mind, excited mental state, movement, disturbance, strong feelings, passion).<sup>142</sup> Though an obscure usage now, until the end of the eighteenth century, *emotion* was not primarily used to characterize the subjective experience of emotions that are constitutive of one’s sense of an interior self or personality. That

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Duty to Love’: Passion and Obligation in Early Modern Political Theory,” *Representations* 68 (1999): 84-107; James Martel, *Love is a Sweet Chain: Desire, Autonomy and Friendship in Liberal Political Theory* (New York: Routledge, 2001); and Ruth Scurr, “Inequality and Political Stability from *Ancien Régime* to Revolution: The Reception of Adam Smith’s *Theory of Moral Sentiments* in France,” *History of European Ideas* 35 (2009): 441-449.

<sup>141</sup> Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. “*sentiment*.” Third edition. Lewis & Short, *A Latin Dictionary*, s.v. “*sentio*.” Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. “*affect*.” Third edition.

<sup>142</sup> The word was common throughout much of Europe by the early modern period: Spanish had *emoción* by 1580, Italian had *emozione* by 1648, and German had *Emotion* by the early seventeenth century.

usage was not unheard of but it was not dominant. Rather, particularly in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, *emotion* was used to refer to “political agitation, civil unrest; a public commotion or uprising,” “movement; disturbance, perturbation,” including physical movement. In the OED, weather is frequently attributed with emotions, as are nations of people, or factions such as the French nobility. In *Tatler* Number 24, Joseph Addison wrote of “Accounts of Publick Emotions, occasion’d by the Want of Corn.”<sup>143</sup> In addition, then, to the metaphysical and physiological, the domain of emotions grew to encompass a linguistic apparatus used to convey the substantive content of feeling, often in public.<sup>144</sup>

Nor was that the only shift in the discursive and ideological domains of the passions, for it was during this period, from the late eighteenth century through the nineteenth, that the emergence of psychology and psychiatry as modern scientific disciplines challenged previous physiological understandings of the passions that were based, however tenuously, on the humours. Simultaneously, the “after around 1850, involuntary appetites, passions and commotions of animal nature as well as moral sentiments and voluntary affections, were all lumped together under the undifferentiated concept of ‘emotions.’”<sup>145</sup> Thus as specialized knowledge of psychology increased, our lay vocabulary for differentiating between emotional experience – and its bodily or spiritual dimensions – flattened out.

The passions also shifted into a new domain. As Albert O. Hirschman persuasively and influentially argued in *The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism before Its Triumph* (1977), the notion of individual interest was theorized in the early modern period by

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<sup>143</sup> Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. “*emotion*.” Third edition.

<sup>144</sup> Annie Jourdan has recently published a remarkable survey of ideological and semantic changes in the French usage of “*nation*” and “*patrie*” from the renaissance through the First Empire. See “France, Patrie, Nation: figures de lutte et discours national (XVI<sup>ème</sup>–XIX<sup>ème</sup> siècles),” *European Review of History: Revue européenne d’histoire* 21 (2014): 37-57.

<sup>145</sup> Thomas Dixon, “Theology, Anti-Theology and Atheology: From Christian Passions to Secular Emotions,” *Modern Theology* 15 (1999), 302. See also Dixon’s *From Passions to Emotions: The Creation of a Secular Psychological Category* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

thinkers including Montesquieu in order to counteract the destructive passions such as the desire for glory that were believed to be at the root of political and religious conflict. Thus we witness the rise of *doux commerce* as a counter-measure – a counter-measure that would, according to Hirschman, eventually overtake discourses of the passions altogether.<sup>146</sup>

Thus there was, and continues to be, a long-standing confusion attached to the language of the passions in early modern thought. The confusion is rooted in the plurality of meaning attributed to a wide range of overlapping but not synonymous terms across languages, as well as the anachronistic imposition of contemporary definitions onto early modern discourses. The language used to identify varieties of feeling underwent a significant shift in the period between Descartes and Rousseau.<sup>147</sup> Nonetheless, in the most recent flourishing of work on emotions by affect theorists, some generalities and conventions have emerged. Broadly speaking, an *affect* is defined as a “physiological shift,” the encounter of the senses and stimuli. The *emotions* are what process, and judge, the input absorbed by the senses from the stimuli.<sup>148</sup> The *passions*, if referred to at all, are an overarching taxonomy that refers to the unified experience of affect and emotion: love, fear, anger, pride, and disgust are all passions that can be further broken down into their constituent parts of affect and emotion. What one takes to be a passion has varied historically, based on whether one privileged affect, emotion, or their interaction.

In the following section, I dissect the definitions given here, which are rooted in the work contemporary affect theorists such as Brian Massumi and William Connolly, and I argue that affect theory’s dominant trend is to render affect apolitical. In the third and final section,

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<sup>146</sup> For critical perspectives on the consequences of the move from the passions to the interests, see John Shovlin, *The Political Economy of Virtue: Luxury, Patriotism, and the Origins of the French Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006) and Anoush Fraser Terjanian, *Commerce and Its Discontents in Eighteenth-Century French Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

<sup>147</sup> Rorty, “From Passions to Emotions and Sentiments,” 159.

<sup>148</sup> This definition of affect and emotion is indebted to Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* and especially to Teresa Brennan’s account in *The Transmission of Affect* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), particularly 1-20.



I suggest that William Reddy's theory of emotive speech acts solves some, but not all, of the problems identified in affect theory by Ange-Marie Hancock, Ruth Leys, Linda Zerrilli, and others. I go on to offer a revised theory of emotives, which I call affective practices.

## II. The Politics of Affect Theory

As Ruth Leys points out, affect theory's most prominent figures, such as William Connolly and Brian Massumi, come to affect for a variety of reasons. Connolly, for instance, positions himself against the excessive rationality of political discourse that I myself criticized in the dissertation's introduction.<sup>149</sup> He opens *Neuropolitics: Thinking, Culture, Speed* with the plaintive observation that "today many cultural and political theorists act as if ethics and politics do, could, or should consist of deliberation alone."<sup>150</sup> Massumi, on the other hand, is critical of affect's susceptibility to abuse: for him, Reagan, the "brainless," was successful because "his means were affective." He was "an effective leader not in spite of but because of his double dysfunction [his verbal fumbling and incoherent thoughts]. He was able to produce ideological effects by non-ideological means."<sup>151</sup> In other words, the Great Communicator was aptly named but the modality of communication misunderstood. In spite of their original reason for turning to affect, both Connolly and Massumi are motivated by a sense of lack, or error, in our current understanding.<sup>152</sup>

If the charge of excessive rationalism or affective abuse is just, then affect theory offers

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<sup>149</sup> Ruth Leys, "The Turn to Affect: A Critique," *Critical Inquiry* 37 (2011): 436.

<sup>150</sup> William Connolly, *Neuropolitics: Thinking, Culture, Speed* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 17.

<sup>151</sup> Brian Massumi, "The Autonomy of Affect," *Cultural Critique* 31 (1995): 101-102.

<sup>152</sup> I use Connolly and Massumi here as primary examples for several reasons, though I am conscious that they are standing in for a large, and far more diverse, literature. Still, I refer to them in this section (rather than Sara Ahmed or Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, for example) because in addition to being at the forefront of affect studies, Connolly and Massumi are explicitly concerned with democratic politics and they have been subjected to critiques to which I also seek to respond below. Moreover, while Connolly's reason for turning to affect mirrors my own, we come to very different conclusions.

an important and even necessary corrective that more accurately attunes human experience and our understanding of those experiences. Yet the desirability of affect theory, and its potential help in moving away from the hyperrationalism and cold calculations of, for instance, constitutional patriotism, does not imply that we have discerned the most accurate understanding. Leys, Ange-Marie Hancock, and Linda Zerilli, among others, offer two principle critiques of the dominant strand of neuropolitics<sup>153</sup>: that at its reductionist worst, it severs any possible relationship between affect and reason and following from that, that it limits the emancipatory potential of political activity which relies on discourse, collective action, and judgment.<sup>154</sup>

The remainder of this section lays out the tenets of this dominant strand of affect theory, what Leys has labeled anti-intentionalism, as well as chief criticisms against it. I then move on to suggest that historian William Reddy's theory of emotive speech acts is an attempt to bridge the affective/discursive divide, but one that ultimately comes up short. To remedy this shortcoming, in the following section, I offer a modified theory of emotives, called affective practices, that rejects the anti-intentionalism of Connolly and Massumi and, by engaging the notion of affective atmospheres from the field of human geography, I seek to reintroduce the discursive and the political.

Much contemporary affect theory is indebted to the work of Silvan Tomkins, a philosopher by training who moved into psychology. Tomkins argued that individuals are biologically wired to have nine affects of varying intensities.<sup>155</sup> Those affects are bodily

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<sup>153</sup> "Neuropolitics" is a convenient, if faddish, label for work at the intersection of affect theory, neuroscience, and political theory.

<sup>154</sup> On this second point, broadly, see Sharon Krause's review of *Neuropolitics*, "Brains, Citizens, and Democracy's New Nobility," *Theory & Event* 9.1 (2006).

<sup>155</sup> Though Tomkins crystallized the idea of a range of affects expressed through facial expressions for modern thinkers, it was by no means a new idea. Consider Guillaume-Benjamin Duchenne de Boulogne's *Mecanisme de la physionomie Humaine* (1862); the work of Duchenne's student, Jean-Martin Charcot that resulted in *Iconographie photographique de la Salpêtrière* (1876-1880); and Charles Darwin's *Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872), to name but a few examples.

sensations that are all but divorced from real-world stimulants. Affects are reactions unconnected to their cause. Thus there is a “radical dichotomy between the ‘real’ causes of affect and the individual’s own interpretation of these causes.”<sup>156</sup> In this sense, Tomkins et. al. are anti-intentionalist: affects are not oriented by or toward any external object, state, or idea.

Those who are students of his scholarship, including Sara Ahmed, Adam Frank, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, and Sianne Ngai, must grapple with the limitations inherent in Tomkins’s framework. Primary among them is specification of precisely nine affects, shared by all human beings, a claim which runs the high risks of ethnocentricity and essentialism. Indeed, while many neuroscientists, including such popularizers as Antonio Damasio and Joseph LeDoux, subscribe to some variation of the Basic Emotions Paradigm (as it is called by Leys), there is little to no agreement on how many emotions there are, exactly – a problem dating back at least to Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*. The Basic Emotions Paradigm, or Basic Emotions Theory, retains its advocates but increasingly finds itself challenged by new research.<sup>157</sup> One longstanding challenger to the Basic Emotions Paradigm is appraisal theory, according to which “the emotions are to be understood as states of mind that are directed toward objects and that include cognitions, judgments, and beliefs about the world.”<sup>158</sup>

Yet the dominant trend in affect theory, or neuropolitics, remains the Basic Emotions Paradigm and there is something appealing it and how it differentiates itself from Tomkins’s

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<sup>156</sup> Silvan Tomkins, *Affect Imagery Consciousness*, vol. 1 (New York: Springer, 1962-1963), 248. Quoted in Leys, “The Turn to Affect,” 437.

<sup>157</sup> A key essay here is Lisa Feldman Barrett’s “Are Emotions Natural Kinds?” *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 1 (2008): 28-58. Barrett is associated with the Interdisciplinary Affective Science Laboratory at Northeastern University, where she and her fellow researchers are producing a fascinating array of findings.

<sup>158</sup> Leys, “How Did Fear Become a Scientific Object and What Kind of Object Is It?” *Representations* 110 (2010), 90n.7. For a more thorough discussion of appraisal theory, see Agnes Moors, Phoebe Ellsworth, Klaus Scherer, and Nico Frijda, “Appraisal Theories of Emotion: State of the Art and Future Development,” *Emotion Review* 5 (2013): 119-124. That issue contains numerous other insightful articles on the current state of appraisal theory as well that serve to complicate Leys’s serviceable but perfunctory gloss. Two other notable approaches are (cultural) constructivism, which overlaps with Basic Emotions Paradigm and psychological constructivism, which gives more credence to the (potential) biological bases of emotion. See the special section on psychological constructivism in *Emotion Review* 5.4 (2014), particularly William Cunningham’s introduction.

earlier work. Aware of the twin specters of determinism and essentialism that loom over Tomkins's thought, contemporary affect theorists emphasize the contingent, disruptive, uncontrollable aspects of affect.<sup>159</sup> For Massumi, affect has an "irreducibly bodily and autonomic nature," "a nonconscious, never-to-conscious autonomic remainder. It is outside expectation and adaptation, as disconnected from meaningful sequencing, from narration, as it is from vital function."<sup>160</sup> Commenting on the neurological experiments of Benjamin Libet,<sup>161</sup> Massumi rather gleefully declared,

will and consciousness are *subtractive*. They are *limitative, derived functions* which reduce a complexity too rich to be functionally expressed. It should be noted in particular that during the mysterious half-second, what we think of as 'higher' functions, such as volition, are apparently being performed by autonomic, bodily reactions occurring in the brain but outside consciousness, and between brain and finger, but prior to action and expression.<sup>162</sup>

Massumi implies, both throughout "The Autonomy of Affect" and *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (2002), that this reordering of higher and lower functions ought to be regarded as liberating, at least conceptually.

Though neither Massumi nor Connolly uses this language, both convey the sense that affect provides a more authentic and therefore more worthy of pursuit for living a genuine and ethical life. What neither does is sufficiently think through the consequences of depending upon an "autonomic" form of affect, primary of which is to render apolitical aspects of the body and emotional life that nonetheless remain the site of contestatory politics. They remove the

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<sup>159</sup> Indeed, some of Tomkins's more fervent students deny that thinkers like Massumi and Connolly "form a group of like-minded theorists" who share the same "conceptual and empirical commitments." Adam Frank and Elizabeth A. Wilson, "Like-Minded," *Critical Inquiry* 38 (2012), 870.

<sup>160</sup> Massumi, "The Autonomy of Affect," 89, 85.

<sup>161</sup> Libet's experiment purported to demonstrate that subjects would perform a requested task (flexing a finger) 0.2 seconds after they registered their decision to do so, while an EEG machine demonstrated brain activity thought correlated to making the decision to move their finger 0.3 seconds before they registered their decision – leaving a 0.5 second gap between unconscious thought and voluntary movement. The experiment has been redesigned and rerun by others, but the results continue to be subject to much debate – which is unsurprising, given their implications for free will.

<sup>162</sup> Massumi, "The Autonomy of Affect," 90.

possibility of political response from bodies subject to political acts and capable of political actions.

One might suggest that, at least in regard to Massumi, it is to make a categorical error in expecting such a consideration of political consequences, but that would be very much mistaken. Indeed, the last section of *Parables for the Virtual* culminates with a call for “a political knowledge-practice that takes an inclusive, nonjudgmental approach to tending belonging-together in an intense, affectively engaged way,” which Massumi deems an “ethics.” On the verge of arguing that “cultural studies is destined to be political” (“what else could it be, when it does what it can do the best that it can?”), Massumi pulls up in the penultimate paragraph: “that is for a coming cultural studies community to determine.”<sup>163</sup> The “that” to be determined is the political nature of affect and the consequences of an affect-based politics.

Connolly seems rather more pessimistic in his assessment of affect. He argues that affect is manipulated via “interstitial media,” the level on which “micropolitics” works, “between subliminal attachment and explicit belief; between implicit memory and explicit aspirations.”<sup>164</sup> He promises, however, that a better understanding of affect (and interstitial media, micropolitics, and techniques of the self) will lead to “an expansive ethos of pluralism,” one grounded in gratitude and the cultivation of a Nietzschean variation of grace and nobility.<sup>165</sup> Seeking to avoid Nietzsche’s perceived elitism, Connolly suggests pursuing “the cultivation of nontheistic gratitude for the rich abundance of being amid the suffering that comes from being mortal.”<sup>166</sup> Yet it is hard to avoid Krause’s observation, that while “Connolly clearly wants the ethic of generosity to be empowering for the disenfranchised, to sustain an activist form of democracy in

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<sup>163</sup> Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 255-256.

<sup>164</sup> Connolly, *Neuropolitics*, 20.

<sup>165</sup> On grace and Nietzschean nobility, see Connolly, *Neuropolitics*, 163-174.

<sup>166</sup> Connolly, *Neuropolitics*, 105.

which the needs and interests of the marginalized are forcefully defended,” the “abundance” evidently necessary to generate an ethos of pluralism belongs to those already privileged.<sup>167</sup>

Moreover, Connolly intends gratitude to instantiate a culture of generosity – and not only a culture, but a politics. This sequestering of desirable affects, achieved through the practice of unspecified techniques of the self, has descended to egoism and presents a large challenge to the democratic practices it is meant to sustain: “Individual self-cultivation and the toleration of other self-cultivated individuals may be important but they do not fully capture the very real collectivist dimensions of democratic political life... The activity of resolving concrete questions about the organization of collective life is arguably the heart of politics, and it often requires not merely toleration but the negotiation of differences.”<sup>168</sup> It is this that is so often the stumbling block for theories of affect that one might otherwise wish to adopt for political purposes.<sup>169</sup> As Ange-Marie Hancock notes, what is concerning about neuropolitics is that it is

hyperindividualist; decontextualized; and strangely oblivious to a history of biology and politics movements featuring a litany of the most horrific policy ramifications. The concern, in other words, isn’t that neuropolitics has no policy implications, but that it contributes to a world where biology and politics do have serious policy implications for those with less power than the policy makers.<sup>170</sup>

In other words, neuropolitics, in insisting that affect is “radically outside meaning and signification and free of [its] triggering source,” operates as if it were apolitical.<sup>171</sup> “Affect is ascribed political significance because it is the medium for efforts at priming subjects to act in

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<sup>167</sup> Krause, “Brains, Citizens, and Democracy’s New Nobility.”

<sup>168</sup> Krause, “Brains, Citizens, and Democracy’s New Nobility.”

<sup>169</sup> To be clear, it does not seem to be a stumbling block for Connolly himself, for while he is cynical about the potential for corporations and governments to manipulate via micropolitics, he is confident in the potential for an ethos of pluralization based in gratitude.

<sup>170</sup> Hancock was responding to an article by John Hibbing, “Ten Misconceptions Concerning Neurobiology and Politics,” *Perspectives on Politics* 11 (2013): 475-489. Connolly also wrote in response, concluding with the observation, “I am not sure how much Hibbing and I diverge.” See, in the same issue, Connolly’s “Biology, Politics, Creativity” and Hancock’s “Neurobiology, Intersectionality, and Politics: Paradigm Warriors at Arms?”

<sup>171</sup> Linda Zerilli, “Embodied Knowing, Judgment, and the Limits of Neurobiology,” *Perspectives on Politics* 11 (2013), 514n.6.

more or less malign, hateful, hopeful, generous or benign ways”<sup>172</sup> but it has no inherent content.<sup>173</sup> In the following section, I suggest that affect theory requires enrichment from discourse and speech act theories but that this alone is insufficient. Only by acknowledging the interpersonal effects of not only affect but its conveyance via emotion will we be able to recuperate the passions for politics.

### III. From Emotive Speech Acts to Affective Practices

Because “one of the distinguishing aspects of affect scholarship [is its emphasis on] processes *beyond, below and past discourse,*” “human affect is formulated as a kind of ‘extra-discursive event.’”<sup>174</sup> In prioritizing affect as an embodied and autonomic response, discourse is a second-order interest.<sup>175</sup> Indeed, the turn to affect was arguably partly generated in response to a perceived dominance of discourse. This is Sedgwick’s central argument against critical theory, which she declares obsessed with a “paranoid” mode of reading that privileges discourse over bodily affect.<sup>176</sup> Affect theorists, specifically those at the vanguard of non-representational theory, pursue, in the words of Nigel Thrift, “a new structure of attention” to “what was formerly invisible or imperceptible.”<sup>177</sup>

Yet as the premises of the anti-intentionalist affect theories come under increasing pressure (primarily for the ways in which they employ and interpret more strictly neuroscientific

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<sup>172</sup> Clive Barnett, “Political Affects in Public Space: Normative Blind-Spots in Non-Representational Ontologies,” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 33 (2008), 195.

<sup>173</sup> “There is nothing about sobbing that tells us anything about the steady-state stimulus that has triggered it; sobbing itself has nothing to do with hunger or cold or loneliness. Only the fact that we grow up with an increasing experience of sobbing lets us form some ideas about its meaning.” Donald L. Nathanson, *Shame and Pride: Affect, Sex, and the Birth of the Self* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992), 66. Quoted in Leys, “The Turn to Affect,” 438.

<sup>174</sup> Margaret Wetherell, “Affect and Discourse – What’s the Problem? From Affect to Excess to Affective/Discursive Practice,” *Subjectivity* 6 (2013): 350.

<sup>175</sup> Compare, however, Pettit’s relative disinterest in affect in his “Discourse Theory and Republican Freedom,” *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 6 (2003): 72-95.

<sup>176</sup> See *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), chapter 4.

<sup>177</sup> Nigel Thrift, “Intensities of Feeling: Toward a Spatial Politics of Affect,” *Geografiska Annaler* 86 (2004), 67.

research, such as Libet's), the division between affect and discourse seems increasingly arbitrary.<sup>178</sup> William Reddy attempts to mediate this affective/discursive divide, if not explicitly, in his work on emotive speech acts. As the term implies, Reddy's "emotives" explicitly draw on speech act theory. Slow moving as the linguistic turn was, and indebted as it was to the work in formal logic by analytic philosophers including Gottlob Frege and Bertrand Russell, to say nothing of the British empiricists like Locke and the rationalist Leibniz, it was not until the appearance of Austin's *How to Do Things with Words* (1962) that Aristotle's dominance over the philosophy of language was shaken.<sup>179</sup> Though many before Austin had taken up questions of language, those questions remained within the parameters established by Aristotle.

Prior to Austin, philosophy of language restricted itself to evaluating the truth-content of particular claims. In *De Interpretatione*, Aristotle grants that, while "every sentence has meaning," "every sentence is not a proposition... Thus a prayer is a sentence, but is neither true nor false. Let us therefore dismiss all other types of sentence but the proposition, for this last concerns our present inquiry, whereas the investigation of the others belongs rather to the study of rhetoric or of poetry."<sup>180</sup> In other words, Aristotle concerns himself (at least in *De Interpretatione*) with the truth-content of language and analytic philosophy, particularly the positivist strand, would follow his lead. It would be left to Austin to examine speech's potential *for* and *as* action and to suggest that to speak is also to act.

In spite of developments in speech act theory, however, the effect of the affect, emotion, or passion is internal to the individual, until we come to what Reddy has called emotive speech

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<sup>178</sup> For a social-psychological perspective on this debate, which details affect theory's difficulties with neuroscience, see Wetherell, "Affect and Discourse."

<sup>179</sup> Philosopher Barry Smith argues that, with few, largely inconsequential exceptions, Aristotle's first serious challenger was Thomas Reid in the second half of the eighteenth century. Smith, "Towards a History of Speech Act Theory," in *Speech Acts, Meanings and Intentions. Critical Approaches to the Philosophy of John R. Searle*, ed. Armin Burkhardt (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1990), 30.

<sup>180</sup> Aristotle, *De Interpretatione* I.4; cited by Smith, "Towards a History of Speech Act Theory," 29.



acts, or emotives. Emotive speech acts are intended to bridge the gap between the internal sensation or experience of emotion and the speech acts by which an individual communicates to another. With the development of ‘emotives,’ Reddy destabilizes the subject, by suggesting that our experience of our feelings exceeds our understanding of them. In spite of this excess, he offers a means of uniting affect and emotion, the stimuli and the assessment. Though, as I argue below, Reddy’s emotives remain intrapersonal, their performative nature introduces the possibility of a more dynamic, interpersonal theory of affective practices. Reddy’s own account of emotives is primarily indebted to J.L. Austin’s theory of the speech act, as outlined in *How to Do Things with Words*, and the post-structuralist instantiation of the signifier and the sign as articulated by, among others, Jacques Derrida and Judith Butler. In the remainder of this section, I detail Reddy’s theory of emotives and demonstrate their intrapersonal limits. I go on to argue that if we are concerned with the place of the passions in our shared, political life, then we need a specifically interpersonal understanding of the passions, which I call *affective practices*.<sup>181</sup>

Reddy’s first move is “to propose a concept of ‘translation’ as a replacement for the post-structuralist concept of ‘sign.’”<sup>182</sup> His purpose in doing so is to escape the criticism frequently aimed at post-structuralism, that one can never reach an ‘original’ signified that is not somehow also signifier and thus, everything becomes discourse.<sup>183</sup> To shift to the language of translation accomplishes more than a mere terminological sleight of hand. Translation, as it does engage the potential of infinite regress, “is something that goes on, not just between language and between individuals, but among sensory modalities, procedural habits, and linguistic structures” (80).

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<sup>181</sup> When one comes across the word “practice” in literatures relating to emotions, it is usually within a sociological, and specifically Bourdieuan, context, which is distinct from my own usage.

<sup>182</sup> Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*, 78. Ensuing citations of this text will be made parenthetically.

<sup>183</sup> Reddy recognizes that Derrida, and other poststructuralist thinkers, have responded to this criticism (see especially page 76). He is primarily interested in making a lateral move to the language of translation that the discourse of signified and signifier allows and his approach remains poststructuralist in significant ways.

That is, it widens the domain engaged beyond that of language. Drawing from cognitive psychology, Reddy imagines “a conception of the individual as a site where messages arrive in many different languages or codes, and where some of the messages are successfully translated into other codes, while others are not... This way of thinking about cognition points toward a novel understanding of the relation between feeling and utterances, since the latter must always constitute translations into speech of the former” (80). Attention is a cognitive function that serves as a “translator,” which tends to “thought material,” the thoughts, emotions, ideas, and all manner of cognitive fodder that “[exist] in many codes, linguistic and extralinguistic” (87). Translation of thought material necessarily “involves an element of indeterminacy,” (84) invoked by the excess of thought material that the individual manifests.

Reddy defines an emotion as “loosely-connected schema of thought material” that is “activated” simultaneously but which “exceeds attention’s capacity to translate it into action or into talk in a short time horizon” (94). One feels an emotion (or feeling) when flooded by thought material without the ability to translate immediately into a linguistic code. Reddy argues that this conception of translation leads to a new theory of subjectivity: the self as disaggregated. “Its disunity derives directly from the fact that it has constantly before it flows of signifiers in many different codes or languages, both verbal and nonverbal, in constant need of translation,” which are by definition incomplete and indeterminate and, I would add, excessive.

The communication of an emotion, according to Reddy, is distinct from either a performative or constative statement as defined by Austin. Not solely descriptive (in the way of a constative statement), their declaration does not accomplish or perform anything (in the way of a performative). Rather, “emotional utterances of the type ‘I feel afraid’ or ‘I am angry’,” which

Reddy labels “first-person present-tense emotion claims” have three distinctive elements.<sup>184</sup> The first is “a descriptive appearance,” meaning that statements such as “I am joyful” or “I feel mournful” appear to describe a subject’s state. These statements may, moreover, coincide with external demonstrations or qualities (a smile, tears) that seem to verify it – but unlike constative statements (“the library book is overdue”), there is no way for another individual to verify the truth content of the subject’s statement.

The second distinctive element of an emotion claim is its “relational intent.” Most emotions claims are made in reference to a particular set of circumstances or with regard to another person and one’s relationship with them. Reddy, however, does not seem persuaded by this criterion: he attributes it to “a large number of observers.” To the degree that Reddy emphasizes the relational intent, he does so for its connection to sincerity and the third quality of emotion claims.

The third distinctive element of an emotion claim is what Reddy labels its “self-exploring or self altering effect.” Here Reddy moves beyond the conundrum of affect theorists. Acknowledging that “the range and complexity can so completely exceed the capacity of attention, that attempts to summarize or characterize the overall tenor of such material inevitably fail,” Reddy nonetheless maintains that “a first-person emotion claim is such an attempt... in which activated thought material itself plays a role and in which very important relationships, goals, intentions, and practices of the individual may be at stake.”

For instance, attempts to verbalize and communicate one’s feelings can either confuse or clarify the original sentiment, both for the subject and the person to whom they are expressing themselves. “A person whose current state include an element of confusion may say ‘I love you’

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<sup>184</sup> The following draws from Reddy, “Emotional Liberty: Politics and History in the Anthropology of Emotions,” *Cultural Anthropology* 14 (1999), especially 268-269.

in order find out if it is true.” “Emotions are both self-exploring and self-altering.”<sup>185</sup> Yet, understood in this way, they also permit “navigation,” a means of retaining, if not control, then a relationship of awareness with affective excess that permits the subject a degree of “emotional liberty.” The “bewildering, ambivalent thought activations that exceed the capacity of attention” to which Massumi and Connolly draw our attention might be negotiated, rather than survived or undergone.

But let us return to the relationship between the second and third elements of emotions claim and the issue of sincerity. Relational intent should provide emotives with their interpersonal dimension, as both the first and the third elements speak to self-knowledge. Yet I want to suggest that relational intent is ultimately self-reflexive rather than interpersonal. In the little discussion he does give over to relational intent, Reddy argues, “it is worth noting that routine acceptance, and management of divergences between relational intent and self-altering effect can result in a person giving up on the self-exploratory effects of emotives.”<sup>186</sup> In other words, the most serious consequences are for the self, rather than one’s relationship with others. Though he goes on to argue that “claims about ‘hypocrisy,’ ‘self-deception,’ or ‘denial’ have their own potential emotive effect and concomitant failure of referentiality. They are highly political in character,” it is hard to see how. Reddy hints at this when he notes that, contra “Habermas’s notion of communicative rationality, ... in formulating emotives speakers are trying to communicate with themselves as much as with others.”<sup>187</sup>

The theory of emotives constitutes an alluring alternative to the reductionist tendencies often found within cognitive psychology, as well as speech act theory’s general inattentiveness to

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<sup>185</sup> Reddy, “Emotional Liberty,” 271.

<sup>186</sup> Reddy, “Emotional Liberty,” 270-271.

<sup>187</sup> Reddy, “Against Constructionism: The Historical Ethnography of Emotions,” *Current Anthropology* 38 (1997): 332.

the physiological conditions under which constative and performative acts occur. It does however pose one significant difficulty when employed to understand the role of emotions in political discourse. Reddy's theory, so far as it is developed in his fullest statement on emotives, *The Navigation of Feeling*, is primarily intrapersonal. The translation that occurs is entirely within the sovereign subject who, if attuned to the act of "translation," is also aware of the questionable status of his or her own subjectivity. Disaggregated or no, the self's primary referent and interest remains the self.

According to the theory of emotives, the individual remains "provisional" (95). Reddy explicitly contrasts what he calls "the disaggregated self" with the Cartesian subject and a "poststructuralists' vision of an illusory self generated as a byproduct of a discursive structure" (95). But in so doing, he overlooks (or perhaps is simply not concerned with) the radical individuating effect of emotive theory. By uniting, however loosely, the disparate aspects of the self – physiology, emotion, speech – Reddy has simultaneously undercut the means by which individuals relate to other individuals. Though relational intent should cover it, its inadequate theorization means that there is simply no accounting for translation *between* two people.

When considering the political, we therefore need a method of communicating passions between persons in addition to the tools provided by Reddy. I suggest we call this method of communication *affective practices*. I define affective practices as:

*the ways in which emotions are cogitated upon, judged, enacted in the body and, crucially, communicated to others, in the pursuit, maintenance, and critique of specific goals.*

Just as Reddy's emotives and thought material are intentionally expansive concepts, so is the theory of affective practices. The key distinction, embodied in the language of practice, is the gesture toward habitual or regular practices of exchange and, moreover practices which can be

done in concert with others. Political affect is the tether that links citizen to state, insofar as shared affective experiences contribute to the formation, maintenance, and dissolution of political communities via the exercises of discipline, power, and regulation they permit or exclude.

I intend affective practices to supplement, rather than supplant, emotives. Reddy's theory of emotions claims succeeds in moving beyond the alienation produced by affect theory. In its insistence upon challenging the dominance of discourse and arguing for the importance of the body, affect theory paradoxically reinforces many of the same boundaries it seeks to eliminate. Should it be the case that the "nonconscious, never-to-conscious autonomic remainder" does constitute affect (and we learn this upon future, refined discoveries of neuroscientists), it does not follow that we will have learned something about the human condition beyond its biology.<sup>188</sup> Emotives do help us move beyond this register. Yet even the degree to which emotions claims involve other people, it is so one may better understand the self. Relational intent is peculiarly self-regarding. Following literary scholar Adela Pinch, I distinguish this political form of affective engagement from the primarily subjective experience of emotions that are constitutive of one's sense of an interior self or personality: "the history of feeling and the history of the individual are not the same thing."<sup>189</sup> Whereas emotives, much like affect, can remain isolating and apolitical, affective practices do not just acknowledge or permit but rather *require* a shared

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<sup>188</sup> Zerilli, in her response to the passionate scientism of Hibbing, remarks, "Today biologists – especially geneticists – are proposing answers to questions that have long been asked by philosophy or faith or the social sciences. If biology now has such a hold on us, if science as biology has come to dominate science as physics once did... that is because the fundamental question of scientific investigation is not what constitutes matter but what it is to be human" ("Embodied Knowing," 514).

<sup>189</sup> Adela Pinch, *Strange Fits of Passion: Epistemologies of Feeling from Hume to Austen* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 13.

life.<sup>190</sup> In short, emotives are inward looking, or self-regarding, and affective practices are the outward looking, or other-regarding extension of emotives.

### **Conclusion: Affective Practices and *les philosophes***

I have made several claims in this chapter. The first is that there is a forgotten, or ignored, thread of republican thought that has historically given substantive accounts of virtue, accounts very often tied up in theories of the emotions. Contemporary republicanism's reluctance to engage this thread contributes to its ongoing affective and normative impoverishment. The genealogy, if I may be permitted to call it that, is in a sense ground-clearing work necessary to move forward.

My second claim is that affect theory of the anti-intentionalist/Basic Emotions Paradigm is the wrong step forward. While much in it is admirable, not least that it offered something genuinely new and interdisciplinary, it suffers from certain profound flaws: a founding principle (consider the body!) that seems more liberating than it is, defined, as it is, by what it is not (discourse); confidently drawn conclusions with minimal scientific defense; increasingly rigid and boundary-policing academic practices; and, most distressing for my own present concerns, radically apolitical implications. In many ways, affect theory simply suffers on account of thinking it must reinvent the wheel: philosophy and politics have long considered the body, in context. Removing the context, alas, does not seem to be a solution.

My third claim is that William Reddy's theory of emotive speech acts, itself an addition to Austin's performative and constative speech acts, partially remedies the apolitical stakes of

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<sup>190</sup> Again, establishing the grounds for a possible politics of emotion does appear to be Reddy's *intention*. For instance, he argues that "emotional control is the real site of the exercise of power: politics is just a process of determining who must repress as illegitimate, who must foreground as valuable, the feelings and desires that come up for them in given contexts and relationships" ("Against Constructionism," 335).

affect theory. Reddy insists that the “excess” which anti-intentionalist affect theorists such as Massumi would argue is created through feeling is, in fact, worth pulling apart for its implications for our conscious social life. This “self exploring” may be fragmentary, confusing, even destructive – but it is, contra anti-intentionalists, possible.

My fourth and final claim is that Reddy’s theory of emotives stops short. He pays lip service to the notion of communicating with others but is primarily concerned with “self exploring” and “self altering.” This is, of course, not a particularly devastating criticism of Reddy’s theory itself: it simply does not do what I want it do. But it has the potential to. And so I suggest that we supplement emotives with affective practices, an explicitly other-regarding variety of (self) exploring that makes politics possible in a concrete, rather than an abstract, fashion.

In the following chapters, I employ this theory of affective practices to explore the role of the passions in several canonical texts of the French Enlightenment that speak, to greater and lesser degrees, to republican concerns. I begin in the next chapter with a consideration of the role of fear in Montesquieu’s *Lettres persanes*. Fear, the prevailing emotion under a despotic regime (as Montesquieu explains in *De l’esprit des lois*), rules the seraglio where the wives of central character Usbek live. In the chapter, I demonstrate that an alternative set of affective practices emerge under a political regime that ought to preclude their existence, undercutting the alienation of despotic politics in favor of the community and freedom to which republican virtue can contribute.



## CHAPTER 2 | Fear, Excess, and the French Enlightenment

‘What is the qualitie of my offence,  
Being constrayn’d with dreadfull circumstance?  
May my pure mind with the fowle act dispense,  
My low declined Honor to advance?  
May anie termes acquit me from this chance?  
The poisoned fountaine cleares itself againe;  
And why not I from this compelled staine?’  
- Shakespeare, *Lucrece*<sup>191</sup>

### Introduction: Despotic Excesses and Republican Deficits

I have previously argued that contemporary republicanism, and to some extent, the republican political tradition has avoided rather than undertaken a serious engagement with the passions. In this chapter, I suggest that the literature of the French Enlightenment yields a crucial exception to this general claim about republicanism’s affective deficit. Rather, the work of figures such as Denis Diderot, Claude Adrien Helvétius, and Gabriel Bonnot de Mably, among others, gestures toward a critical point of entry for developing just such a theory of affective practices capable of integrating republican practices and civic virtue. In pursuing this argument, I develop a close reading of the intersection of the passions and republicanism in Montesquieu’s *Lettres persanes* (1721). A seminal text of the Enlightenment and subject to much analysis, the *Lettres persanes* is commonly interpreted as an exercise in, or commentary on, Enlightenment Europe’s encounters with ‘the other.’<sup>192</sup> The ‘other’ in question may be the Persian travelers, the French subjects they encounter, the eunuchs of Usbek’s palace (or *seraglio*, as Montesquieu calls

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<sup>191</sup> William Shakespeare, *Lucrece* (London: Printed by Richard Field, for Iohn Harrison, and are to be sold at the signe of the white Greyhound in Paules Churh-yard [sic], 1594), M2r. Lines 1753-1759 in modern editions.

<sup>192</sup> For a representative selection of this claim, see Madeleine Dobie, *Foreign Bodies: Gender, Language, and Culture in French Orientalism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 31-32; Suzanne Pucci, “Orientalism and Representation of Exteriority in Montesquieu’s ‘Lettres persanes,’” *The Eighteenth Century* 26 (1985): 263-279; Diana Schaub, *Erotic Liberalism: Women and Revolution in Montesquieu’s Persian Letters* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 1995); and Ruth Thomas, “Montesquieu’s Harem and Diderot’s Convent: The Woman as Prisoner,” *French Review* 52 (1978): 36-45.

it), or the women they guard.<sup>193</sup> Though undeniably an element at work, this is only part of what the work accomplishes. I begin this chapter by proposing that we read the *Lettres persanes* as an attempt on Montesquieu's part to theorize a republican alternative to living in a condition of fear, which, as he touches upon in the *Lettres* and would later demonstrate in detail in *De l'esprit des lois* (1748), is characteristic of despotic regimes. By exploring the psychology of fear in a thickly allegorical fiction, Montesquieu, frequently depicted as a moderate monarchist, explores the ethical and political potential for the development of a republican form of citizenship. The *Lettres persanes*, through their diagnosis of despotic fear, serve as a critique of despotic excess that prefigures Montesquieu's positive argument in favor of moderation in *De l'esprit des lois*.

It is excess, not moderation, which pervades the *Lettres persanes* – and multiple kinds of excess, at that. The text is notoriously anomalous in a generic sense – that is, it confounds attempts to assign it to a particular category of literature. Though handily described as a novel, Montesquieu himself was coy about accepting such a designation. In his 1754 “Reflections,” he famously, and perhaps disingenuously, distanced himself from the notion that his work was in fact a novel, observing with apparent surprise that “nothing pleased the public more, in the *Persian Letters*, than to find unexpectedly a sort of novel.”<sup>194</sup> Since its publication, others have offered their own definitions, labeling the text an epistolary novel; the first epistolary novel worthy of the name; a (fictional) travelogue; an inverted travelogue (the “foreigners” come *to*

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<sup>193</sup> Ali Behdad calls our attention to the fact that Montesquieu uses *seraglio* and *harem* interchangeably, the former to refer to the Sultan's palace in its entirety and the latter to refer exclusively to the women's chambers. I use the broader term *seraglio* throughout in order to indicate a parallel with the despotic state in its entirety. “The Eroticized Orient: Images of the Harem in Montesquieu and His Precursors,” *Stanford French Review* 13 (1989): 114n.13.

<sup>194</sup> Montesquieu, “Some Reflections on the *Persian Letters*,” in *The Persian Letters*, trans. C.J. Betts (New York: Penguin Books, 2004 [1973]), 283. “Rien n'a plus avantage, dans les *Lettres persanes*, que d'y trouver, sans y penser, une espèce de roman.” *Lettres persanes* in *Œuvres complètes*, vol. 1, ed. Roger Caillois (Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1949-1951), 129. Hereafter *OC I*.

Europe); an allegory; and a satire.<sup>195</sup> More recently, Marshall Berman deemed the *Lettres* the first *bildungsroman*, an account of Usbek and Rica's coming of age.<sup>196</sup>

The *Lettres*, then, confounds readers and critics by *exceeding* generic boundaries and the genre's formal requirements. I propose that this formal and generic excess is also reflected in the emotional excess of the story it recounts.<sup>197</sup> The single constant in over two thousand years of writings on the passions is a concern for their ability to overwhelm reason; to overflow the boundaries of propriety; to escape the private realm of the body and mind and infiltrate aspects of our shared (political) life in which they ostensibly have no business. This is pointedly reflected in the language we use when speaking about emotions: one *exercises* one's reason, whereas one is *subject to* one's passions. This emotional overflow, which the text simultaneously enacts and theorizes, is matched by the formal overflow of the text, which cannot be contained under the heading of *conte*, *essai*, or *roman*. These formal and passionate excesses serve the political arguments of the *Lettres*.

The central claim of this chapter is that the *Lettres* presents political (specifically, republican) alternatives to a form of politics – despotism – that is characterized, in part, by its excesses. (Indeed, according to Jean Starobinski, Montesquieu purposefully associates the passions with the East throughout the *Lettres*.)<sup>198</sup> This republican alternative is made possible by the reorientation of a central character's affective shift from fear to virtue, from excess and its ensuing paralysis to moderation and autonomy. As discussed in the first section, despotic

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<sup>195</sup> I will, for the sake of convenience, refer to it as a novel but this should not be taken as a conclusive statement on the text's generic status.

<sup>196</sup> As I argue below, it is Roxane, not Usbek, who fulfills that genre's requirement of personal development. Montesquieu remains ambivalent about Rica's fate, that is, his acceptance into European society. Marshall Berman, *The Politics of Authenticity: Radical Individualism and the Emergence of Modern Society* (New York: Verso Books, 2009 [1970]), 7.

<sup>197</sup> Thank you to Alice Boone for encouraging me to pursue this connection.

<sup>198</sup> "Les types psychologiques et passionnels, eux aussi, font défaut dans la description du monde occidental. C'est que Montesquieu réserve le registre passionnel pour l'Orient : c'est là qu'apparaîtront la jalousie, la colère, la dissimulation. Starobinski, "Préface," *Lettres persanes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1973), 13.

excesses, and their associated passions, such as gluttony and lust, are degenerative by their nature – their pursuit and fulfillment generate even greater desires. Hence Montesquieu’s longing for ‘moderate’ governments, in which “it is necessary to combine powers, temper them, make them act, and adjust them; to give ballast to one, so to speak, in order to put it in a position to resist another. It is a masterpiece of legislation that chance very rarely achieves and that prudence is scarcely allowed to affect.”<sup>199</sup> Though the *Lettres persanes* does not offer such a ‘masterpiece’ of theoretical governance itself (it holds other riches), it demonstrates the dangers that make Montesquieu’s pursuit in the *Laws* worthwhile. It is the diagnosis for which the *Esprit des Lois* is intended to be the cure.

Specifically, the *Lettres* challenges and unsettles a despotic regime via the text’s dominant analogy wherein “Usbek’s seraglio is at once a household, a society and a state; the passions that bind men and women within it are simultaneously those which link masters and slaves, upper and lower classes, sovereigns and subjects, to one another.”<sup>200</sup> Though the seraglio is often (rightly) read as the site of barely governed passions, and despotic regimes are characterized in the *Esprit des Lois* by the subjects’ fear of their ruler, I argue in the second section that Montesquieu does not therefore favor the elimination of the passions as part of the ‘solution’ to despotism. Rather, in dissecting the role of a particular passion, fear, in the maintenance of these relationships, he offers an alternative vision of republican citizenship reliant upon passions more conducive to political participation and, ultimately, civic virtue. The solution to the excess of despotism is not the eradication of emotion, but moderation, which is anathema to despotic politics. As I demonstrate below, via Roxane’s rebellion, Montesquieu

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<sup>199</sup> Montesquieu, *My Thoughts*, ed. and trans. Henry C. Clark (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2012), §892 (OC I, §1794): “Pour faire un gouvernement modéré, il faut combiner les puissances, les tempérer, les faire agir et les régler ; donner, pour ainsi dire, un lest à l’une, pour la mettre en état de résister à une autre. C’est un chef-d’œuvre de législation que le hasard fait bien rarement, et qu’on ne laisse guère faire à la prudence.”

<sup>200</sup> Berman, *The Politics of Authenticity*, 7.

theorizes a transmutation from an excessive and self-regarding emotion, fear, to temperate and other-regarding affective practices that open the possibility of republican government.

We as readers witness this transmutation in the relationship between the despotic Usbek and his favored wife, Roxane. Contrary to a common interpretation, which read Roxane's suicide at the novel's climax as an act of futility, I argue in the third section that Roxane's active role in the destruction of the seraglio should not be read as "a conventional conclusion: death, at her own hand, of the misfit woman and the larger social system unperturbed."<sup>201</sup> Rather, Roxane's act should be interpreted as a key political move that occurs within an ostensibly closed system that should have prevented her from acting. With the seraglio's demise, the affective register of her experience shifts from despotic fear to republican virtue. Roxane's death is the means by which Montesquieu introduces a new set of affective practices into the ruins of the collapsed despotic polity. These practices are specifically other-regarding and potentially republican – they are motivated not by fear, but by virtue. In advancing this claim, I demonstrate that Roxane's suicide parallels that of the Roman, and republican, heroine Lucretia. I interpret the suicide of Roxane as analogous to Lucretia's suicide in its political implications, rather than a failed gesture – though the two women's deaths remain distinct in several significant ways as well.

Ultimately, Roxane's rejection of Usbek and her destruction of the seraglio precipitate the end of his despotic rule and offer up a republican alternative, in much the same way that Lucretia's death inaugurates republican Rome: the actions of both women provide an opportunity for (republican) action by others. Yet in Roxane's case, there is a secondary significance: her rebellion also belies the commonly held belief in the totalizing effects of despotism, the paralysis and the fear that purportedly accompany it – to say nothing of the belief dating back to at least

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<sup>201</sup> Julia Douthwaite, *Exotic Women: Literary Heroines and Cultural Strategies in Ancien Régime France* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), 100. This is in line with several other critical interpretations, to which I return below.

Polybius that the despotic state has no political corrective or remedy but can only be escaped through the passage of time.<sup>202</sup> In laying claim to virtue, Roxane offers an alternative affective mode of subjectivity that refuses the slavishness of the despotic subject.

## I. Despotism in Early Modern Thought

Despotism remains an under-defined, and therefore particularly contestable, concept within modern political thought.<sup>203</sup> My purpose in this section is to detail what are arguably two primary, and conflicting, causes for this. The first is that despotism is oftentimes conflated with other forms of ‘negative’ rule – dictatorship and tyranny in particular – rendering conceptual clarity a challenge. The language of (Greek) tyranny and (Roman) dictatorship dominated political discourse until the seventeenth century.<sup>204</sup> Tyranny shares characteristics with despotism and indeed the terms have been used interchangeably since the eighteenth

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<sup>202</sup> See Polybius, *The Histories, Books 5-8*, Vol. 3, trans. W.R. Paton, F.W. Walbank, and Christian Habicht (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011 [1923]), Book VI.

<sup>203</sup> This is not to say that important work has not been done on the subject, particularly by continental scholars. Consider that the most recent comprehensive study of the subject is a two-volume Italian work published in 2001, *Dispotismo*, ed. Domenico Felice (Naples: Liguori Editore). For English language studies, still essential are a 1951 essay by Richard Koebner, “Despot and Despotism: Vicissitudes of a Political Term,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute* 14: 272–302 and Franco Venturi’s 1963 “Oriental Despotism,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 24: 133-142. Two works by Montesquieu scholar Melvin Richter, “The History of the Concept of Despotism,” in *The Dictionary of the History of Ideas* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1973), Vol. 2, 1-20, and “A Family of Political Concepts: Tyranny, Despotism, Bonapartism, Caesarism, Dictatorship, 1750-1917,” *European Journal of Political Theory* 4 (2005): 221-248 are likewise important. See also Michael Curtis, *Orientalism and Islam: European Thinkers on Oriental Despotism in the Middle East and India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Joan-Pau Rubiés, “Oriental Despotism and European Orientalism: Botero to Montesquieu,” *Journal of Early Modern History* 9 (2005): 109-180; and Mario Turchetti’s “‘Despotism’ and ‘Tyranny’: Unmasking a Tenacious Confusion,” *European Journal of Political Theory* 7 (2008): 159-182.

<sup>204</sup> See Andreas Kalyvas’s recent intervention on the relationship between tyranny and dictatorship, “The Tyranny of Dictatorship: When the Greek Tyrant Met the Roman Dictator,” *Political Theory* 35 (2007): 412-442. It is important for our purposes to recall that the denotation and connotation of dictatorship were vastly different from modern usage, in that “[t]he dictator’s actions were generally considered to be inspired by a strong civic commitment to the public good, a real manifestation of the patriotic attachment of the republican citizen. *He was the guardian of the republican order; the tyrant its usurper*” (416, emphasis added).

century, to the point of colloquial collapse.<sup>205</sup> Conceptually, however, they ought to be differentiated, as Voltaire himself complained, noting that “il me semble qu’aucun Grec, qu’aucun Romain ne se servit du mot despote ou d’un derive de despote pour signifier un roi. *Despoticus* ne fut jamais un mot latin.”<sup>206</sup>

In the case of tyranny, the offender is an individual who pollutes what may be an otherwise tenable political regime for his or her own purposes. Tyranny is always illegitimate, always a usurpation. A despotic state is systemically corrupt, but may well be legitimate or even legal. “The concept of tyranny generated theories of resistance and tyrannicide. Its use implied that a worthwhile political regime could be preserved by eliminating deviant, usurping, or corrupt rulers. The concept of despotism, however, suggested that the problem lay in a political system corrupt by its nature, rather than in an individual ruler’s qualities or actions.”<sup>207</sup> Though, as I discuss below, despotism would not be systematized until Montesquieu’s *Esprit des lois*, there has been a longstanding trend toward treating despotism structurally and tyranny as a breakdown of structure.

The second reason despotism remains conceptually loose is that it has historically been used to describe relationships under ostensibly apolitical conditions. Despotic power has been understood a form of paternal authority properly relegated to the household and the private sphere. Considered an appropriate regime for “natural slaves,” since “despot” derives from the Greek *despotes* (δεσπότης), “meaning ‘master over slaves in a domestic space,’ despotism

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<sup>205</sup> Richter, “Family of Concepts,” 225; Turchetti, “‘Despotism’ and ‘Tyranny,’” 160-161. However, compare Raymonde Monnier, “Use and Role of the Concepts of Tyranny and Tyrannicide During the French Revolution,” *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 2 (2006): 19-41.

<sup>206</sup> “It seems to me that no Greek or Roman used the word ‘despot’, or any derivation of despot, to refer to a king. ‘*Despoticus*’ was never a Latin word.” *Commentaire sur l’Esprit des lois de Montesquieu* (1777), quoted in Koebner, “Despot and Despotism,” 275.

<sup>207</sup> Richter, “A Family of Concepts,” 228.

maintains a link with the domestic.”<sup>208</sup> We find this second tendency in Aristotle, who nonetheless used the language of despotism to describe the corruption of a typology of regimes that included aristocracy, constitutional rule, and monarchy (which have the capacity to devolve, respectively, into oligarchy, democracy, and tyranny).<sup>209</sup> He also tended to describe despotism as a natural outcome for peoples purportedly dominated by their passions, observing that “barbarians, being more servile in character than Hellenes, and Asiatics than Europeans, do not rebel against a despotic government.”<sup>210</sup> This claim, about the natural servility of many peoples outside of Europe, “was echoed by William of Malmesbury in the twelfth century, Machiavelli in the sixteenth, and Montesquieu in the eighteenth,” where it would morph into a climatic argument so popular amongst Enlightenment thinkers, save Hume.<sup>211</sup>

It was Montesquieu who is primarily responsible for reviving a concept that had fallen out of political usage.<sup>212</sup> Joan-Pao Rubiés reminds us that “[i]t is important to note that, unlike Montesquieu, neither Machiavelli nor Bodin actually used the word “despotism;” in fact, even the adjectival form, “despotic,” only returned to regular use in the late sixteenth century.” As Thomas Kaiser notes, “[w]ith Montesquieu’s genius applied to the matter, ‘despotism’ acquired a systemic nature. No longer did it designate merely an abusive regime; rather, it connoted a totalistic, aberrant form of political society that, by implication, could only be uprooted by

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<sup>208</sup> Aristotle, *Politics*, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 1254a19-1254b20 and Inge Boer, “Despotism from under the Veil: Masculine and Feminine Readings of the Despot and the Harem,” *Cultural Critique* 32 (1995-1996): 43.

<sup>209</sup> For more on the nature of Aristotle’s distinction between despotism and tyranny, see Turchetti, “‘Despotism’ and ‘Tyranny,’” 161-162, and Venturi, “Oriental Despotism,” 133-135.

<sup>210</sup> Aristotle, *Politics*, 1285a19-1285b21, cited in Roger Boesche, “Fearing Monarchs and Merchants: Montesquieu’s Two Theories of Despotism,” *Western Political Quarterly* 43 (1990): 741.

<sup>211</sup> Rubiés, “Botero to Montesquieu,” 116. As Rubiés hints, the fundamental distinction supported by this binary is between Europeans and non-Europeans, since “despotism was not necessarily oriental, nor of course ‘Muslim’: it could be African or American, gentile and even Christian (as in Russia and Ethiopia).”

<sup>212</sup> Rubiés, “Botero to Montesquieu,” 122. Alain Grosrichard traces the eighteenth century’s etymological revival of ‘despotism’ in *The Sultan’s Court: European Fantasies of the East*, trans. Liz Heron (New York: Verso Books, 1998), 4-11. See also Diana Schaub, *Erotic Liberalism: Women and Revolution in Montesquieu’s Persian Letters* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 1995), 19-39.



radical restructuring of the polity.”<sup>213</sup> We owe this systemic understanding of despotism to Montesquieu. While Hobbes reintroduced “despotic” and “despotical” and Milton, Locke, and *Frondeurs*, among others, picked up the language, primarily in its adjectival form,<sup>214</sup> it remained left for Montesquieu to theorize despot-*ism* as a form of government.

In part, the task is left to Montesquieu because the predecessor most likely to give despotism serious consideration, Hobbes, subsumes it into argument for absolute sovereign power. Though reluctant to accept anything overtly Aristotelian, Hobbes does agree that what “some Writers call DESPOTICALL, from Despotes, [] signifieth a Lord, or Master; and is the Dominion of the Master over his Servant.” For Hobbes, “this Dominion is then acquired to the Victor, when the Vanquished, to avoyd the present stroke of death, covenanteth either in expresse words, or by other sufficient signes of the Will, that so long as his life, and the liberty of his body is allowed him, the Victor shall have the use thereof, at his pleasure.”<sup>215</sup> Like Aristotle, Hobbes specifies the conditions under which despotic government is legitimate. By ‘covenanting’ with one’s conqueror, one can agree to give up future claims to challenge in return for protection, just as can those who covenant without being conquered. Hobbes insists, typically, that this covenant is made at the “discretion” of the vanquished, not a “yeelding on condition of life”: “and then onely is his life in security, and his service due, when the Victor hath trusted him with his corporall liberty. For Slaves that work in Prisons, or Fetters, do it not of duty, but to avoyd the cruelty of their task-masters.” *Contra* Aristotle, Hobbes makes a distinction, albeit a difficult one to maintain, between servants and slaves in respect to despotism, based not on conditions but on intention.

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<sup>213</sup> Thomas Kaiser, “The Evil Empire? The Debate on Turkish Despotism in Eighteenth-Century French Political Culture,” *The Journal of Modern History* 72.1 (2000): 14-15.

<sup>214</sup> Koebner, “Despot and Despotism,” 288, 291-293.

<sup>215</sup> Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan, or The matter, forme, & power of a common-wealth ecclesiasticall and civill*, (London: Andrew Crooke, 1651), chapter XX.

Hobbes aside, Montesquieu was not thinking and writing in a vacuum but rather within the bureaucratic and legal regimes of the tumultuous *ancien régime*, amid increasing intimations that the line between despotism and monarchy had withered. Though excluded from Pierre Bayle's *Dictionnaire historique et critique*, editions of which he supervised from its first appearance in 1697 until his death in 1706, Bayle devoted two chapters to despotism in the second volume of his *Réponse aux questions d'un provincial* (1704).<sup>216</sup> 'Despotism' first appeared in a French dictionary (an updated edition of the *Dictionnaire de Trévoux*) in the same year that the *Lettres persanes* was published.<sup>217</sup> Ephraim Chambers's *Cyclopædia* (1728), drawing on *Trévoux*, defined a despot as "a Title, or Quality given to the Princes or *Walachia*, *Servia* [Serbia], and some of the neighboring Countries." "Despotism, or Despotic Government" is defined as "a Form of Government wherein the Prince is absolute and arbitrary... without being check'd by any other Power. Such as most of the Eastern Governments, as those of the *Mogol*, *Grand Seignior*, *Sophi*, &c."<sup>218</sup>

What these early modern understandings hold in common, and in distinction, from Aristotle, is the claim that despotism is primarily, if not necessarily, a form of government rather than the result of a failing of character.<sup>219</sup> Yet despotism is also treated incidentally rather than a subject in its own right. This is where Montesquieu's approach differs. He sets to systematizing in the *Esprit des Lois*, establishing a new regime triptych of monarchy, republicanism, and

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<sup>216</sup> Pierre Bayle, *Réponse aux questions d'un provincial*, vol. 2 (Rotterdam: Reinier Leers, 1704), 587-618.

<sup>217</sup> Grosrichard, *The Sultan's Court*, 4.

<sup>218</sup> Ephraim Chambers, *Cyclopædia: or, An Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences* (London: J. and J. Knapton, et. al., 1728). The *Encyclopédie* developed out a failed project to translate the *Cyclopædia* and Diderot purportedly asked Montesquieu to author the entry on despotism. Montesquieu, however, declined. Louis de Jaucourt instead composed the entry.

<sup>219</sup> On this point, compare Sharon Krause, "Despotism in the *Spirit of the Laws*," in *Montesquieu's Science of Politics: Essays on The Spirit of the Laws*, ed. David Carrithers, Michael Mosher, and Paul Rahe (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001), especially 233-235. Krause, in making a similar point about despotism's structural quality, implies that it therefore necessarily threatens all regime types, which does not follow – at least, not according to Montesquieu.

despotism.<sup>220</sup> To each of these regime types, he assigns a “nature” and a “principle,” or what Montesquieu scholar Melvin Richter has described as structure and operative passion, respectively.<sup>221</sup> For monarchies, the principle is honor; for republics, the principle is virtue. For despotic states, the principle, or operative passion, is fear, primarily fear of the prince, who rules according to his absolute and arbitrary will – in other words, according to his passions.<sup>222</sup> To be sure, this is not to imply that the passions have an exclusively negative connotation according to Montesquieu, but rather that the passions of the despot are totalizing and self-regarding, the very inverse of the moderation which Montesquieu praises. The despotic ruler’s primary motivation is the fulfillment of his own self-regarding desires and the political system exists in order to fulfill those desires.<sup>223</sup> The structure is thus corrupted and corruptive: there is no such thing as a virtuous despot.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> Krause reminds us that “Montesquieu actually enumerates four types of government, insofar as he notes that republican can be either democratic or aristocratic, but he classifies the two together because in either case the people as a whole or a part of the people are sovereign.” See “The Politics of Distinction and Disobedience: Honor and the Defense of Liberty in Montesquieu,” *Polity* 31.3 (1999): 473n.15. David Young offers an explanation for Montesquieu’s deviation from Aristotle in “Montesquieu’s View of Despotism and His Use of Travel Literature,” *Review of Politics* 40 (1978): 392-405; as does Duncan Kelly in *The Propriety of Liberty: Persons, Passions, and Judgement in Modern Political Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), especially 68-81.

<sup>221</sup> Richter, “A Family of Political Concepts,” 229. The principle may also be considered a “spring,” as in the Cambridge translation, which brings to the surface the text’s mechanistic metaphors one ordinarily associates with Hobbes. One must be careful, however, not to overstate Montesquieu’s materialism, which, while present, did not reach the same levels as Hobbes or Spinoza. Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*, ed. and trans. Anne Cohler, Basia Carolyn Miller, and Harold Samuel Stone (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), Author’s Foreword and I.1, 3-5. The roman numeral refers to the book, followed by chapter and page.

<sup>222</sup> Though a justly full consideration would be beyond the scope of this dissertation, there is an important link between despotism and empire in Montesquieu’s thought, a recent overview of which is Michael Mosher, “Montesquieu on Empire and Enlightenment,” in *Empire and Modern Political Thought*, ed. Sankar Muthu (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 112-154.

<sup>223</sup> Dobie argues that “[t]he seraglio is for [Montesquieu] an unstable environment in which the despot is effeminized by his contact with women and in which government is corrupted by its entanglement in the personal life of the ruler” (*Foreign Bodies*, 51). The association of the orient and effeminacy dates back at least to Sallust and his contemporaries but effeminacy is usually attributed to luxury, not women per se. Dobie’s claim about government corrupted by the ruler’s personal life ignores the very systemic nature of despotic government, in which one does not become entangled in the other for the simple fact that there is never any distinction to be made between the two. On the connection between effeminacy and luxury in ancient Roman thought, see Christopher Berry, *The Idea of Luxury: A Conceptual and Historical Investigation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 63-86.

<sup>224</sup> This may account for some of Voltaire’s hostility to Montesquieu’s analysis of despotism as a form of government, given the former’s association with Catherine the Great and Frederick the Great. Several “enlightened absolutists” of course adopted various of Montesquieu’s theories, though not without certain adjustments to allow

Drawing on the available (if not necessarily accurate) travel literature, Montesquieu seems to follow Chambers and associate the despot with an imagined east and its barbaric princes, ruling over massive empires.<sup>225</sup> But this is not quite right. Rather, the emphasis is on regimes' structures and their related "springs." In the *Esprit des Lois*, Montesquieu establishes a seemingly straightforward relationship between the despotic rule of a prince who governs according to his passions and the fear that consequently dominates the lives of his subjects: "In despotic states the nature of the government requires extreme obedience... Man is a creature that obeys a creature [i.e. the prince] that wants."<sup>226</sup> The "immense power" of the prince "passes intact to those to whom he entrusts it. People capable of much self-esteem would be in a position to cause revolutions. Therefore, *fear* must beat down everyone's courage and extinguish even the slightest feeling of ambition."<sup>227</sup> One of the more remarkable aspects of despotism as it is drawn in the *Laws* is the relative lack of governing that needs to be done in order to first establish and then perpetuate the despot's rule. In his *Pensées*, Montesquieu observes that "[since] the passions alone are necessary to form [a despotic government], everyone is fit for that."<sup>228</sup> Yet having once done so, the despot himself is in no position to govern responsibly, subject as he is to his desires: "A man whose five senses constantly tell him that he is everything and that others are nothing is naturally lazy, ignorant, and voluptuous. Therefore, he abandons the public business."<sup>229</sup> The

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for the absolutism to remain. For more on Voltaire's response to Montesquieu's discussion of despotism, see Kaiser, "The Evil Empire?," 17-18.

<sup>225</sup> Montesquieu was particularly enamored with the works of Jean Chardin, Paul Ricaut, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, and Joseph Pitton de Tournefort. See Young, "Montesquieu's Use of Travel Literature."

<sup>226</sup> *Spirit of the Laws*, III.10, 29. "Dans les États despotiques la nature du gouvernement demande une obéissance extrême... l'homme est une créature qui obéit à une créature qui veut." *De l'Esprit des Lois*, in *Œuvres complètes*, vol. 2, ed. Roger Caillois (Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1949-1951), 259-260. Hereafter *OC* II.

<sup>227</sup> *Spirit of the Laws*, III.9, 28 (*OC* II, 258-259): "Le pouvoir immense du prince y passé tout entière à ceux à qui il le confie. Des gens capables de s'estimer beaucoup eux-mêmes seroient en état d'y faire des révolutions. Il faut donc que la crainte y abatte tous les courages, et y éteigne jusqu'au moindre sentiment d'ambition."

<sup>228</sup> *My Thoughts*, §892 (*OC* I, §1794): "Le gouvernement despotique sauté, pour ainsi dire, aux yeux et s'établit presque tout seul. Comme il ne faut que des passions pour le former, tout le monde est bon pour cela."

<sup>229</sup> *Spirit of the Laws*, II.5, 20 (*OC* II, 249): "Un homme à qui ses cinq sens dissent sans cesse qu'il est tout, et que les autres ne sont rien, est naturellement paresseux, ignorant, voluptueux. Il abandonne donc les affaires."

natural consequence of this is the collapse of public and private into one another: if all that matters are the concerns of the despot, then there is nothing one could truly call “politics.”<sup>230</sup> The despotic state is therefore not simply apolitical, but anti-political.

## II. Despotic Passions in the *Lettres persanes*

The *Lettres persanes* has historically been read as making several contrary claims. At its most rudimentary, it is a simple fiction told to divert its audience and to stretch the author’s imagination while to he served as Président à Mortier in Bordeaux’s Parlement, an office he inherited from his uncle and which, by all accounts, he served faithfully.<sup>231</sup> Some contemporary readers found the inclusion of the letters to, from, and about the seraglio to be a distraction from the weightier matters of the philosophical and theological debates conducted exclusively between men in other letters and believed that Montesquieu included them to attract attention and sell well.

A second interpretation takes seriously the relationship between the seraglio letters and the rest but underplays or denies the analogy of state and seraglio. Commentators who read Montesquieu as a defender of monarchy, even in the *Lettres*, often find themselves in this camp.<sup>232</sup> Annelien de Dijn, who argues that Montesquieu becomes a more confident advocate of monarchy between the publication of the *Lettres persanes* and the *Esprit des lois*, nonetheless argues that “even in 1721 Montesquieu cannot simply be seen as a champion of the anti-absolutist camp. After having asserted that monarchies always ran the danger of degenerating

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<sup>230</sup> Krause, “Despotism in the *Spirit of the Laws*,” 240.

<sup>231</sup> The definitive biography of Montesquieu remains Robert Shackleton, *Montesquieu: A Critical Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), though Rebecca Kingston has more recently reviewed his time in Parlement in *Montesquieu and the Parlement of Bordeaux* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1996).

<sup>232</sup> See Radasanu, “Montesquieu on Moderation, Monarchy and Reform,” 292, for an example of underplaying the parallel.

into despotism, Montesquieu continued to argue that the way in which power was exercised in European monarchies was nonetheless very different from oriental despotisms... In the *Persian Letters*, in short, Montesquieu's views on monarchy were ambiguous and open to different interpretations."<sup>233</sup> There are several difficulties with this view. First, it ignores the fundamental tension in the *Lettres* between despotic and monarchical regimes by arguing, for Montesquieu, that all European monarchies were not, in fact, despotic. Second, it mistakes the ambiguities and tensions within the *Lettres* for uncertainties to be firmly resolved in the *Lois*. De Dijn does not take into account the differing generic conventions and demands required by a novel (if we may call it that) and a philosophical treatise, let alone Montesquieu's purposes in choosing them. Thirdly, and perhaps most problematically, de Dijn's assertion requires that she maintain (as she does) that Usbek is Montesquieu's "mouthpiece," as the comparisons praising French kings over Persian sultans come directly from "his" pen. Yet so do those comparing the aging Louis XIV to a despot.<sup>234</sup>

A third interpretation reads the seraglio letters as a commentary on the state of affairs in *ancien régime* France, particularly the period of the *Régence*, 1715-1723, during which France was ruled by Philippe d'Orléans, cousin of Louis XIV, in the name of five-year old Louis XV.<sup>235</sup> According to this interpretation, a version of which I will advance in the remainder of the chapter, the seraglio intentionally resembles both a despotic state and a monarchy. Montesquieu uses the site of the seraglio to play with the boundary between the two. Usbek himself unfolds the state/seraglio analogy, musing that "[i]t is noticeable that in countries where fathers are given wider powers to punish and reward, families are better run. Fathers resemble the creator of the universe, who, although he could lead men by love, also binds them to him by motives of hope

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<sup>233</sup> De Dijn, "Montesquieu's Controversial Context," 81.

<sup>234</sup> See *Persian Letters*, Letter 37, 91-92, and Letter 102, 187-189 (*OC I*, 184, 281-282).

<sup>235</sup> See Aram Vartanian, "Eroticism and Politics in the *Lettres Persanes*," *Romanic Review* 60 (1969): 25-26.

and fear.”<sup>236</sup> Fear permeates society, descending from the prince. Montesquieu here plays with an increasingly popular theme in the late *ancien régime* in which despotism is the logically possible, or even likely, extension of absolutism. According to early modern defenders of absolutism and divine right, the king, as the leader chosen by God, stands in the same relationship to his people as the father does to his family. Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet, French bishop and tutor to the Dauphin during the reign of Louis XIV, celebrates this relationship in his compendium of lessons for the Dauphin, *Politics Drawn from Holy Scripture*:

Finally, gather together all that we have said, so great and so august, about royal authority. You have seen a great nation united under one man: you have seen his sacred power, paternal and absolute: you have seen that secret reason which directs the body politic, enclosed in one head: you have seen the image of God in kings, and you will have the idea of majesty of kingship... So great is this majesty that its source cannot be found to reside in the prince: it is borrowed from God, who entrusts it to the prince for the good of his people, to which end it is well that it be restrained by a higher power.<sup>237</sup>

Usbek replicates this hierarchy of relations within his seraglio. Containing 161 letters (including supplementary letters added by Montesquieu’s son to later editions as well as “*Quelques réflexions sur les Letters persanes*”), eleven are written by the wives and thirteen by the eunuchs. We know from his letters with Rhédi, Rustan, and others that Usbek is concerned with questions of theology and demonstrating proper obedience to God. Within the order of the seraglio, however, he readily places himself in the role of “creator of the universe.” In a literal sense, he is

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<sup>236</sup> *Persian Letters*, Letter 129, 230 (OC I, 323): “On remarque que, dans les pays où l’on met dans les mains paternelles plus de récompenses et de punitions, les familles son mieux réglées : les pères son l’image du Créateur de l’Univers, qui, quoiqu’il puisse conduire les hommes par son amour, ne laisse pas de se les attacher encore par les motifs de l’espérance et de la crainte.”

<sup>237</sup> Bossuet, *Politics Drawn from Holy Scripture*, ed. and trans. Patrick Riley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), V.IV.1, 162. “Enfin ramassez ensemble les choses si grandes, et si augustes que nous avons dites, sur l’autorité Royale. Voyez un peuple immense réuni en une seule personne : voyez cette puissance sacrée, paternelle, et absolue. Voyez la raison secrete qui gouverne tout le corps de l’état renfermé dans une seule tête : vous voyez l’image de Dieu dans les Rois et vous avez l’idée de la Majesté Royale... Elle est si grande cette Majesté, qu’elle ne peut être dans le prince comme dans sa source ; elle est empruntée, qui la lui donne pour le bien des peuples, à qui il est bon d’être contenu par une force superieure.” *La Politique tirée des propres paroles de l’Écriture-sainte*, vol. 1 (Brussels: Jean Leonard, 1710), VI.1, 211-212.

quite correct: the seraglio has been constructed for his pleasure; the women traded or purchased with him in mind; and their fate, if something were to happen to Usbek, would be uncertain. If we were to push the comparison, the eunuchs (already described as the intermediaries relied on by a despot to run interference between himself and his subjects) may also be imagined as a priestly class, executing the orders of the divine.

Upon hearing that his wives are disobeying his orders in his absence, Usbek advises their guardian, the chief eunuch, to “[l]et fear and terror be your companions; go with all speed to punish and chastise in room after room; everyone must live in dread, everyone must weep before you.”<sup>238</sup> The subjects’ passions operate in inverse proportion to the prince’s: they are a “timid, ignorant, beaten-down people.”<sup>239</sup> After the eunuch has discharged his duties, Roxane reports to Usbek that “[h]orror, darkness, and dread rule the seraglio; it is filled with terrible lamentation; it is subject at every moment to the unchecked rage of a tiger.”<sup>240</sup> In the *Esprit des lois*, Montesquieu likens the “tranquility” of despotic states not to peace but to “the silence of the towns that the enemy is ready to occupy.”<sup>241</sup>

According to one of Montesquieu’s most recent interpreters on the question of fear, Corey Robin, this is the Frenchman at his most hyperbolic.<sup>242</sup> He argues, “Montesquieu’s most dramatic account of despotic fear [in the *Lois*] did not reflect Montesquieu at his most searching or probing but, rather, “Montesquieu formulated his theory of despotic fear with the avowed

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<sup>238</sup> *Persian Letters*, Letter 148, 271 (*OC I*, 363): “Que la crainte et la terreur marchent avec vous ; courez d’appartement en appartement porter les punitions et les châtimens. Que tout vive dans la consternation ; que tout fonde en larmes devant vous.”

<sup>239</sup> *Spirit of the Laws*, V.14, 59 (*OC II*, 292): “... des peuples timides, ignorants, abattus.”

<sup>240</sup> *Persian Letters*, Letter 156, 276-277 (*OC I*, 369): “L’horreur, la nuit et l’épouvante règnent dans le sérail : un deuil affreux l’environne. Un tigre y exerce à chaque instant toute sa rage.”

<sup>241</sup> *Spirit of the Laws*, V.14, 60 (*OC II*, 294): “Comme le principe du gouvernement despotique est la crainte, le but en est la tranquillité; mais ce n’est point une paix, c’est le silence de ces villes que l’ennemi est près d’occuper.”

<sup>242</sup> Robin has published two variations of his interpretation of Montesquieu, a journal article and a revised chapter. I refer to both. Though I do not want to imply that the pieces are interchangeable, most differences are questions of emphasis rather than content. See Corey Robin, “Reflections on Fear: Montesquieu in Retrieval,” *American Political Science Review* 94 (2000): 347-360, and *Fear: The History of a Political Idea* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 51-72.



polemical purpose of rousing elite opinion in France against creeping royal absolutism.”<sup>243</sup> Fear, as depicted in the *Lois*, amounts to “political pornography.” Robin correctly notes that the depiction of despotism and fear in the *Lettres* departs significantly from the account in the *Laws* but to stop there is to neglect a central effect of the presentation of fear in the *Lettres*.<sup>244</sup> Within the secondary literature, it is frequently remarked in passing that the seraglio is a stand-in for despotic state and Usbek for the despotic ruler.<sup>245</sup> The parallel provides a “condition of defamiliarization,”<sup>246</sup> a distancing effect that permits Montesquieu (and his readers) to criticize the Regency of Philippe, Duc d’Orléans, who ruled in place of the child king, Louis XV, in the 1720s. While this is critically sound, it is insufficient. This defamiliarization also, I suggest, allows the introduction of plural regimes of affective practices, which ultimately puts into question the desirability, legitimacy, and hegemony of the despotic authority.<sup>247</sup>

In the *Lettres*, Usbek, having left his wives and seraglio in the care of the eunuchs he employs, departs for Paris with his younger friend Rica and ultimately finds himself undone by the problems that ensue not in cosmopolitan Paris but in the enclosed world of the women left behind. While Rica’s letters generally serve as colorful, sometimes cutting, commentary on Parisian (and, implicitly, western) life, the content of Usbek’s letters tends toward the existential. Something of a master at compartmentalization, Usbek “is a humanitarian and a rapist, a

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<sup>243</sup> Robin, “Reflections on Fear,” 349.

<sup>244</sup> Strictly speaking, of course, the account in the *Laws* (1748) departs from that in the *Letters* (1721).

<sup>245</sup> See, for example, Boesche, “Fearing Monarchs and Merchants,” 746; Mark Hulliung, *Montesquieu and the Old Regime* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 120; Ina Baghdiantz McCabe, *Orientalism in Early Modern France: Eurasian Trade, Exoticism and the Ancien Regime* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2008), 278; and Patricia Springborg, “The Contractual State: Reflections on Orientalism and Despotism,” *History of Political Thought* 8 (1987): 415.

<sup>246</sup> Srinivas Aravamudan, *Enlightenment Orientalism: Resisting the Rise of the Novel* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 79. See also Genevieve Lloyd, “Imagining Difference: Cosmopolitanism in Montesquieu’s *Persian Letters*,” *Constellations* 19 (2012), especially 482-485, for a discussion of “Montesquieu’s use of wonder as a distancing strategy.”

<sup>247</sup> Here I adapt Reddy’s definition of an “emotional regime” as “the set of normative emotions and the official rituals, practices, and emotives that express and inculcate them; a necessary underpinning of any stable political regime” (*The Navigation of Feeling*, 129).

rationalist and a terrorist.”<sup>248</sup> He balances his duties to the seraglio and his new experiences in Paris (many of which he actively seeks out and cultivates through his letters) on a knife’s edge. For Judith Shklar, Usbek’s personality underlies the “general theme of the book, the universal power of self-deception.”<sup>249</sup> But it is more aptly termed, in the case of Usbek, the fragile power of self-deception. As Roxanne Euben notes, “[t]he wives’ rebellion at the end of the novel... represents not only the freedom of the women but the disintegration of Usbek’s identity, premised, as it has been, on his wives’ immobility, obedience, and seclusion...”<sup>250</sup> In governing through fear, Usbek receives only loathing in return, something of which he only gradually gains awareness. It is mistaken to read the wives’ letters, as Marshall Berman does, as straightforward expressions of feeling and not at least partially strategic.<sup>251</sup> Usbek’s “whole life is an illustration of the distance between theoretical knowledge and personal conduct.”<sup>252</sup> As the seraglio descends into chaos in Usbek’s absence, his ability to maintain a divided self lessens; he collapses under the weight of the despotic fear he had previously believed himself to wield over his wives and eunuchs.

It would seem, then, that the power of the passions ultimately overwhelms the liberal leanings Usbek acquires in his time in Paris, tendencies that are never effectively integrated with the despotic aspects of his personality. Nonetheless, what Montesquieu suggests in the *Lettres* is that what is required is not the elimination or repression of the passions altogether but a reorientation, a shift from a model of the emotive (inward-looking, pleasure-seeking or fear-

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<sup>248</sup> Robin, “Reflections on Fear,” 350.

<sup>249</sup> Judith Shklar, *Montesquieu* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 31.

<sup>250</sup> Roxanne Euben, *Journeys to the Other Shore: Muslim and Western Travelers in Search of Knowledge* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 151. E.J. Hundert makes a version of this argument, but in overemphasizing the allegorical aspects of the women’s roles in the text, he demotes the women themselves to little more than reflections of Usbek’s self rather than autonomous individuals ensnared in a despotic system. See “Sexual Politics and the Allegory of Identity in Montesquieu’s ‘Persian Letters,’” *The Eighteenth Century* 31 (1990), especially 108-110.

<sup>251</sup> Berman, *The Politics of Authenticity*, 25-28.

<sup>252</sup> Shklar, *Montesquieu*, 34.

ridden) to affective practices (outward-looking, other-regarding, political, and potentially cooperative). As Mary Shanley and Peter G. Stillman argue persuasively, because Usbek's wives are essentially enslaved to him, there is no possibility of freely given love or affection between husband and wife.<sup>253</sup> In other words, though driven by passion, those passions remain base. Usbek cannot be motivated by love – and nor can his wives. There is only “the deviousness of thought and the perversion of feeling” necessary to perpetuate the system.<sup>254</sup> Usbek, as master of the seraglio, can only experience emotives and self-regarding emotions and cannot engage in affective, other-regarding practices. In the following section, I offer an interpretation of Roxane's suicide as the novel's theorization of other-regarding practices and as a republican interruption of Usbek's despotic control over the seraglio.

### III. Roxane and “the poisoned fontaine”

Here I want to make the case that a set of affective practices, practices based in other-regarding actions and amenable to a republican sense of civic virtue, does in fact guide one of the novel's central characters. Though ostensibly subject to the same treatment as the rest of his wives, Roxane is notably Usbek's favorite (and, perhaps not coincidentally, his newest) bride.<sup>255</sup> She is also, I argue, intended by Montesquieu to invoke the Roman heroine and matron Lucretia and capable of “honorable,” and not only slavish, action. As related by Livy, Ovid, and a number of

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<sup>253</sup> Mary Lyndon Shanley and Peter G. Stillman, “Political and Marital Despotism: Montesquieu's *Persian Letters*,” in *The Family in Political Thought*, ed. Jean Elshtain (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1982), especially 72-76.

<sup>254</sup> Vartanian, “Eroticism and Politics in the *Lettres Persanes*,” 25.

<sup>255</sup> Shanley and Stillman suggest that Usbek respects Roxane because she initially refused his sexual advances and offer as evidence the fact that, of his wives, it is only Roxane that Usbek addresses using the formal ‘vous’ (75). I share the view, however, of Katherine M. Rogers, who argues that though the linguistic show of deference is difficult to explain otherwise, it seems unlikely that Usbek truly appreciated Roxane's resistance, considering it involved her pulling a blade on him and resulted in him raping her. Indeed, he seems to regard her resistance to, and even fear of, him as an inconvenience to be overcome. Rogers, “Subversion of Patriarchy in *Les Lettres Persanes*,” *Philological Quarterly* 65 (1986): 64.

other ancient sources, the rape of Lucretia by the son of the king of Rome impelled her to commit suicide at the feet of her father and husband in defense of her honor and in order to restore her virtue. Her death purportedly spurred the collapse of the corrupt monarchy and the creation of the Roman Republic, ensuring that the then king of Rome was its last.

The story is this.<sup>256</sup> Roman noblemen, including King Tarquinius Superbus, were whiling away an evening during their siege on the city of Ardea in 509 BCE by trading stories about their wives to pass the time. Tarquinius Collatinus, husband of Lucretia and relation of the king, insisted that his wife's virtue was far greater than that of any other woman and proposed that the men visit their wives right then, to see what activities they engaged in when left to their own devices. All of the wives, save Lucretia, were foolishly wasting time, while Lucretia was with her servants, spinning wool. The son of the Etruscan king, Sextus Tarquinius (called Tarquin), is struck by the sight of Lucretia. Livy argues that he finds chastity, not merely her beauty, overwhelming. (Indeed, according to Livy, the "contest" of the husbands was to find the chastest of the wives.) Tarquin returns later in the night and attempts to seduce Lucretia, to no avail. Her virtue, specifically her *pudicitia*, cannot be overcome through reason or pleading.<sup>257</sup> He then threatens to murder her and she again refuses. He follows that unsuccessful threat with another: he will kill her and a black slave, leaving their corpses to be discovered in bed together. He will claim to have killed them in defense of Collatinus's honor. Eventually, Lucretia submits, believing Tarquin's threatened course of action would bring more shame on her and her family

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<sup>256</sup> In addition to Livy's version, I rely here on the account given in the only full-length treatment of the Lucretia story by Ian Donaldson in *The Rapes of Lucretia: A Myth and Its Transformations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 3-5. It is mentioned only in passing in works devoted to suicide in ancient Rome, such as Timothy D. Hill, *Ambitiosa Mors: Suicide and the Self in Roman Thought and Literature* (New York: Routledge, 2004) and Anton J.L. van Hooff, *From Autothanasia to Suicide: Self-killing in Classical Antiquity* (New York: Routledge, 2002 [1990]).

<sup>257</sup> When Tarquin is spying on Lucretia, he fixates on her chastity, which Livy refers to as "*castitas*." When speaking of herself, Lucretia refers to her "*pudicitia*." The latter implies "sexual fidelity enhanced by fertility." See Elaine Fantham, et. al., *Women in the Classical World: Image and Text* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 225.

than sexual violence alone, and he rapes her, “the fear of dishonor prevailing where the fear of death had failed.”<sup>258</sup>

The following morning, Lucretia calls for an audience with her husband and her father, who are in Ardea and Rome, respectively. The urgency of her message calls them back to her, though she does not yet reveal what has passed. She tells each to bring a friend to bear witness, however, to what she will tell them. Spurius Lucretius brings Publius Valerius Publicola.<sup>259</sup> Collatinus brings Lucius Junius Brutus, whom Livy tells us he runs into by chance upon receiving Lucretia’s message, and who, moreover, was presumed to be of a feeble mind. Upon seeing Lucretia so evidently shaken, her husband asks if she is well, to which Livy has her reply,

Far from it, for what can be well with a woman when she has lost her honour?  
The print of a strange man, Collatinus, is in your bed. Yet my body only has been violated; my heart is guiltless, as death shall be my witness. But pledge your right hands and your words that the adulterer shall not go unpunished. Sextus Tarquinius is he that last night returned hostility for hospitality, and armed with force brought ruin on me, and on himself no less if you are men when he worked his pleasure with me.

Though the men try to comfort her and to assure her that she is guiltless, she is not persuaded:

It is for you to determine... what is due to [Tarquin]; for my own part, though I acquit myself of the sin, I do not absolve myself from punishment; not in time to come shall ever unchaste woman live through the example of Lucretia.<sup>260</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> R.A. Bauman, “The Rape of Lucretia, *Quod metus causa* and the Criminal Law,” *Latomus* 52 (1993): 551. Though Lucretia submits, it is worth stressing that she *is* raped and that Livy does not judge her for doing so. This can be gleaned from the pairing of Lucretia and Verginia, another sacrificed woman in *The History of Rome*’s opening books. Though it is beyond the scope of this chapter to delve too deeply into Verginia’s story, the two women clearly mirror one another and are both treated as victims of sexual violence, though their paths diverge. Lucretia, in my reading, is not a sacrifice to Rome, not even by her own hand. Verginia, however, remains without agency; her story ends when father murders her. See Book 3.44-58 for Livy’s account of Verginia. Bauman argues that Livy recounts Lucretia’s story specifically to make a legal case for being found innocent of acts committed under duress (“The Rape of Lucretia,” 551-552).

<sup>259</sup> John Jay, Alexander Hamilton, and James Madison will sign the *Federalist Papers* as “Publius” in his honor.

<sup>260</sup> Livy, *History of Rome, Books 1 and 2*, vol. 1, trans. B.O. Foster (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1919), Book I, §58, 202-203: “Minime, quid enim salvi est mulieri amissa pudicitia? Vestigia viri alieni, Collatine, in lecto sunt tuo; ceterum corpus est tantum violatum, animus insons; mors testis erit. Sed date dexteras fidemque haud inpune adultero fore. Sex. est Tarquinius, qui hostis pro hospite priore nocte vi armatus mihi sibi, si vos viri estis, pestiferum hinc abstulit gaudium... Vos videritis, quid illi debeatur: ego me etsi peccato absolvo, supplicio non libero; nec ulla deinde inpudica Lucretiae exemplo vivet.” See Bauman, “The Rape of Lucretia,” on the legal status of rape in Rome; Nghiem L. Nguyen, “Roman Rape: An Overview of Roman Rape Laws From the

Having extracted a pledge of vengeance from her father, husband, and two witnesses, she pulls out a concealed dagger and stabs herself in the chest, making graphically visible the otherwise invisible wounds, physical and psychological, resulting from Tarquin's attack. In doing so, Lucretia performs her virtue for her assembled audience by assuming an almost masculine prerogative to speak in defense, paradoxically, of the most feminine of virtues, *pudicitia*.<sup>261</sup> As she falls (dead instantly, Livy tells us), her husband and father stand in shock, unable, temporarily, to respond. When they act, it is in a role traditionally assigned to Roman women, that of the lamenter: "the wail for the dead was raised by her husband and her father."<sup>262</sup>

While Lucretia's other witnesses turn to mourning, Brutus removes the dagger from her bloodied chest and reaffirms the oath that Lucretia had extracted from him and the other men moments earlier. Though Livy does not give us the details of the earlier oath, given while Lucretia is still alive, we are given to understand that this second oath, and its reiteration over her body, is the one that matters. Holding the dagger "dripping with gore," Brutus proclaims

By this blood, most chaste until a prince wronged it, I swear, and I take you gods, to witness, that I will pursue Lucius Tarquinius Superbus and his wicked wife and all his children, with sword, with fire, aye with whatsoever violence I may; and that I will suffer neither them nor any other to be king in Rome.<sup>263</sup>

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Republican Period to Justinian's Reign," *Michigan Journal of Gender and Law* 13 (2006), especially 82-95, for evolving concepts of duress; and Sara Elise Phang, *The Marriage of Roman Soldiers (13 B.C.-A.D. 235): Law and Family in the Imperial Army* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 251-261, on the range of punishments applicable to soldiers found guilty of rape during roughly the same period in which Livy is writing.

<sup>261</sup> According to Jill Harries, historian of Roman law, "the Livian stories were a part of Augustus' moral message. Women were expected actively to support the honour system, not merely acquiesce in it." Harries, *Law and Crime in the Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 89.

<sup>262</sup> Livy, *History of Rome*, Book I, §58, 202-203: "conclamat vir paterque"

<sup>263</sup> Livy, *History of Rome*, Book I, §59, 204-205: "Per hunc castissimum ante regiam iniuriam sanguinem iuro, vosque, di, testes facio me L. Tarquinium Superbum cum scelerata coniuge et omni liberorum stirpe ferro, igni, quacumque denique vi possim exsecuturum nec illos nec alium quem quam regnare Romae passurum."

Brutus then urges Collatinus and Spurius Lucretius to join him in his oath, so that “grief was swallowed up in anger.”<sup>264</sup> Forgoing all rituals pertaining to the preparation of the corpse, the four men, at Brutus’s urging, carry Lucretia’s body to the marketplace: “they carried out Lucretia’s corpse from the house and bore it to the [forum],” marking the moment when a private, familial tragedy is put to use in a public fashion.<sup>265</sup> Lucretia’s body is displayed as a symbol of the Tarquins’ tyranny. Brutus, who was in fact far more astute than he had let on, uses the opportunity to raise public opposition to the Etruscan king and the entire royal family. Lucretia proves a potent symbol: “[she] has far more power as a corpse than as a living woman.”<sup>266</sup> Brutus gives a speech to a growing crowd, condemning “the violence and lust of Sextus Tarquinius,” emphasizing “the defilement of Lucretia and her deplorable death [and] the bereavement of [Spurius Lucretius], in whose eyes the death of his daughter was not so outrageous and deplorable as was the cause of her death.”<sup>267</sup> Indeed, for the crowd, Lucretia’s death is seemingly “experienced, as the language of outrage among the male citizens attests, as a violation against their persons.”<sup>268</sup>

Lucretia’s importance, as instigator or talisman of republican Rome, is a well-trod story in art history, literature, and political thought.<sup>269</sup> The four witnesses to her death go on to lead an

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<sup>264</sup> Livy, *History of Rome*, Book I, §59, 204-205: “...totique ab luctu versi in iram.”

<sup>265</sup> Roman law distinguished between private and public cases, the vast majority of which (including adultery, murder, and rape) fell under the purview of the private. Public cases were primarily reserved for those involving public office. See Andrew M. Riggsby, *Roman Law and the Legal World of the Romans* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 195-196. Though Riggsby discusses the particular legal status of women (165-185), he is silent on the issue of sexual violence.

<sup>266</sup> Patricia Klindienst Joplin, “Ritual Work on Human Flesh: Livy’s Lucretia and the Rape of the Body Politic,” *Helios* 17 (1990): 64.

<sup>267</sup> Livy, *History of Rome*, Book I, §59, 206-207: “Ibi oratio habita nequaquam eius pectoris ingenique quod simulatum ad eam diem fuerat, de vi ac libidine Sex. Tarquini, de stupro infando Lucretiae et miserabili caede, de orbitate Tricipitini, cui morte filiae causa mortis indignior ac miserabilior esset.”

<sup>268</sup> That is, rather than “as violence against women.” Joplin, “Ritual Work on Human Flesh,” 67.

<sup>269</sup> To the best of my knowledge, the parallel between Lucretia and Roxane has not been mentioned, let alone explored, in the secondary literature. The relationship between Lucretia and republicanism has been explored in reference to other canonical thinkers in Stephanie Jed, *Chaste Thinking: The Rape of Lucretia and the Birth of Humanism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988) and Melissa Matthes, *The Rape of Lucretia and the*

uprising against the king, who is driven out, and two consuls, Collatinus and Brutus, are installed as heads of the new Roman Republic.<sup>270</sup> This is, after the birth of Remus and Romulus, the second, republican founding of Rome. Livy's telling in particular has been read for its dramatic content.<sup>271</sup> Still, though she comes up three other times in passing in his political writings Montesquieu does not mention Lucretia in the *Lettres persanes*.<sup>272</sup> So why connect her to Roxane?

In the *Lettres persanes*, Roxane plays one of the biggest roles yet she makes few appearances. Montesquieu presumes his readers will be familiar with certain other Roxanes, notably the Bactrian wife of Alexander the Great and Roxelana, wife of Suleiman the Magnificent.<sup>273</sup> Both Roxane and Roxelana were of lower social rank than their husband and both became political actors upon their marriage (or, in the former's case, their husband's death – Roxane promptly murdered Alexander's other wife).<sup>274</sup> Jean Racine's *Bajazet* (1672), set in Babylon, features a character named Roxane, depicted as a self-interested schemer willing to

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*Founding of Republics: Readings in Livy, Machiavelli, and Rousseau* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2001). Roxane has also been considered as a neo-classical heroine by Jean Goldzink, *Montesquieu et les passions* (Paris: PUF, 2001), 18; Jean-Marie Goulemot in "Montesquieu : du suicide légitimé à l'apologie du suicide héroïque," in *Gilbert Romme et son temps: Actes du colloque tenu à Riom et Clermont, les 10 et 11 juin 1965*, ed. Jean Ehrard and Albert Soboul (Clermont-Ferrand: PUF, 1966), 307-318; and Jeannette Geffriaud Rosso, *Montesquieu et la féminité* (Pisa: Nizet, 1977).

<sup>270</sup> "As Cicero says of the rape of Lucretia, it was obviously unlawful in terms of 'natural law', although there was no written law against it (*Leg* 2.10; cf. *Rep* 2.46). The resultant expulsion of the Tarquins in 510 BC was perhaps the most extreme case of the community's punishing offenses against itself by direct action" (Harries, *Law and Crime in the Roman World*, 2).

<sup>271</sup> See Cristina G. Calhoun, "Lucretia, Savior and Scapegoat: The Dynamics of Sacrifice in Livy 1.57-59," *Helios* 24 (1997): 151-169, and Andrew Feldherr, *Spectacle and Society in Livy's History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 187-202.

<sup>272</sup> Montesquieu refers to Lucretia in *Spirit of the Laws* XI.15, 176 (*OC* II, 418) and XII.21, 206 (*OC* II, 451); and *Considerations on the Causes of the Greatness of the Romans and Their Decline*, ed. and trans. David Lowenthal (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1999 [1965]), chapter 1, 25 (*OC* II, 70).

<sup>273</sup> See Katie Trumpener, "Rewriting Roxane: Orientalism and Intertextuality in Montesquieu's *Lettres Persanes* and Defoe's *The Fortunate Mistress*," *Stanford French Review* 11 (1987): 177-192, for a fascinating interpretation, albeit one from which I depart, of the figure of Roxane in Racine's *Bajazet*, the *Persian Letters*, and Daniel Defoe's *The Fortunate Mistress*. Defoe's novel, in which the Lady Roxana finds independence through prostitution, and her downfall through a daughter, would appear just three years after Montesquieu's *Lettres persanes*.

<sup>274</sup> According to Plutarch, "Roxana was with child, and on this account was held in honour among the Macedonians; but she was jealous of Stateira, and therefore deceived her by a forged letter into coming where she was, and when she had got there, slew her, together with her sister, threw their bodies into the well, and filled the well with earth..." (*Lives*, vol. 7, §77.6, 437).



sacrifice everyone around her to advance herself. (The play fared poorly.) In short, for the historically minded and well read in Montesquieu's audience, the name Roxane would summon up an image of a Persian woman who was the lover of a powerful political leader.

As much as Roxane follows in a tradition of historical figures, she is equally distinct from her fellow wives in the seraglio.<sup>275</sup> After an initial letter to Usbek from Fatmé and Zéphis each, we never hear directly from them again. Zachi adores Usbek, or at least purports to. Zélis, mother to the only child referenced in the text, is more pragmatic, her concerns indicating "a third way" between sycophancy and rebellion.<sup>276</sup> Unlike the other wives, Roxane does not write to Usbek until written to and she does not attempt to persuade him to return to Isfahan. In the only letter from Usbek to her (and to which there is evidently no reply, though we are led to believe, by the novel's preface, that more letters exist than are published), he laughingly recounts his 'successful' rape of Roxane as if recalling a romantic courtship. The echoes of the story of Lucretia are striking, so the letter is worth recounting nearly in full:

Do you remember how, when everything else had failed, you found a last resource in your own courage? You took a dagger and threatened to destroy the husband who loved you, if he continued to demand something that meant more to you than he did. This struggle between love and virtue lasted two months. You carried the scruples of chastity too far: you did not surrender, even after you had been conquered; you defended your dying virginity at the very last extremity; you considered me as an enemy who had inflicted an outrage on you, not as a husband

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<sup>275</sup> Intriguingly, Janet Gurkin Altman situates her argument as an attempt to recuperate a modified version of "earlier readings [that] tended to identify Roxane as the heroine of a certain republicanism, repressed by the despotic Usbek but offering nonetheless the triumphant final word of the novel." These "earlier readings" are not cited and the attempt at recuperation is unpersuasive. Altman essentially argues that not only Roxane but also Rica, Rhédi, several of the eunuchs, and "the wives" form a republican community that counters Usbek. While Zélis, as I discuss below, is more rebellious than is frequently recognized, Altman's identification of an "epistolary style that is in the tradition of republican friendship" between the wives and Usbek both assumes too much about unknown variables and ignores the possibility of duplicity. Republicanism remains uninterrogated as a political force in this reading. See "Strategic Timing: Women's Questions, Domestic Servitude, and the Dating Game in Montesquieu," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 13 (2001): 325-348.

<sup>276</sup> Schaub, *Erotic Liberalism*, 50. Aside from Roxane, Zélis is the most likely to challenge her husband. Recall that is Zélis who drops her veil during an outing, a great outrage to the eunuchs charged with guarding her and certainly to Usbek (Letters 147 and 148, 270-271; *OC* I, 362-363). Though Usbek reaffirms that the chief eunuch has absolute authority to govern in his stead and discipline his wives, this marks a turning point in the seraglio's internal dynamics.

who had loved you. It was three months before you dared look at me without blushing; your embarrassment seemed to be reproaching me for taking advantage of you. I could not relax even when I was in possession of you: you deprived me, as far as you could, of your beauty and your grace, and I was intoxicated with the greatest privileges without having obtained the lesser.<sup>277</sup>

Here the politics of Roman tyranny play out as despotic melodrama.

Though Roxane is mentioned in letters between Usbek and his other wives, we do not hear directly from her until the novel's very end. In the last letter, we learn that Roxane is not, like Usbek, weighed down by fear but has retained a sense of self independent of her particular circumstances: "I may have lived in servitude, but I have always been free. I have amended your laws according to the laws of nature, and my mind has always remained independent."<sup>278</sup> As the seraglio falls apart, Usbek, if not the reader, is surprised to learn that Roxane loathes her despotic husband and has taken poison to escape him – indeed, the text closes with her announcement of her impending death – she is writing to Usbek as she dies.<sup>279</sup> In consequence, Usbek's personality, so tightly wound into the existence of the seraglio, will unravel: "because his whole

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<sup>277</sup> *Persian Letters*, Letter 26, 76 (OC I, 169): "Vous souvient-il, lorsque toutes les ressources vous manquèrent, de celles que vous trouvâtes dans votre courage? Vous prîtes un poignard et manaçâtes d'immoler un époux qui vous aimoit, s'il continuoit à exiger de vous ce que vous chérissiez plus que votre époux meme. Deux mois se passèrent dans ce combat de l'Amour et de la Vertu. Vous poussâtes trop loin vos chastes scrupules : vous ne vous rendîtes par même, après avoir été vaincue : vous défendîtes jusques à la dernière extrémité une virginité mourante : vous me regardâtes comme un ennemi qui vous avoit fait un outrage, non pas comme un époux qui vous avoit aimée : vous fûtes plus de trois mois que vous n'osiez me regarder sans rougir : votre air confus sembloit me reprocher l'avantage que j'avois pris. Je n'avois pas même une possession tranquille ; vous me dérobiez tout ce que vous pouviez de ces charmes et de ces graces ; et j'étois enivré des plus grandes faveurs, sans avoir obtenu les moindres."

<sup>278</sup> *Persian Letters*, Letter 161, 280 (OC I, 372): "J'ai pu vivre dans la servitude, mais j'ai toujours été libre : j'ai reformé tes lois sur celles de la Nature, et mon esprit s'est toujours tenu dans l'indépendance." Roxane arguably articulates a Stoic undercurrent at work in the *Lettres*. Consider Seneca's claim that "it is a mistake to think that slavery penetrates the entire man. The better part of him is exempt. Bodies can be assigned to masters and be at their mercy. But the mind, at any rate, is its own master, so free in its movements that not even this prison which shuts it in can hold it back from following its own impulse, from setting might projects in motion, from faring forth into the infinite to consort with the stars. The body, therefore, is what fortune hands over to a master, what he buys and sells. That inner part can never come into anyone's possession. Whatever proceeds from it is free." Seneca, *De Beneficiis*, Book III.20, in *Seneca: Moral and Political Essays*, ed. John M. Cooper and J.F. Procopé (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 257.

<sup>279</sup> Starobinski reminds us that, within the structure of the novel, Usbek foreshadows Roxane's suicide with his musings on the subject to Ibben in Letter 76. Indeed, he attacks the European laws against suicide. "Préface," *Lettres persanes*, 32.

life has been enclosed in a system of falsehood, the false identity it has conferred on him is all he has.”<sup>280</sup> Alain Grosrichard argues that the logic of despotism implies death for the despot: “if fear is that wild passion which sacrifices everything to the imperative of the individual’s survival, its corruption – beyond impassivity and indifference – is that absurd passion for dying which we find in all despotic regimes.”<sup>281</sup>

It is through this act of insurrection, however, that Roxane’s character is most fully revealed. In the accounts of both Lucretia and Roxane, a profound violation was more than they could bear. In Roxane’s case, in spite of living under the sway of fear and despotic control, she had somehow created and maintained a distinct affective regime with her lover in Usbek’s absence. It is true that what drives her is hatred of Usbek – but the character who commits suicide at the novel’s end is hardly “timid, ignorant, and faint-spirited.” Roxane’s ability to act in defiance of despotic authority undercuts the despot’s claim to total authority exercised through the paralysis that fear creates – and the supposed absence of political solutions in the anti-political despotic state. In fact, given the little we know about Roxane’s personal history, Montesquieu seems to indicate that it was Usbek’s initial attack that compelled her seek out this alternative affective regime. Recall that Usbek himself mentions Roxane summoning her own “courage.” Unlike Lucretia, who “dies because words are not enough to reveal her moral qualities,”<sup>282</sup> Roxane’s death confirms her virtue in a way that her life within the seraglio never could.<sup>283</sup> Her death is the “ultimate form of self-legitimation and self-understanding.”<sup>284</sup>

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<sup>280</sup> Berman, *The Politics of Authenticity*, 25.

<sup>281</sup> Grosrichard, *The Sultan’s Court*, 45.

<sup>282</sup> Rebecca Langlands, *Sexual Morality in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 95.

<sup>283</sup> Lisa Lowe argues that Roxane does have one available method of resistance. “In Usbek’s retelling, Roxane’s terror is evident, yet she appears to have practiced one potent form of resistance: what Usbek wants to construe as Roxane’s modesty is her means of refusal. To disallow Usbek ‘une possession tranquille,’ to refuse willing or passionate participation, is her only weapon of resistance.” *Critical Terrains: French and British Orientalisms* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 69.

<sup>284</sup> Margaret Higonnet, “Frames of Female Suicide,” *Studies in the Novel* 32 (2000): 233.

In spite of this, both women's deaths are frequently interpreted as sacrifices to a larger, masculine culture rather than the autonomous acts of independent subjects. In an influential reading, Sandra Joshel argues that "Lucretia's actions result in her own eradication. She is sacrificed so the men of her class may win their liberty – their ability to act. Her language kills no less than her actions."<sup>285</sup> Joshel goes on to contrast Lucretia with Brutus, arguing, "Brutus's words and actions bring a political order in which men like himself can act; his sacrifice preserves that order." But by this logic, any action taken by a woman would necessarily be sacrificial, as there was no public role for women – to enter the public domain was to engineer one's own end. That Lucretia is the author of her own demise is, of course, not questionable – but it demonstrates a certain degree of cognitive dissonance to claim that she is both wholly responsible for her own "eradication" *and* sacrificed by others in pursuit of political ends. Were she a soldier who died in the siege on Ardea, would she not be honored? If we want to properly politicize Lucretia's death, we need to consider it in light of the republican politics it both draws on and instigates, as well as the premium such politics places on civic virtue and a willingness to place the public good before one's own. Lucretia can sacrifice herself, without being sacrificed.

Even if Lucretia's suicide is treated as noble, albeit in so far as it fulfills a role within patriarchal society, Roxane's suicide is often depicted as futile or an example of a woman overrun by her passions. The same qualities are attributed to her that one might more readily assign to Usbek. Diana Schaub, for instance, describes Roxane as "duplicitous in her speech and deed, governed by passion."<sup>286</sup> This is, at a basic level, factually correct: Roxane *has* lied to

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<sup>285</sup> Sandra Joshel, "The Body Female and the Body Politic: Livy's Lucretia and Verginia," in *Pornography and Representation in Greece and Rome*, ed. Amy Richlin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 127-128. Echoing this is Michael Mosher's determination that Lucretia "showed men who they must become. Brutus later demonstrates that he can sacrifice sons to the republic." "Rousseau, Gender, and Republican Will," *Political Theory* 33 (2005): 299.

<sup>286</sup> Schaub, *Erotic Liberalism*, 54.

Usbek (at the very least, she has found a lover in his absence). But given Roxane's final words and their assertion of independence, the assessment rings false: she is not pursuing material or physical pleasures for their own sake. Rather, her pursuit and experience of them is indicative of her broader search from freedom within the despotic constraints of the seraglio – to say Roxane is governed by passion is to miss that she is driven by a search for personal freedom.

Julia Douthwaite makes a more persuasive criticism of Roxane's self-destruction, arguing that "Montesquieu's Persian experiment comes to a conventional conclusion: death, at her own hand, of the misfit woman and the larger social system unperturbed. Roxane's suicide is often interpreted as a gesture of final freedom, indicating the symbolic death of the master and, by extension, the annihilation of the despotic oriental system. While Usbek's harem is effectively destroyed... I do not believe this ending suggests a universal condemnation of all sexual tyranny, but rather the logical climax of Usbek's moral and affective bad faith."<sup>287</sup> Douthwaite justifiably claims that the seraglio's destruction is almost the inevitable outcome, or "logical climax," of the pressures imposed upon, and by, Usbek's self-contradictions, his "bad faith." But it is not necessary to read the *Lettres* as an either-or scenario wherein Roxane's suicide represents *either* a pointless reaction to an "unperturbed" social system *or* "gesture of final freedom [and] a universal condemnation of all sexual tyranny." To take the latter position would be to mistake the *Lettres* for a feminist text by reading past the political allegory of the seraglio in favor of reading it as a story of the liberation of Usbek's wives as individual women. It remains the case

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<sup>287</sup> Douthwaite, *Exotic Women*, 100. See also Mosher's assessment that Roxane's "rebellion fails" for the "obvious reason... that [Montesquieu] thought her rebellion was utopian" in "The Judgmental Gaze of European Women: Gender, Sexuality, and the Critique of Republican Rule," *Political Theory* 22 (1994): 27. Additionally, see Boer, "Despotism from under the Veil," and Mary McAlpin, "Between Men for All Eternity: Feminocentrism in Montesquieu's *Lettres Persanes*," *Eighteenth-Century Life* 24 (2000): 45-61.

that only Roxane is liberated and only through choosing to die.<sup>288</sup> And if we consider Roxane's suicide in light of Lucretia and turn to the *Lois*, we can see that it represents something greater than an act of fruitless defiance committed against a reactionless system.

Montesquieu held quite exceptional views about suicide given the time in which he lived, to the dismay of his readers.<sup>289</sup> Uncharacteristically for the time, he regarded suicide as most often the “effect of madness” and was sympathetic to its victims. However, he differentiated such deaths with psychological causes at their root from specifically political deaths, noting in repeated asides, “[we] do not find in history that the Romans ever killed themselves without a cause.”<sup>290</sup> In other words, he differentiated between self-regarding and other-regarding deaths and finds the first tragic and the second honorable, frequently praising the heroic suicides of ancient Romans. Driven to the point by the suicides of Cato, Brutus, and Cassius, but speaking generally, Montesquieu observed that

self-love, the love of our own preservation, is transformed in so many ways, and acts by such contrary principles, that it leads us to sacrifice our being for the love of our being. And such is the value we set on ourselves that we consent to cease living because of a natural and obscure instinct that makes us love ourselves more than our very life.<sup>291</sup>

We can see both Lucretia and Roxane in this description of the principled suicide, the refusal to remain the victim of Tarquin (or Usbek). In taking her own life, Lucretia in essence overrides his violation and claims some agency in a situation that appears to afford her very little. Roxane, in

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<sup>288</sup> Given that we do not know with absolute certainty what happens to the rest of the wives, there remains a possibility that Zéphir and her daughter also find freedom in the wake of the seraglio's collapse – but such speculative optimism seems unwarranted.

<sup>289</sup> Goulemot, “Montesquieu : du suicide légitimé à l'apologie du suicide héroïque,” 307-318. See also Dominique Godineau, *S'abrégé les jours: Le suicide en France au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2012).

<sup>290</sup> See *Spirit of the Laws* XIV.12, 241 (*Esprit des lois*, 485) and XXIX.9, 606-607 (*Esprit des lois*, 870-871).

<sup>291</sup> *Considerations on the Romans*, chapter 12, 117-118 (*OC* II, 136): “l'amour propre, l'amour de notre conservation, se transforme en tant de manières, et agit par des principes si contraires, qu'il nous porte à sacrifier notre être pour l'amour de notre être ; et tel est le cas que nous faisons de nous-mêmes, que nous consentons à cesser de vivre, par un instinct naturel et obscur qui fait que nous nous aimons plus que notre vie même.” This concept of “*amour propre*” shares little with Rousseau's, to which I return in the third chapter.

refusing “her being,” makes the one available choice left to the despotic subject, likewise laying claim to agency under a regime that denies the possibility.

If not on a literal level, as in the case of Lucretia, Roxane’s death nonetheless provides an opportunity for action by others. Lucretia is not lionized because she herself founded the Roman Republic but because her actions prompted Brutus to overthrow the Tarquins and establish the consuls. Indeed, much of her significance comes not from her act of suicide but from the meaning her body conveys when displayed to her fellow Roman subjects. Similarly, Roxane’s suicide has already occurred some time before Usbek receives her letter, leaving the letter itself to bear the symbolic weight of her actions, as her body could not. To emphasize the *act* of suicide in either the case of Lucretia or Roxane is to miss how they are *utilized* in their deaths, by Brutus but also by Lucretia and Roxane themselves, to greater ends – for a cause. Lucretia, though she insists she is guiltless, refuses to be made a model for “unchaste woman” by the deeds of Tarquin. Roxane’s death literally refuses Usbek’s rule and figuratively rejects the legitimacy of Usbek’s despotic rule over the ‘state’ of the seraglio.

It is Douthwaite’s assessment, itself representative of a host of contemporary interpretations,<sup>292</sup> I have attempted to call into question here, primarily by juxtaposing the despotic/emotive/self-regarding regime that Usbek represents and the republican/affective/other-regarding regime that Roxane’s death offers. Contrary to Douthwaite’s claim, it is not possible that “the larger social system” could remain “unperturbed.” If the seraglio stands for the state, then its collapse must reverberate beyond “death, at her own hand, of the misfit woman.” Rather, “it marks a point of departure in European thought, and prefigures an age of revolutionary action

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<sup>292</sup> See notes 95, 97, and 103.

to come.”<sup>293</sup> It does not matter whether Usbek is ‘enlightened’ by Roxane’s rebellion because he has lost all authority by the time he receives her letters – the subjects no longer live in fear. It is one of the enduring ambiguities of the *Lettres* that we do not know whether Roxane, in addition to murdering the eunuchs, has also killed her fellow wives – if not, then she has left them to rebuild in the absence of the despot. If this may be the case, then the novel’s conclusion also functions as a republican opening.

This brings us to a final paradox of the *Lettres persanes*. If we read the text as an account of life under a despotic regime, in which the seraglio mirrors the state, it arguably does not matter that Roxane is a woman. Insofar as she lives in a condition of fear conditioned by the whims and desires of a despot, she becomes the every(woman), standing in for all subjects without agency in all despotic regimes. Roxane’s sexual servitude may be read as a condition shared by Louis XIV and the Regent’s subjects, her feminine weakness compounding the shame inherent in such a comparison. Her rebellion, and her conversion to a republican ethos (that, though historically gendered, need not necessarily be),<sup>294</sup> marks a rejection not only of Usbek’s personal despotism but that of the French Regency.

### **Conclusion: Fearful Symmetry**

In reading Usbek as consistent with the depiction of the despotic leader in Montesquieu’s *Laws* and Roxane as a character informed by the Roman heroine Lucretia, who maintains an alternative set of affective practices even when ostensibly under the control of Usbek, I have

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<sup>293</sup> Berman, *The Politics of Authenticity*, 8. In spite of this, Berman finds Roxane’s revolt, which he attributes to all of the wives, to be “abortive and self-destructive.”

<sup>294</sup> For related explorations of the relationship between gender and republicanism, see Stephanie Jed, *Wings For Our Courage: Gender, Erudition, and Republican Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011) and R. Claire Snyder, *Citizen-Soldiers and Manly Warriors: Military Service and Gender in the Civil Republican Tradition* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999).



made three arguments, which I will point to here as tentative conclusions, each of which deserve further attention.

The first claim has been made implicitly throughout and is an argument in favor of continuity, rather than rupture, in Montesquieu's thought. Modern scholarly attitudes toward the relationship between the *Lettres persanes* and the *Esprit des lois* are mixed. Those who would have us read the *Laws* as the definitive Montesquieian statement argue that the *Lettres* is a youthful diversion, informative but not representative of the mature thinker's ideas, which are decidedly lacking any "youthful radicalism."<sup>295</sup> Those who hold such a view look to the *Lettres* tend to focus on the ways in which it "prefigures" the later *Laws* and argue that by "read[ing] carefully," we can "discover" and "piece together" "bits of evidence" of a "more discerning" Montesquieu in the later text.<sup>296</sup> I have attempted here to draw on both texts to establish a coherent set of political behaviors and affective practices within the story of the *Lettres* that is frequently reinforced or developed by the vastness that is the *Laws*.

The second argument is that a thread of republicanism is woven throughout the *Lettres* and not simply as part of a youthful fancy on Montesquieu's part, but rather as a literary and political experiment in the co-existence of multiple kinds of affective practices within a text and, by extension, a political system. By reading Roxane, and her afterlife in her letter to Usbek, as modeled on Lucretia, and in juxtaposition with Montesquieu's position on suicide, I have demonstrated the possibility of a republican, other-regarding regime in the wake of Usbek's despotic, self-regarding seraglio.

The third, and central, argument is that in the *Lettres persanes*, Montesquieu criticizes the excesses characteristic of despotism, offering an alternative affective regimen capable of

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<sup>295</sup> Johnson Kent Wright, "Montesquieuan Moments: *The Spirit of the Laws* and Republicanism," *Proceedings of the Western Society for French History* 35 (2007): 149.

<sup>296</sup> Robin, "Reflections on Fear," 349, 350.

supplanting despotism. This regimen specifically advocates republican values and practices. Instead of excess, Montesquieu praises moderation; in place of fear and paralysis, he urges virtue and autonomy. To those who would ask what is particularly *political* about the passions, I suggest that the passions' apparently apolitical, or personal, nature is a modern convention rather than objective fact. I contend that further examination of the nexus of passions and republican thought hinges on the issue of virtue. An understanding of virtue which takes into account something as personal and subjective as individuals' emotions as motivating factors in their political behavior may be one way to avoid the imposition of external values while still affirming the centrality of virtue in republican political theory.

## CHAPTER 3 | Rites of the Republic

I know that the man without passions is a chimaera.  
- Rousseau, *Letter to d'Alembert*<sup>297</sup>

### Introduction: Rousseau and Civic Spectacle

I have contended that the republican state historically places great affective demands on its citizens through its emphasis on civic virtue. More particularly, classical republicanism emphasizes a substantive notion of civic virtue that privileges duty, honor, responsibility, concern for the greater good, and dedication to public service. In comparison, contemporary, or neo-, republicanism emphasizes the identification of freedom with non-domination and the ensuing institutional challenges to the instantiation of that ideal. Nor is neo-republicanism alone in neglecting civic virtue: whereas republicanism clings to the potential of its citizens' virtue and the idea that something akin to character, with its messy, emotional implications, is required to participate in politics, liberalism will come to replace the burden of virtue with the burden of dispassionate judgment. In brief, remarkably little attention has thus far been paid to the function and substance of civic virtue in contemporary republican political thought. Though we are in the midst of the "affective turn," as well as a republican revival, in both its historical and neo-republican modes, the contemporary literature on republicanism continues to suffer from what I have called an affective deficit. The language of civic virtue abounds but it is largely devoid of evaluative criteria; most often it appears in a moralizing guise that sublimates its explicitly

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<sup>297</sup> Rousseau, *Politics and the Arts*, ed. Allan Bloom (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1960), 117. "Je sais que l'homme sans passions est une chimere." *J.-J. Rousseau, ... à M. d'Alembert, sur son article "Genève", dans le VIIe vol. de l'Encyclopédie, et particulièrement sur le projet d'établir un théâtre de comédie en cette ville* (Amsterdam: M.M. Rey, 1758), 222. Hereafter *Lettre à d'Alembert*.

emotional qualities.<sup>298</sup> In other words, what remains curiously absent from contemporary analyses of civic virtue is the emotional dimension of republican citizenship.

My aim in this chapter is to demonstrate that this disjunction between republicanism and the passions has not always been the case by considering one way in which eighteenth-century thinkers incorporated positive sentiments of affection, love, and sympathy into political practices via ceremony, festival, and ritual. Against the old story of a hyper-rational Enlightenment, now satisfactorily under scrutiny, we need a new narrative of how certain thinkers and writers emphasized the affective potential of civic rituals in the establishment and perpetuation of republican regimes. Specifically, I consider moments of republican (re-) foundings in the work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. I suggest that he advocates the use of ceremonies to recreate the original social contract with an affective reaffirmation and to thus infuse civic virtue with substantively emotional commitments to one's *patria*.

Why, though, turn to Rousseau to remedy the affective deficit? Though likely the most personally emotive of Enlightenment figures, his work offers several challenges to recuperating the passions within the republican tradition in a democratically productive manner. He is, after all, sometimes treated as the father of modern nationalism and has been accused of mistaking totalitarianism for democracy.<sup>299</sup> Yet Rousseau's emphasis on ceremony, festival, and ritual provides a crucial exception to my general claim about republicanism's affective deficit. As they function in his works, ceremony, festival, and ritual offer moments of republican reconstitution, in which affective attachment to the nation's past simultaneously binds one to its present and to one's fellow citizens. As such, his writings on constitutionalism and the theater, in particular,

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<sup>298</sup> On the tendency of civic virtue to lapse into moralizing, see Alan Keenan, *Democracy in Question: Democratic Openness in a Time of Political Closure* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 21 and 176-182.

<sup>299</sup> See Anne M. Cohler, *Rousseau and Nationalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1970) and Jacob Talmon, *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy* (New York: Beacon Press, 1952). I return to the issue of Rousseau's relationship to modern nationalism below.

offer a critical point of entry for developing a theory of affective practices capable of integrating republican practices, such as ceremony, and civic virtue.

If we consider that the affective register required by republicanism tends toward the selfless and virtuous – given its emphasis on duty, honor, responsibility, and concern for the greater good – ceremony, festival, and ritual allow citizens an emotional outlet for naturally arising tensions. Nonetheless, so long as they are managed by the state, such practices promise to ultimately reinforce its desired norms, which in this case are republican.<sup>300</sup> It is particularly well documented that the leaders of the French Revolution and its greatest enthusiasts, attentive students of Rousseau, utilized a series of civic rituals in an attempt to instantiate the new republic's authority and legitimacy and to encourage the devotion of ordinary French citizens by infusing traditional Christian, particularly Catholic, rites with new secular meaning.<sup>301</sup> Here I want to suggest that Rousseau's insistence upon the importance of ritual stems from his belief that it enacts a moment of "re-founding" in which the republican state is reconstituted and republican citizens recreated and recommitted to the state but also to one another. This notion of re-founding, or rebirth, is of course an element of many ritual practices. One need only think of

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<sup>300</sup> Outside of the French revolutionary and republican literatures, I am particularly indebted to the following works on the roles of ceremony and ritual: Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, trans. Hélène Iswolsky (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984 [1965]); Natalie Zemon Davis, "The Reasons of Misrule: Youth Groups and Charivaris in Sixteenth-Century France," *Past and Present* 50 (1971): 41-75, republished in *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 97-123; Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *Le Carnaval de Romans : de la Chandeleur au mercredi des Cendres, 1579-1580* (Paris: Gallimard, 1979); Edward Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990); and Richard Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980).

<sup>301</sup> This is not, of course, to suggest that the French Revolutionaries were the first to employ such a technique. Two classic accounts of the period remain F.-A. Aulard, *Le Culte de la raison et le culte de l'Être Suprême, 1793-1794* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1892) and Mona Ozouf, *La Fête révolutionnaire 1789-1799* (Paris: Gallimard, 1976), translated as *Festivals and the French Revolution* by Alan Sheridan (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988). For an overview, see Bernard Manin, "Rousseau," in *Dictionnaire critique de la Révolution française*, ed. François Furet and Ozouf (Paris: Flammarion, 1988). Ozouf finds Rousseau's fingerprints all over the festivals of 1789, and considers him a particular influence on Robespierre (see *La Fête révolutionnaire*). Nonetheless, Ozouf resists the idea that the ritual practices she discusses may have begun before the Revolution itself. See David Bell, "Le caractère national et l'imaginaire républicain au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle," *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 57 (2002): 867-888, for a critique of that view.

the Christian sacrament of baptism. Yet the Rousseauian concept of re-founding is distinct in three regards: first, in its performance of the democratic paradox; second, in the particular nature of its affective content; third, in its temporal implications. I take up each of these dimensions – performance, affect, temporality – in turn.

I begin in the following section by situating Rousseau’s rituals of re-founding with respect to the “declarative acts” discussed by Jacques Derrida in the latter’s “Declarations of Independence,” a talk delivered in 1976 on the occasion of the American bicentennial. Derrida orients us to the performative dimension of the well-known “democratic paradox,” or “the paradox of the founding.” I argue that for Rousseau, ritual contributes to the construction, but more importantly, the maintenance, of the general will, such that he deems rituals of re-founding necessary in spite of their potential dangers, to which he also alerts us. Through ongoing civic ceremonies, such as public games, military parades, and public songs and pledges, consensus may form and faction may be avoided.<sup>302</sup> Moreover, civic ceremony, as opposed to theater, which Rousseau attacks so thoroughly in his *Lettre à d’Alembert*, requires that citizens be participants rather than spectators, actors rather than an audience. In short, performance is at the heart of ritual. What distinguishes republican ritual from spectacle is the participatory dimension. While one *observes* a spectacle, one engages or joins in ceremonies, festivals, and rituals, even if only nominally.<sup>303</sup>

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<sup>302</sup> To give a loose contemporary parallel to Rousseau’s argument, consider, for example, saying the Pledge of Allegiance in American elementary schools each morning or the tendency, since September 11, 2001, of ballparks to play “God Bless America” rather than “Take Me Out to the Ball Game” during the seventh inning stretch. These are, of course, notably thin forms of affective practices, such that we might fairly regard them as signals meant to indicate greater depth of feeling than they actually contain. Rousseau’s project, on the other hand, is meant to reflect a depth of feeling actually experienced.

<sup>303</sup> Note that ritual is invariably shorthand for “political ritual”, such as the French Revolution’s *Fête de la Raison*. Though demonstrably an attempt to redirect loyalty to the church toward the state, political rituals such as this and the other revolutionary *fêtes* nonetheless differed from private acts of devotion in so far as they took place in public - indeed, in crowds - and were specifically civic-minded affairs.

For Rousseau, ritual is intimately connected to a particular affective experience: love of country.<sup>304</sup> The cultivation of this particular passion is the very purpose of republican rituals. In the second section, I focus on the affective content of ritual by considering the role of love, specifically *amour de soi-même* and *amour-propre*, in the establishment of republican regimes such as those described in his writings on Corsica and Poland.<sup>305</sup> If, as Rousseau suggests in the *Discours sur l'inégalité*, humankind is irreversibly corrupted following the formation of society and the concomitant shift from *amour de soi-même* to *amour-propre*, then the task Rousseau sets is one of fashioning a politically productive model of *amour-propre* through the practice of civil ceremonies. Republican *amour-propre*, expressed via political ritual, motivates the individual to regard love of the self and the well being of the community as inextricably linked. This link, when successfully forged, is the triumph of the general will over the will of all.

In the chapter's third section, I turn to the temporal dimension of ritual.<sup>306</sup> Because political ritual is often understood to invoke shared, or mythical, history (frequently to bolster a

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<sup>304</sup> Beyond the context of the French Revolution, scholars have been particularly attentive to the role of festivals and ritual in the process of nineteenth century state consolidation. See, *inter alia*, James Lehring, *The Melodramatic Thread: Spectacle and Political Culture in Modern France* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007); Ryan Minor, *Choral Fantasies: Music, Festivity, and Nationhood in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); and George Mosse, *The Nationalisation of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the Third Reich* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975).

<sup>305</sup> Though the contrast is instructive, I set aside "domestic love" as depicted in *Émile* and *Julie*. For an instructive and pleasurable interpretation of those texts' sexual politics, see Elizabeth Rose Wingrove, *Rousseau's Republican Romance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000). Nonetheless it bears noting that since *Julie*'s publication, it has been suggested that the world of Clarens in *Julie* is a microcosm of Rousseau's ideal polity – or simply a utopia – but to fully explore that notion would divert us from our main purpose. See Mira Morgenstern's diagnosis of Clarens as a "benevolent patriarchy" in "Women, Power, and the Politics of Everyday Life," *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, ed. Lynda Lange (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2002), 113-143. Judith Shklar, cutting to the point, labels it an autarchy and the patriarch Wolmar a charismatic lawgiver. See *Men and Citizens: A Study of Rousseau's Social Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 150-155.

<sup>306</sup> Important works on temporality and ritual include Catherine Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997) and Edward Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), especially chapter 2.

reigning ideology), it is often regarded as oriented toward the past.<sup>307</sup> For Rousseau, however, the purpose of political rituals is to continually reconstitute a new present. To parse this delicate distinction, I build on a concept introduced by historian Lynn Hunt in *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (1984), that of the “mythic present.”<sup>308</sup> Hunt defines the mythic present as the recreation of “the sacred moment of the new consensus,” with an emphasis on *new*, rather than a call back to an ancient past or for a renewal of tradition. For Rousseau (and the revolutionaries who studied him), the ideal was not the reintroduction of Roman republican ceremonies but the instantiation of republican civic practices suited to specific national communities in their current form. In summoning up this “repetition with a difference,” the “sacred moment” of the mythic present is invoked by all citizens. I suggest that the centrality of re-founding to Rousseau’s thought should be understood as a means to artificially halt the decline of virtue described in the *Discours sur l’inégalité* as rooted within the very moment of society’s inception, at the moment of the giving of the laws. By providing a method by which the people, as both citizens and sovereign, can reconstitute themselves in perpetuity, Rousseau, though not explicitly, offers a solution to the problem posed by his own introduction of the lawgiver.

In the following sections, I thus establish the performative, affective, and temporal dimensions of republican ritual in the constitutional writings of Rousseau.<sup>309</sup> I contrast these with his treatment of spectacle as a practice encouraging crass sentimentality, shallowness of feeling, and disengagement from one’s fellow citizens. Ultimately for Rousseau, if ritual is the form of

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<sup>307</sup> Certain kinds of rituals, particularly rites of passages, are bound, alternately, to the human body, the natural world, and the seasons. See Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, trans. Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960 [1909]).

<sup>308</sup> Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004 [1984]), 27.

<sup>309</sup> Because the affective and temporal dimensions can only be consequent of the performative, the latter receives the bulk of my attention.



the performance that one enacts as part of a political community, and love provides the correct affective orientation toward the republic to adopt during ritual practice, the mythic present of the republican founding is what one ought to be oriented *toward*. The coordination of these three factors contributes to the establishment and maintenance of the general will, the essential factor of Rousseauian politics.

### **I. Performing Re-founding through Ritual**

In “Declarations of Independence,” his meditation on the American Declaration and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man, Derrida considers the following question: “who signs, and with what so-called proper name, the declarative act which founds an institution?”<sup>310</sup> What he finds in introducing this question is the democratic paradox of “the people.” That is, the people are required to exist in order to found the institution, but it is only through the founding of the institution that the people are created. As Derrida notes, “... this people does not exist. They do *not* exist as an entity, it does *not* exist, *before* this declaration, not *as such*. If it gives birth to itself, as free and independent subject, as possible signer, it can hold only in the act of the signature. The signature invents the signer.”<sup>311</sup> This paradox of founding, which Rousseau himself articulates in the *Contract*, cannot be solved by resorting to claims of legitimacy or authority, subject as these would be to the same aporetic puzzle, for only through the founding can democratic legitimacy or authority be claimed. (Hence why this is specifically a problem for democratic regimes that place high values on legitimacy.) But it is also, in Bonnie Honig’s

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<sup>310</sup> Jacques Derrida, “Declarations of Independence,” trans. Tom Keenan and Tom Pepper, *New Political Science* 15 (1986): 8. Emphasis in the original. Derrida first delivered the paper at the University of Virginia in 1976. It was then published as “Déclarations d’Indépendance,” in *Otobiographies : L’enseignement de Nietzsche et la politique du nom propre* (Paris: Galilée, 1984), 13-22. The English translation was later reprinted in *Negotiations: Interventions and Interviews, 1971-2001* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 46-54.

<sup>311</sup> Derrida, “Declarations of Independence,” 10.

words, “a structural feature of language. This gap that marks *all* forms of utterance is always filled (whether or not we acknowledge it) by a *deus ex machina*- if not by God himself, then by nature, the subject, language, or tradition.”<sup>312</sup>

Though not usually framed as such, the first task of works in the social contract tradition, including those of Hobbes and Locke in addition to Rousseau, is to offer a *deus ex machina* with the most persuasive claim to legitimacy or authority that bestows legitimacy. They do so by arguing for the supremacy of a particular set of standards, be it the security of the people or the right to private property, into which the people will then agree to contract.<sup>313</sup> In Derrida’s terms, those standards, themselves an invention, in turn invent the legitimacy then bestowed on the regime that the newly constituted people have authorized, which in turn is what formally constitutes the people. Though it has the appearance of politics-as-Möbius-strip, in which the constitution of the people is endlessly protracted, it is, in the case of Rousseau, indicative of his concern for providing a properly democratic foundation for the republican state. It is thus not a little problematic that Rousseau’s solution to this self-reflexivity woven into the democratic paradox is the lawgiver, whom he introduces in Book II, Chapter VII, of the *Contrat social*. The lawgiver is extra-political and, according to Rousseau’s critics, anti-democratic. As I discuss in the third section below, he is certainly implicated in extra-institutional methods, not least of which is the emotion stirred up by republican rituals necessary to reconstitute the people in the future absence of the lawgiver.

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<sup>312</sup> Bonnie Honig, “Declarations of Independence: Arendt and Derrida on the Problem of Founding a Republic,” *American Political Science Review* 85 (1991): 105.

<sup>313</sup> On the challenges this paradox poses to democracy in particular, see also Marcel Gauchet, *La Démocratie contre elle-même* (Paris: Gallimard, 2002); Bonnie Honig, “Between Decision and Deliberation: Political Paradox in Democratic Theory,” *American Political Science Review* 101 (2007): 1-17; Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and the Socialist Strategy* (New York: Verso Books, 1985); Claude Lefort, *Essais sur le politique : xix<sup>e</sup> et xx<sup>e</sup> siècles* (Paris: Seuil, 1986); Chantal Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox* (New York: Verso Books, 2000); Sofia Näsström, “The Legitimacy of the People,” *Political Theory* 35 (2007): 624-658; and Keenan, *Democracy in Question*.

The importance of ceremony and ritual to Rousseau's political thought is a neglected undercurrent in most recent secondary scholarship, tended to obliquely if at all.<sup>314</sup> Yet ceremony and ritual recurs as a theme in most of his major works, most obviously in the *Lettre à d'Alembert* but also in his constitutional recommendations for Corsica and Poland and his call for a civil religion in *Du contrat social*.<sup>315</sup> As Jean Starobinski, one of Rousseau's most perceptive readers, notes, "without risk of exaggeration, one could see his depiction of the idealized festival as one of the key images of Rousseau's thought."<sup>316</sup> As with his treatment of other issues with which he was deeply concerned, such as sovereignty, the nature of the general will, and representation, Rousseau's treatment of ritual is marked by paradox. Civic ceremony is extravagant but worthwhile, corrosive but necessary.<sup>317</sup> But unlike his interest in those other subjects which form the basis of his political philosophy, ceremony and ritual are explicitly a means to an end. They are the means by which political leaders, and citizens, establish a patriotic ethos conducive to the maintenance of the republican state. The question thus becomes, *how* does ritual contribute to the construction of republican civic identity such that Rousseau deems it essential in spite of its potential dangers? How does the production of, and participation in,

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<sup>314</sup> The exception to this is a recent article by Eoin Daly, "Ritual and Symbolic Power in Rousseau's Constitutional Thought," *Law, Culture, and Humanities* (published online before print on September 24, 2013), 1-27. Though I only had the benefit of reading his piece after drafting this chapter, I do agree with Daly about the importance of the relationship between ritual and *amour-propre*. Nonetheless, I find that his argument relies on a heavily primitivist interpretation of Rousseau and several unsupported assertions about the nature of Rousseau's thought and republicanism more generally.

<sup>315</sup> Neither the *Considérations sur le gouvernement de Pologne* (1771-1772) nor the *Projet de constitution pour la Corse* (1765) were published during Rousseau's lifetime, though the former may have circulated in manuscript form. I draw primarily on the essay on Poland here, where he discusses ceremonies extensively, compared to the piece on Corsica, where he offers a vision of society that depends in part on isolation and on operating with the most skeletal governmental institutions possible. Nonetheless, certain comparisons remain instructive.

<sup>316</sup> Jean Starobinski, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: La Transparence et l'obstacle, suivi de sept essais sur Rousseau* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971 [1957]), 117.

<sup>317</sup> Throughout "Ritual and Symbolic Power in Rousseau's Constitutional Thought," Daly emphasizes that Rousseau advocates austerity for his republican cities. While this is an accurate observation about Rousseau's treatment of Corsica, it is less clearly so for Poland. While Rousseau encourages a sort of Spartan simplicity for the citizens' daily lives, he hardly treats Poland as rustic (as he clearly does Corsica). Moreover, though the rituals he advocates are not to display elaborate wealth or otherwise mimic the courtly entertainments of Louis's Paris, the fact that the majority of an agricultural community can take the time to celebrate en masse speaks to a certain degree of luxury or, at the very least, an ordering of priorities that places communal feeling above maximum productivity.

republican civic ceremony generate and reaffirm the “mythic present”? And what is the connection between ritual and the general will?

I suggest that for Rousseau, the performance or enactment of ritual, binds an abstract sense of identity to a concrete set of political practices. As Wendy Nielsen has noted, “Rousseau’s theories about theater, theatricality, performance, and civic identity played such a large part in French Revolutionary culture because they responded to a specific need: the education, edification, and construction of a new republican identity.”<sup>318</sup> The festivals that Rousseau describes, particularly in the *Considérations sur le gouvernement de Pologne*, are demonstrations of emotion that one both enacts and receives moral instruction from by virtue of one’s participation. This experience in turn generates the general will necessary for the functioning of a republican state: “so long as several men united consider themselves a single body, they have but a single will, which is concerned with their common preservation, and the general welfare.”<sup>319</sup>

Rousseau’s language repeatedly emphasizes the emotional dimension of ritual’s purpose: in considering “the state of the question” regarding Poland’s constitution, for instance, he suggests that the primary question is, “[h]ow, then, can one move hearts and get the fatherland and its laws loved?”<sup>320</sup> The answer for him rests in the models offered by the “spirit of the ancient institutions.” He is referring to those of the Roman republic, but not exclusively those:

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<sup>318</sup> Wendy Nielsen, “Staging Rousseau’s Republic: French Revolutionary Festivals and Olympe de Gouges,” *The Eighteenth Century* 43 (2002), 269.

<sup>319</sup> *Social Contract*, Book IV, chapter 1, 121 (OC III, 437): “Tant que plusieurs hommes réunis se considerent comme un seul corps, ils n’ont qu’une seule volonté qui se rapporte à la commune conservation, et au-bien-être general.” The English translations of the *Social Contract* and, below, *Considerations on the Government of Poland* and the *Discourse on Political Economy*, are from *The Social Contract and Other Later Political Writings*, ed. and trans. Victor Gourevitch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

<sup>320</sup> *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, 179 (OC III, 955): “Par où donc émouvoir les cœurs, et faire aimer la patrie et ses loix?” “Considérations sur le gouvernement de Pologne.”

the paradigmatic founders he refers to by name are Moses, Lycurgus, and Numa. “All of them,” he writes,

sought bonds that might attach the Citizens to the father and to one another, and they found them in distinctive practices... in games which kept the Citizens frequently assembled, in exercises which increased their pride and self-esteem [*leur fierté et l'estime d'eux-mêmes*] together with their vigor and their strength, in spectacles which by reminding them of the history of their ancestors, their misfortunes, their virtues, their victories, stirred their hearts, fired them with a lively spirit of emulation, and strongly attached them to the fatherland with which they were being kept constantly occupied.<sup>321</sup>

Through these “practices,” “you will give them a vigor which will make them do by preference and passion the things one never does well enough when one does them only by duty or interest.”<sup>322</sup> The affective content of republican ritual must be genuine, “something simple and innocent which suits republican morals [*mœurs*]”<sup>323</sup> or else it would be susceptible to the criticisms Rousseau levies against the practice of attending the theater in his *Lettre à M. d’Alembert*.

Yet, as I mentioned above, the ancient “spirit” was intended to guide, not dictate, the content of Corsican or Polish practices. The key to developing successful republican ceremonies is to draw upon individual national histories that can (indeed, must) be well-known. Though the role of national histories are usually dismissed as a propagandistic add-on to the institutional organization at the heart of state-planning, Rousseau gives it pride of place in “Sur le

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<sup>321</sup> *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, 181-182 (OC III, 958): “Tous cherchent des liens qui attachent les Citoyens à la patrie et les uns aux autres, et ils les trouvèrent dans des usages particuliers... dans des jeux qui tenoient beaucoup les citoyens rassemblés, dans des exercices qui augmentoient avec leur vigueur et leurs forces leur fierté et l’estime d’eux-mêmes, dans des spectacles qui, leur rappelant l’histoire de leurs ancêtres, leurs malheurs, leurs vertus, leurs victoires, intéressoient leurs cœurs, les enflamoient d’une vive emulation, et les attachoient fortement à cette patrie dont on ne cessoit de les occuper.”

<sup>322</sup> *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, 184 (OC III, 961): “Donnez une autre pente aux passions des Polonois, vous donnerez à leurs ames une physionomie nationale qui les distinguera des autres peuples, qui les empêchera de se fonder, de se plaire, de s’allier avec eux, une vigueur qui remplacera le jeu abusif des vains préceptes, qui leur fera faire par goût et par passion, ce qu’on ne fait jamais assez bien quand on ne le fait que par devoir ou par intérêt.”

<sup>323</sup> *Politics and the Arts*, 100 (*Lettre à d’Alembert*, 186): “... quelque chose de simple et d’innocent qui convient à des mœurs républicaines.”

gouvernement de Pologne.” Contrary to the *Contrat social*, where civil religion, a comparatively “soft” concern, appears only toward the end of the work, Rousseau reverses the order in which he discusses the Polish (re-)constitution.<sup>324</sup> By beginning with the role of ceremony and ritual, he structurally highlights it in a way he had not in the *Contrat*. Only after having assessed the state of the Polish “soul” (a term he returns to repeatedly), and its suitability for constitutional reform does he move on to institutional matters.<sup>325</sup> Likewise in his treatment of Corsica, he insists that “the first rule we have to follow is the national character. Every people has or ought to have a national character, and if it lacks one it would be necessary to begin by giving it one.”<sup>326</sup>

While strong claims that Rousseau is the founding theorist of nationalism inscribe back into the mid-eighteenth century the faults and failings of the nineteenth century, where an identifiably modern nationalism arguably takes hold, it is unquestionable that he develops what Arthur Melzer has described as a “politics of sympathetic identification.”<sup>327</sup> This is a lesson Rousseau draws from Moses. According to Rousseau, “to keep his people from being absorbed by foreign peoples, [Moses] gave it morals and practices which could not be blended with those

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<sup>324</sup> I refrain from discussing the chapter on civil religion extensively because, true to its position behind a chapter on censorship, Rousseau’s discussion largely revolves around “a purely civil profession of faith” – that is, what one must declare. There is comparatively little said about how one must act. *Social Contract*, Book IV, chapter 8, 150 (OC III, 468).

<sup>325</sup> Constitutional reformation entails revising the role of the Polish king, as well. See §8, “Of the King” (*Considerations on the Government of Poland*, 211-215; OC III, 989-994). For references to the soul, see, among other references, pages 178 (954), 179 (956), 183 (959), and 189 (966).

<sup>326</sup> “Plan for a Constitution for Corsica,” trans. Christopher Kelly, in *The Collected Writings of Rousseau*, vol. 2, ed. Roger D. Masters and Kelly (Hanover: The University Press of New England, 2005), 133 (OC III, 913): “La première règle que nous avons à suivre est le caractère national. Tout peuple a ou doit avoir un caractère national et s’il en manque il faudroit commencer par le lui donner.”

<sup>327</sup> Arthur Melzer, “Rousseau, Nationalism, and the Politics of Sympathetic Identification,” in *Education the Prince: Essays in Honor of Harvey Mansfield*, ed. Mark Blitz and William Kristol (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000), 111-128. For arguments that Rousseau is a nationalist, or proto-nationalist, Alfred Cobban, *Rousseau and the Modern State* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1934); Cohler, *Rousseau and Nationalism* (see note 3 above); Steven Engel, “Rousseau and Imagined Communities,” *The Review of Politics* 67 (2005): 515-537; and Marc Plattner, “Rousseau and the Origins of Nationalism,” in *The Legacy of Rousseau*, ed. Clifford Orwin and Nathan Tarcov (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 183-199.

of other nations; he weighed it down with distinctive rites and ceremonies.”<sup>328</sup> The lawgiver, the role which Rousseau appropriates for himself in his writings on Corsica and Poland, must “give [citizens’] souls a national physiognomy” by reshaping their passions so that they privilege love of country.<sup>329</sup> In “Sur le gouvernement de Pologne,” this is chiefly accomplished through a rigorous education emphasizing national history.<sup>330</sup>

It is in his treatment of education that proponents of the Rousseau-as-strong-nationalist argument have their strongest evidence, because of his emphasis on internal concerns: “I want that on learning to read, he read about his country, that at ten he know all of its products, at twelve all of its provinces, roads, towns, that at fifteen he know its entire history, at sixteen all of its laws...”<sup>331</sup> The purpose of an education is to affirm national differences: “a Frenchman, an Englishman, a Spaniard, an Italian, a Russian, are all more or less the same man... At twenty a Pole should not be just another man; he should be a Pole.”<sup>332</sup> Yet even in the domain of

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<sup>328</sup> *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, 180 (OC III, 956-957): “Pour empêcher que son peuple ne se fonde parmi les peuples étrangers, il lui donna des mœurs et des usages inaliénables avec ceux des autres nations ; il le surchargea de sites, de ceremonies particulières.”

<sup>329</sup> *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, 184 (OC III, 960): “Donnez une autre pente aux passions des Polonois, vous donnerez à leurs ames une physionomie nationale...”

<sup>330</sup> In the “Plan for a Constitution for Corsica,” Rousseau argues that an agriculturally based community is the most “natural” and therefore the best choice for the Corsicans. Thus his recommendations for the cultivation of national spirit also differ from those appropriate for Poland. In a fragment appended to the *Project*, he writes, “I will be asked if it is while plowing one’s field that one acquires the talents necessary for governing. I will answer, yes in a simple and upright government such as ours. Great talents are the supplement of patriotic zeal, they are necessary for leading a people that does not love its country at all and does not honor its leaders at all... The best motive force of a government is love of the fatherland and this love is cultivated along with the fields” (156). “One me demandera si c’est en labourant son champ qu’on acquiert les talens nécessaires pour gouverner. Je répondrai que oui dans un gouvernement simple et droit tel que le notre. Les grands talens sont le supplément du zèle patriotique, ils sont nécessaires pour mener un peuple qui n’aime point son pays et n’honore point ses chefs.... Le meilleur mobile d’un gouvernement est l’amour de la patrie, et cet amour se cultive avec les champs” (OC III, 940-941).

<sup>331</sup> *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, 184 (OC III, 966): “Je veux qu’en apprenant à lire il lise des choses de son pays, qu’à dix ans il en connoisse toutes les productions, à douze toutes les provinces, tous les chemins, toutes les villes, qu’à quinze il en sache toute l’histoire, à seize toutes les loix...” In addition to this intense inward focus on the nation, Rousseau implicitly refrains from extending republican principles to relationships that extend beyond national borders, though his relationship with cosmopolitanism is more complex than usually assumed. See Tzvetan Todorov, *Frêle Bonheur : Essai sur Rousseau* (Paris: Hachette, 1985).

<sup>332</sup> *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, 189 (OC III, 966): “Un François, un Anglois, un Espagnol, un Italien, un Russe, sont tous à-peu-près le même homme... A vingt ans un Polonois ne doit pas être un autre homme ; il doit être un Polonois.” Rousseau’s plan for education here is notably different from his proposals in *Émile*, which

education, Rousseau emphasizes the importance of spectacle, specifically in pursuit of virtue: “I cannot repeat often enough that good education has to be negative. Prevent vices from arising, you will have done enough for virtue.”<sup>333</sup> Even “parents who prefer domestic education” must send their children to join in public games, where

the winners’ prizes and rewards should be distributed not arbitrarily by the coaches or school principals, but by acclamation and the judgment of the spectators; and these judgments can be trusted always to be just especially if care is taken to make these games attractive to the public by organizing them with some pomp and so that they become a spectacle...

because then “all honest folk and good patriots will regard it a duty and a pleasure to attend them.”<sup>334</sup> Rousseau implies, but does not develop, the notion that there is a symbiotic relationship between the education of children and the continued affirmation of adults’ civic virtue: as surely as the children look to the adults for models of what it means to a republican citizen, adults continue to reinforce their own virtue through the cultivation of their children’s. Educative spectacles of the sort Rousseau proposes, then, may be considered an extension of civic education, bound by a common purpose.

The mode of identification specific to civic education, and the festivals Rousseau advocates for students, is importantly distinct from the sympathetic identification that overwhelms spectators in the theater.<sup>335</sup> Rousseau explicitly distinguishes between the

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emphasize individuality and self-cultivation. That possibility exists under the plan in *Poland* but it is treated as an exception, not a goal.

<sup>333</sup> *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, 191 (OC III, 968): “Je ne redirai jamais assés que la bonne education doit être negative. Empêchez les vices de naitre, vous aurez assez fait pour la vertu.”

<sup>334</sup> *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, 191 (OC III, 968): “Il ne faut pas que les prix et récompenses des vainqueurs soient distributes arbitrairement par les maîtres des exercices ni par les chefs des colleges mais par acclamation et au jugement des spectateurs ; et l’on peut compter que ces jugements seront toujours justes, surtout si l’on a soin de rendre ces jeux attirans pour le public en les ordonnant avec un peu d’appareil et de façon qu’ils fassent spectacle. Alors il est à presume que tous les honnêtes gens et tous les bons patriots se feront un devoir et un plaisir d’y assister.”

<sup>335</sup> Some conceptual confusion stems from Bloom’s translation in *Politics and the Arts*, where he substitutes ‘entertainment’ or ‘theater’ for ‘spectacle’ in the body of the text. (On this point, see Margaret Kohn, “*Homo spectator*: Public Space in the Age of the Spectacle,” *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 34 (2008): 484n.39.) In fact, it is the phrase ‘*un théâtre de comédie*’ that appears in the title of the first edition of 1758. It reads, in full: *J.-J.*



deleterious effects of theater and the virtues of festivals. As he argues in the *Lettre à d'Alembert*, unlike civic ritual,

the moral effect of the theatre can never be good or salutary in itself, since... we find no real utility without drawbacks which outweigh it. Now, as a consequence, the theatre, which can do nothing to improve morals [*mœurs*], can do much toward changing them. In encouraging all our penchants, it gives a new ascendancy to those which dominate us. The continual emotion which is felt in the theatre excites us, enervates us, enfeebles us, and makes us less able to resist our passions. And the sterile interest take in virtue serves only to satisfy our vanity [*amour-propre*]<sup>336</sup> without obliging us to practice it.<sup>337</sup>

Theater causes men (and women), actors and audience members alike, not to “live in ourselves but in others.”<sup>338</sup>

Though civil ceremonies, rituals, and festivals undoubtedly have theatrical elements, they serve a different purpose in alternative political sites, turning the citizens into participants, not spectators, and thus they retain their autonomy through a direct and expressive use of their emotion, instead of falling prey to false emotionality on which, Rousseau claims, the theater

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*Rousseau, citoyen de Genève, à M. d'Alembert, de l'Académie Française, de l'Académie Royale des Sciences de Paris, de celle de Prusse, de la Société Royal de Londres, de l'Académie Royale des Belles-Lettres de Suede, et de l'Institut de Bologne : sur son article "Genève", dans le VIIe vol. de l'Encyclopédie, et particulièrement sur le projet d'établir un théâtre de comédie en cette ville.* Rousseau's rhetorical strategy, here as elsewhere, is to position himself as the humble Swiss citizen appealing to the moral sensibility of d'Alembert, the feted and worldly Parisian.<sup>336</sup> Translating *amour-propre* presents certain difficulties in Rousseau scholarship. As Victor Gourevitch noted, “the obvious candidates for Rousseau's *amour propre* are ‘vanity,’ ‘vainglory’ and ‘pride’... but none of these three English terms will do, if only because he also uses *vanité*, *orgueil*, and *fierté*, and he contrasts them in the *Project for a Constitution for Corsica*” (“Note on the Translations,” in *The Social Contract and Other Later Political Writings*, xlviii). See “Plan for a Constitution for Corsica,” 154 (*OC III*, 937-938). Considering that my interest in the words hinges on unpacking their nuances, I leave them in the French and indicate when they appear in translations.

<sup>337</sup> *Politics and the Arts*, 57 (*Lettre à d'Alembert*, 97-98): “... l'effet moral du Spectacle et des Théâtres ne sauroit jamais être bon ni salutaire en lui-même : puisqu'à ne compter que leurs avantages, on n'y trouve aucune sorte d'utilité réelle, sans inconvénients qui la surpassent. Or par une suite de son inutilité même, le Théâtre, qui ne peut rien pour corriger les mœurs, peut beaucoup pour les altérer. En favorisant tous nos penchans, il donne un nouvel ascendant à ceux qui nous dominent ; les continuelles émotions qu'on y ressent nous énervent, nous affoiblissent [affaiblissant], nous rendent plus incapables de résister à nos passions ; et le sterile intérêt qu'on prend à la vertu ne sert qu'à contenter notre amour propre, sans nous contraindre à la pratiquer.”

<sup>338</sup> *Politics and the Arts*, 67 (*Lettre à d'Alembert*, 118). The actor “displaying other sentiments than his own, saying only what he is made to say, often representing a chimerical being, annihilates himself... if something remains of him, it is use as the plaything of the spectators” (81). “Mais un Comédien sur la Scene, étalant d'autres sentiments que les siens, ne disant que ce qu'on lui fait dire, représentant souvent un être chimerique, s'anéantit, pour ainsi dire, s'annule avec son héros ; et dans cet oubli de l'homme, s'il reste quelque chose, c'est pour être jouet des Spectateurs” (*Lettre à d'Alembert*, 146).

relies.<sup>339</sup> Rousseau “reiterates the... distinction... between *spectacles* (which separate subject from object) and festivals (which facilitate participation).”<sup>340</sup> The chief danger of theater’s false sentimentality is that spectators maintain those false standards once the curtain falls. However “legitimate” an otherwise ridiculous love story may be rendered within in the context of a play, “is it not ridiculous to pretend that the motions of the heart can be governed, after the event, according to the precepts of reason?... The harm for which the theatre is reproached is not precisely that of inspiring criminal passions but of disposing the soul to feelings which are too tender and which are later satisfied at the expense of virtue.”<sup>341</sup> To be an audience member, or spectator, is to be vulnerable to the corrupt emotional conditioning to which one is, in Rousseau’s mind, subjected. It is this shift from spectator to participant that changes the nature of the affective experience, from one of insincere, overwrought emotionality to that which is free, generous, and innocent.<sup>342</sup>

Rousseau emphasizes this dichotomy by moving out of the physical confines of the theater and placing his republican rituals in the outdoors. “What! Ought there be no entertainments in a republic? On the contrary, there ought to be many... It is in the open air, under the sky, that you ought to gather, and give yourself to the sweet sentiment of your

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<sup>339</sup> Marie-Hélène Huet, *Mourning Glory: The Will of the French Revolution* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), 39-40. Elsewhere, Huet points out that there is a particular danger for female “actors” to be relegated to, or slip back into, the domain of the spectator. See Huet, *Rehearsing the Revolution: The Staging of Marat’s Death, 1793-1797* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 35, cited in Joan B. Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 166-167 and 247.

<sup>340</sup> Kohn, “*Homo spectator*,” 474.

<sup>341</sup> *Politics and the Arts*, 51 (*Lettre à d’Alembert*, 85): “... mais n’est-il pas plaisant qu’on prétende ainsi régler après coup les mouvemens du Coeur sur les precepts de la raison?... Le mal qu’on reproche au Théâtre n’est pas précisément d’inspirer des passions criminelles, mais de disposer l’âme à des sentimens trop tendres qu’on satisfait ensuite aux dépens de la vertu.”

<sup>342</sup> *Politics and the Arts*, 126 (*Lettre à d’Alembert*, 240).

happiness.”<sup>343</sup> He reiterates the value of open air in “Sur le gouvernement de Pologne,” arguing that “the usual courtly entertainments” are “isolating” and serve to “make [men] forget their fatherland and their duty.” Instead, there are to be public games, where mothers watch their children play, in addition to festivals to be enjoyed by all.<sup>344</sup> For Poland, Rousseau recommends the restoration of aged amphitheaters, for displays of skill (he suggests activities drawing on the Poles’ noted horsemanship) that can unite the people.<sup>345</sup> The participatory aspect is fundamentally instructive, in that festivals are a central means of reaffirming the civic education citizens receive as children, and constructive, in that the primary purpose of education is to develop responsible citizens.

Put differently, their emotions are directed toward the general will through a variety of seemingly informal but in fact highly regulated activities aimed at the continuous reconstitution of the original republican founding. When Rousseau recalls Roman victory parades,<sup>346</sup> or argues for the implementation of public children’s games,<sup>347</sup> ceremonials and spectacles,<sup>348</sup> and a civil religion,<sup>349</sup> he attempts to cultivate a Derridean performance, “a response made to a demand made on [the citizen] by the ‘wholly other’ [*le tout autre*], a response that, far from depending on preexisting rules or laws, on a preexisting ego, I, or self, or on preexisting circumstances or ‘context,’ creates the self, the context, and new rules or laws.”<sup>350</sup> (As I discuss below in the third section, the demand is made, at least in the *Contrat social*, by the lawgiver.) The performance

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<sup>343</sup> *Politics and the Arts*, 125 (*Lettre à d’Alembert*, 239-240): “Quoi! ne faut-il donc aucun Spectacle dans une République? Au-contre, il en faut beaucoup... C’est en plein air, c’est sous le ciel qu’il faut vous rassembler et vous livrer au doux sentiment de votre Bonheur.”

<sup>344</sup> *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, 186-187 (*OC III*, 962-963).

<sup>345</sup> *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, 186 (*OC III*, 963).

<sup>346</sup> *Discourse on Political Economy*, 18 (*OC III*, 257).

<sup>347</sup> *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, 178 (*OC III*, 955).

<sup>348</sup> *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, 186-187 (*OC III*, 963).

<sup>349</sup> *Social Contract*, Book IV, chapter 8, 142-151 (*OC III*, 460-470).

<sup>350</sup> J. Hillis Miller, “Performativity as Performance/ Performativity as Speech Act: Derrida’s Special Theory of Performativity,” *South Atlantic Quarterly* 106 (2007), 231.

brings to life both the republican citizen and a context which is resistant to repetition or analysis by its participants.<sup>351</sup> Recounting a childhood memory of watching a military regiment's exercise and the ensuing celebration by the townspeople, Rousseau remarks "there resulted from all this a general emotion that I could not describe but which, in universal gaiety, is quite naturally felt in the midst of all that is dear to us."<sup>352</sup> As the townspeople try, after a pause, to recommence the dance, they find that the moment has passed: "it was impossible; they did not know what they were doing anymore."<sup>353</sup> The cultivation of such moments becomes the purpose of civic ceremony in Rousseau's political thought.

His description of the event is buried in a footnote, toward the end of the *Lettre à d'Alembert*. Here we see mostly clearly what Starobinski refers to as the opposition between "the closed spectacle of the theater and the open-air spectacle of collective rejoicing."<sup>354</sup> In his protestation to Jean le Rond d'Alembert (who had proposed in his *Encyclopédie* entry on Geneva that the city might construct a theater), Rousseau insists that he will not go so far as to expect his fellow men and women to embrace the simplicity of Lacedaemonia. The Lacedaemonians, or Spartans, demonstrate a "simplicity" which renders them "worthy of recommendation; without

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<sup>351</sup> Perhaps because the ancient examples resonate so greatly for him, Rousseau rarely acknowledges that his civic ceremonies, let alone his civil religion, may be regarded as threats by established religious orders. Consider this fragment from the "Plan for a Constitution for Corsica": devout Corsicans "will be turned away from superstition by being very much occupied with their duties as citizens; by having display put into national festivals, by having much of their time taken away from ecclesiastical ceremonies in order to give them to civil ceremonies, and that can be done with a little skill without making the Clergy angry, by acting so that it always has some share in them, but so that this share is so small that attention does not stay fixed on them at all" (159). "On les détournera de la superstition en les occupant beaucoup de leurs devoirs de citoyens ; en mettant de l'appareil aux fêtes nationales, et otant beaucoup de leur tems aux ceremonies ecclesiastiques pour donner aux ceremonies civiles, et cela se peut faire avec un peu d'adresse sans fâcher le Clergé, en faisant en sorte qu'il y ait toujours quelque part, mais que cette part soit si petite que l'attention n'y demeure point fixée" (*OC* III, 944). This is, incidentally, the only mention of civic ceremonies in the essay on Corsica.

<sup>352</sup> *Politics and the Arts*, 135, note (*Lettre à d'Alembert*, 261-262): "Il résulta de tout cela un attendrissement general que je ne saurois peindre, mais que, dans l'allegresse universelle, on éprouve asséz naturellement au milieu de tout ce qui nous est cher."

<sup>353</sup> *Politics and the Arts*, 135, note (*Lettre à d'Alembert*, 262): "On voulut recommencer la danse, il n'y eut plus moyen : on ne savoit plus ce qu'on faisoit."

<sup>354</sup> Starobinski, *La Transparence et l'obstacle*, 118: "le spectacle fermé du theater et le spectacle à ciel ouvert de la réjouissance collective."

pomp, without luxury, without display, everything in them breathes, along with a secret patriotic charm which makes them attractive, a certain martial spirit befitting free men.”<sup>355</sup> This calls to mind the memory of watching a military regiment from Saint-Gervais engage in a spontaneous dance with their fellow civilian townsmen and women, a memory no doubt strengthened by the reaction of Rousseau’s father:

My father, embracing me, was seized with trembling which I still feel and share. ‘Jean-Jacques,’ he said to me, ‘love your country. Do you see these good Genevans? They are all friends, they are all brothers; joy and concord reign in their midst. You are a Genevan; one day you will see other peoples; but even if you should travel as much as your father, you will not find their likes.’<sup>356</sup>

In spite of remaining a spectator to the scene below, its appeal comes from the possibility of joining a political community that Rousseau views as his birthright. As the child Jean-Jacques watches the crowd disperse from the town square from his window above, the adult Rousseau slips to the present tense in order to remark that “I am well aware that this entertainment, which moved me so, would be without appeal for countless others; *one must have eyes made for seeing it and a heart made for feeling it.*”<sup>357</sup> In the following section, I unfold Rousseau’s proposed method for cultivating republican citizens capable of doing just that. Here I will probe more deeply into the architecture of Rousseau’s thoughts on affect by turning to an earlier work, the *Discours sur l’origine et les fondements de l’inégalité parmi les hommes* (1755), and its

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<sup>355</sup> *Politics and the Arts*, 134 (*Lettre à d’Alembert*, 260): “Je donnois les les fêtes de Lacédemone pour modele de celles que je voudrois voir parmi nous. Ce n’est pas seulement par leur objet, mais aussi par leur simplicité que je les trouve recommandables : sans pompe, sans luxe, sans appareil, tout y respiroit, avec un charme secret de patriotisme qui les rendoit intéressantes, un certain esprit martial convenable à des hommes libres.”

<sup>356</sup> *Politics and the Arts*, 135, note (*Lettre à d’Alembert*, 262): “Mon père, n en m’embrassant, fut saisi d’un tressaillement que je crois sentir et partager encore. Jean-Jaques [*sic*], me disoit-il, aime ton pays. Vois-tu ces bon Genevois ; ils sont tous amis, ils sont tous frères ; la joie et la concorde regne au milieu d’eux. Tu es Genevois : tu verras un jour d’autres peuples ; mais, quand tu voyagerois autant que ton père, tu ne trouveras jamais leur pareil.”

<sup>357</sup> *Politics and the Arts*, 136, note, emphasis added (*Lettre à d’Alembert*, 262): “Je sens bien que ce spectacle don’t je fus si touché, seroit sans attrait pour mille autre : il faut des yeux faits pour le voir, et un cœur fait pour le sentir. Non, il n’y a de pour joie que la joie publique, et les vrais sentimens de la Nature ne regnent que sur le people. Ah! Dignité, fille de l’orgueil et mere de l’ennui, jamais ses tristes esclaves eurent-ils un pareil moment en leur vie?”

discussion of pity, which provides, as it were, the foundation on which this edifice of ritual has been constructed.

## II. Cultivating a Republican *Amour-propre*

Throughout his works, Rousseau makes comments similar to this chapter's epigraph, that "the man without passions is a chimera."<sup>358</sup> Unlike numerous of his predecessors, for whom the passions posed a constant threat to reason, Rousseau concerns himself with the corruption of what he considers to be "natural" emotion – to become modern is not to cast out superstition and become increasingly rational but to become increasingly detached from one's own sentiments and alienated from oneself. Nonetheless, for all of the accusations of utopianism lobbed at him, Rousseau's political philosophy does not offer any method of returning to a previous state. He does not indicate that we may hope to recover our original contentedness from the state of nature – his history is unidirectional, if not progressive. Instead, he suggests a means by which we may manage our corrupted passions and prevent their further decay.

The *Discours sur l'inégalité* is commonly treated as an account of mankind's transition from savagery to civilization but it is also a genealogy of the passions, accounting for the shift from the benign narcissism of *amour de soi-même* to the destructive self-concern of *amour-propre*. The language of *amour de soi-même* and *amour-propre* disappears from the *Contrat social* but the problems posed by *amour-propre* permeate the text, particularly the difficulties that self-interested individuals pose for democratic politics. I suggest in this section that the *Contrat* picks up where the *Discours* leaves off, converting *amour-propre* via the establishment of civic ceremonies and civil religion into an affective disposition most productive for the

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<sup>358</sup> For instance, in the *Discourse on Political Economy*, he notes, "a man devoid of all passions would certainly be a very bad citizen" (20). "Je conviendrai d'autant mieux de tout cela, qu'un homme qui n'auroit point de passions seroit certainement un fort mauvais citoyen" (*OC* III, 259).

maintenance of the republican state. I begin by reviewing the shift from *amour de soi-même* to *amour-propre* in the *Discours sur l'inégalité*; turn to the political consequences of *amour-propre* for life under the social contract; and conclude the section by arguing that civic ritual, including civil religion, is the means by which Rousseau proposes to manage *amour-propre* in the best interest of the general will.

Ostensibly prompted by an essay contest held by the Académie de Dijon, Rousseau's *Discours* famously side-steps the actual question.<sup>359</sup> It instead engages and challenges Hobbes's theory of the state of nature as presented in the *Leviathan* (1651). (It does a number of other things, as well, of course.) Though both *Leviathan* and the *Discours sur l'inégalité* posit a state of nature prior to the conventions of government or even society, the two texts diverge more often than they align or overlap. For Hobbes, the state of nature is famously unstable so that even basic forms of community are beyond our capability. *Leviathan* therefore depicts the development of the state as a move toward stability in a world of violence and the sovereign as the guarantor of all human relations that otherwise take place at everyone's peril. For Rousseau, mankind, though far more animalistic and solitary than we would recognize as "natural" today, was nonetheless inherently peaceful in the state of nature. The development of more complex societies is the harbinger of man's downfall, as association leads not automatically and necessarily to violence, as in Hobbes, but to a range of other negative affects, such as jealousy and pride.<sup>360</sup> The *Discours sur l'inégalité* is a story of mankind's inescapable decline beginning with the emergence of society. The "First Part" of the *Discours* contains, among other things, Rousseau's rebuttal to Hobbes's theory of human nature from which the latter derives his

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<sup>359</sup> On the history of such contests that prompted not on the *Discours sur l'inégalité* but also Rousseau's winning entry of 1750, the *Discours sur les sciences et les arts*, see Jeremy L. Caradonna, *The Enlightenment in Practice: Academic Prize Contests and Intellectual Culture in France, 1670-1794* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012).

<sup>360</sup> In the "Plan for a Constitution for Corsica" (154; *OC* III, 937-938), Rousseau suggests that vanity and pride are two dimensions, or "branches," of *amour-propre*.

political theory. Though Rousseau's account is also one of man's decline, he argues that Hobbes, in arguing that "man is naturally intrepid, and seeks only to attack, and to fight," mistakes effect for cause.<sup>361</sup> The desire to fight stems from our corrupted nature within civil society but does not predate it. In the alternative account of the *Discours*, Rousseau identifies the principle of *amour de soi-même*, according to which "an innate repugnance to see his kind suffer" tempers "the ardor for well-being."<sup>362</sup> The motivating factor in both *amour de soi-même* and *amour-propre* is pity, a "Natural virtue."

Mankind shares this innate quality, this "pure Movement of nature," with animals: "one daily sees the repugnance of Horses to trample a living Body underfoot; An animal never goes past a dead animal of his own Species without some restlessness: Some even give them a kind of burial."<sup>363</sup> This reflects what I referred to as the benign narcissism of *amour de soi-même*. Pierre Saint-Amand argues that this implies that "pity requires self-exteriorization; it necessitates identification with the other," and therefore it "contains the seeds of its own corruption even within the state of nature."<sup>364</sup> But this is incorrect. Because there are not enduring and meaningful relationships in the state of nature, the individual remains the sole point of reference until more complicated forms of society emerge. Thus the repugnance at suffering and the

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<sup>361</sup> Rousseau, "Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality among Men or Second Discourse," in *The Discourses and Other Early Political Writings*, ed. and trans. Victor Gourevitch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 135 (OC III, 136): "Hobbes pretend que l'homme est naturellement intrépide, et ne cherche qu'il attaquer, et combattre."

<sup>362</sup> *Discourse on Inequality*, 152 (OC III, 154): "...la férocité de son amour propre, ou le désir de se conserver avant la naissance de cet amour, tempere l'ardeur qu'il a pour son bien-être par une repugnance innée à voir souffrir son semblable." *Amour de soi-même* is intimately linked to, but not reducible to, pity. See Richard Boyd's "Pity's Pathologies Portrayed: Rousseau and the Limits of Democratic Compassion," *Political Theory* 32 (2004): 519-546, for a critique of a democratic politics based on sympathetic sentiments.

<sup>363</sup> *Discourse on Inequality*, 152 (OC III, 154): "... on observe tous les jours la repugnance qu'ont les Chevaux à fouler aux pieds un Corps vivant; Un animal ne passé point sans inquietude auprès d'un animal mort de son Espèce : Il y en a même qui leur donnent une sorte de sepulture." I note in passing that Rousseau moves swiftly from the example of mothers protecting children to that of animals mourning their fellow creatures without acknowledging any shift between species. This is in keeping with his treatment of all life as animalistic in the state of nature.

<sup>364</sup> Pierre Saint-Amand, *The Laws of Hostility: Politics, Violence, and the Enlightenment*, trans. Jennifer Curtiss Gage (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992 [1996]), 81.



sympathy to which Rousseau calls our attention is rooted in the fact that the feeling animal recognizes itself in the other, not in its love for a differentiated other.<sup>365</sup> For man and animal alike, *pitié* exists “prior to all reflection.”<sup>366</sup> It is not a cognitive function but “a virtue all the more universal and useful to man as it precedes the exercise of all reflection in him” that “that hurries us without reflection to the relief of those who are in distress.” *Amour de soi-même* thus seems to be explicitly pre-political, since it is “pity that, in a state of Nature, takes the place of Laws, morals and virtue.”<sup>367</sup>

But with the transition to society, *amour de soi-même* no longer sufficiently captures the totality of human experience because, ultimately, “that which characterizes [men] – their passions – acquires its characteristics in interaction with others.”<sup>368</sup> No longer are men motivated primarily by innate feelings of compassion coupled with self-regard. As complicated societal structures emerge, so do opportunities for individuals to compare themselves to, and distinguish themselves from, one another.<sup>369</sup> Such comparisons, and the resulting competition, are at the root of *amour-propre*, “a relative sentiment, factitious, and born in society, which inclines every individual to set greater store by himself than by anyone else, inspires men with all the evils they

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<sup>365</sup> Contrast the unreflective relationship between individuals in Rousseau’s state of nature with the betrayal expressed by Diderot’s Tahitians at the behavior of their French guests, to whom an elder declares, “we respected our own image in you” (*Diderot: Political Writings*, ed. and trans. John Hope Mason and Robert Wokler, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 43. “Nous avons respecté notre image en toi” (“Supplément,” in *Contes et romans*, ed. Michel Delon, Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 2004), 548. Henceforth *CR*.

<sup>366</sup> *Discourse on Inequality*, 152 (*OC III*, 154): “...vertu d’autant plus universelle et d’autant plus utile à l’homme, qu’elle précède en lui l’usage de toute réflexion.”

<sup>367</sup> *Discourse on Inequality*, 154 (*OC III*, 156): “C’est elle qui, dans l’état de Nature, tient lieu de Loix, de mœurs, et de vertu.”

<sup>368</sup> Tracy Strong, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: The Politics of the Ordinary* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1994 [2002]), 54.

<sup>369</sup> I thus disagree with Patrick Coleman’s assessment that “it is precisely the ease with which compassion can be distorted that makes it impossible for Rousseau to make sympathy the basis of an ethical system, in the manner of his contemporaries Hume and Smith.” It is not quite that compassion is *distorted* so much as it is replaced by *amour-propre*. Patrick Coleman, *Anger, Gratitude, and the Enlightenment Writer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 165.

do one another, and is the genuine source of honor.”<sup>370</sup> Yet “rather than drawing a parallel between the innocence of *amour de soi* and a pity that tempers *amour propre*, it is more accurate to say that pity is the vehicle through which egotistical interest and vanity are configured.”<sup>371</sup>

Without the original pity that led to the development of society, “man could have neither hatred nor desire for vengeance, passions that can arise only from the opinion of having received offense.”<sup>372</sup> The “Second Part” of the *Discours sur l’inégalité* is dedicated to laying clear the path by which the developing political structure comes to mirror the dysfunction of individual relationships. Civility, with its connotations of dissemblance, replaces compassion, rooted in innate sense. “Everyone began to look at everyone else and to wish to be looked at himself, and public esteem acquired a price... this was the first step at once toward inequality and vice.”<sup>373</sup> Through the pursuit of public esteem, man forfeits his natural liberty, the wealthy take advantage of the poor, and corruption seeps into the structures of government.<sup>374</sup>

Unchecked by pity, *amour-propre*’s domination of our fallen nature poses one of the biggest threats to the coherence and efficacy of the general will.<sup>375</sup> Rousseau tells us that “the general will is always on the side most favorable to the public interest, that is to say, the most equitable; so that one need only be just in order to be sure of following the general will.”<sup>376</sup> It

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<sup>370</sup> *Discourse on Inequality*, 218, note XV (OC III, 219, note XV): “L’Amour propre n’est qu’un sentiment relatif, factice, et né dans la société, qui porte chaque individu à faire plus de cas de soi que de tout autre, qui inspire aux hommes tous les maux qu’il se font mutuellement, et qui est la véritable source de l’honneur.”

<sup>371</sup> Wingrove, *Rousseau’s Republican Romance*, 35.

<sup>372</sup> *Discourse on Inequality*, 218, note XV (OC III, 219, note XV): “... cet homme ne sauroit avoir ni haine ni désir de vengeance, passions qui ne peuvent naître que de l’opinion de quelque offense reçue.”

<sup>373</sup> *Discourse on Inequality*, 166 (OC III, 169-170): “Chacun commença à regarder les autres et à vouloir être regardé soi-même, et l’estime publique eut un prix... et ce fut là le premier pas vers l’inégalité, et vers le vice en même temps.”

<sup>374</sup> *Discourse on Inequality*, 173, 179 (OC III, 177-178, 184).

<sup>375</sup> Though we receive a slightly different origin story in the *Contrat* than in the *Discours*, in both cases, *amour-propre* dominates human nature in its fallen state.

<sup>376</sup> *Discourse on Political Economy*, 12 (OC III, 251): “... la volonté générale est toujours pour le parti le plus favorable à l’intérêt public, c’est-à-dire le plus équitable ; de sorte qu’il ne faut qu’être juste pour s’assurer de suivre la volonté générale.”

“tends to the preservation and the well-being of the whole and of each part.”<sup>377</sup> *Amour-propre*, on the other hand, brings “ferociousness” and conflict.<sup>378</sup> Yet Rousseau continually links the general will, the proper adjudication of which is essential to the moral and political functioning of the republic, to sentiment rather than reason. “If rhetoric’s appeal to the unruly passions is an anathema to the legislative process of determining the general will, it turns out to be indispensable to politics as a whole.”<sup>379</sup> Given mankind’s corrupted nature, the lawgiver must work with what advantages he has. Since mankind is now given to employing passion over reason, “notice how Rousseau specifically excludes the possibility that the lawgiver might employ reason in order to persuade.”<sup>380</sup> In fact, “it is reason that engenders *amour-propre*, and reflection that reinforces it; reason that turns man back upon himself; reason that separates him from everything that troubles and afflicts him.”<sup>381</sup> Alternately, the general will eschews reason, requiring instead the appropriate affective disposition. As Jerome Schneewind remarks, “Rousseau thus follows Malebranche in holding that there must be *desire* for the good as well as knowledge of it if we are to choose it... ‘The acts of the conscience,’ the [Savoyard] vicar declares, ‘are not judgments but *sentiments*.’ They are our felt response to ideas that ‘come to us from outside’ and tell us which of them to follow and which to shun.”<sup>382</sup>

So we are left, it would appear, with something of a quandary: mankind is driven by an

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<sup>377</sup> *Discourse on Political Economy*, 6 (OC III, 245): “Cette volonté generale, qui tend toujours à la conservation et au bien-être du tout et de chaque partie...”

<sup>378</sup> *Discourse on Inequality*, 152 (OC III, 154).

<sup>379</sup> Arash Abizadeh, “Banishing the Particular: Rousseau on Rhetoric, *Patrie*, and the Passions,” *Political Theory* 29 (2001): 570.

<sup>380</sup> Robert Bernasconi, “Rousseau and the Supplement to the Social Contract: Deconstruction and the Possibility of Democracy,” *Cardozo Law Review* 11 (1989): 1549.

<sup>381</sup> *Discourse on Inequality*, 153 (OC III, 156): “C’est la raison qui engendre l’amour propre, et c’est la réflexion qui le fortifie; C’est elle qui replie l’homme sur lui-même; c’est elle qui nos le sépare de tout ce qui le gene et l’afflige.”

<sup>382</sup> J.B. Schneewind, *The Invention of Autonomy: A History of Modern Moral Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 477. Emphasis added.

unnatural sentiment (*amour-propre*) that impinges on our ability to live together harmoniously but our political life must be governed by a principle (the general will) in tension with this unnatural sentiment if we want to temper its effects and consequences. The difficulty will be in finding some way of mediating between the two. If *amour-propre* is inscribed into our (corrupted) constitution as human beings living within society, we should attempt to make it as politically productive as possible. This is feasible within a republican context (and perhaps only there) that marries individual desires to the greater good and emphasizes civic duty.

Specifically, a republic that cultivates a “purely civil profession of faith” that rouses “sentiments of sociability” not only molds its citizens to love their country. Such a state would exercise its citizens’ passions in an advantageous fashion by intertwining love of self and love of country in order to develop a sense of civic virtue it could then employ. It would demonstrate, in Judith Shklar’s words, that “virtue is self-love utterly transformed.” Per Shklar, “no more than Montesquieu did Rousseau for a moment believe that personal virtue *caused* republican societies. According to Montesquieu virtue is a ‘principle’... the sum of those ‘human passions which set it in motion.’ These passions are by no means spontaneously generated.” Rather, they require the cultivation of the proper affective disposition via virtuous practices. “Virtue is created by following law, by accepting an external standard and making it one’s sole guide. To Rousseau also it was clear that republican virtue was the outcome of the interaction between a social situation and predictable human responses to its stimuli.”<sup>383</sup>

The “social situation” best equipped to produce republican virtue is the festival. In addition to the educative reasons discussed in the previous section, festivals have several other advantages, primary among them that they absorb the excess emotionality they tend to generate and that they provide an outlet for the “ferociousness” and conflict characteristic of *amour-*

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<sup>383</sup> Shklar, *Men and Citizens*, 65-66.

*propre*. Saint-Amand quite rightly observes that the festival is a place where “rivalrous confrontation may appear, but only in forms that restrict real violence.”<sup>384</sup> He errs, however, in asserting that Rousseau “seems oblivious to this aspect” of ritualized violence – it is entirely in keeping with the benefits civic ceremony is intended to impart, to say nothing of Rousseau’s affection (to put it mildly) for paradox. The contestation demonstrated during festivals – the displays on horseback that Rousseau encourages amongst the Poles – are not only a means of developing *fraternité* amongst fellow citizens but of releasing the valve so the pressure of *amour-propre* might diffuse without threatening the fragile bonds of a new republic.

### III. Maintaining Civic Virtue Beyond the Myth

This brings us to the issue of temporality. The obvious temporal orientations of ceremony and ritual are toward the past and future – ceremony as the renewal of past achievements and promises, rituals repeated since time immemorial (actually or allegedly), with rules determined by others long gone, and extracting promises that bind participants into the future. Yet the temporal frame of reference for the republican ceremonies Rousseau encourages is neither past nor future but the present. Though frequently drawing on his own memories, and Plutarch’s, his theory is fully ‘presentist’ in that it does not advocate a return to a previous time he believes lost, or even a celebration of founding principles, but an appreciation of the republic’s shared virtues.<sup>385</sup>

In Rousseau’s account, the lawgiver, once his job is completed, leaves the laws he has created to the people instantiated by those very laws, never to return. The lawgiver is the

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<sup>384</sup> Saint-Amand, *The Laws of Hostility*, 88.

<sup>385</sup> The degree to which this is feasible in political practice, as opposed to theory, is of course disputable. The French revolutionaries debated over whether to construct a mythic history or a new founding moment. See Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, 158-196.

consummate outsider, the man with no name; his models are, again, Lycurgus, Moses, and Numa.<sup>386</sup> Even his position remains out-of-bounds, as “this office which gives the republic its constitution has no place in its constitution.”<sup>387</sup> Setting aside the difficulties his sheer existence leaves for readers of Rousseau, his departure provides more challenges still. To choose just one: the people now exist but there is no guarantee of their continued existence, particularly when we take into account that Rousseau’s history of mankind is a tale of decline. (In a footnote, Rousseau rather morosely observes that “a people becomes famous only once its legislation begins to decline.”)<sup>388</sup> The origin myth provided by the lawgiver will drift into irrelevancy unless grounded in present concerns. Recall that the lawgiver forgoes reason in establishing the people.

For a nascent people to be capable of appreciating sound maxims of politics and of following the fundamental rules of reason of State, the effect would have to become the cause, the social spirit which is to be the work of the institution would have to preside over the institution itself, and men would to be prior to laws what they ought to become by means of them. Thus, since the Lawgiver can use neither force nor reasoning, he must of necessity have recourse to an authority of a different order, which might be able to rally without violence and to persuade without convincing.<sup>389</sup>

This is why, according to Rousseau, lawgivers and founders have recourse to divine authority: “this is what has at all times forced the fathers of nations to resort to the intervention of heaven and to honor the Gods with their own wisdom.”<sup>390</sup> The concern is thus how to continue to bind a

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<sup>386</sup> Of the three, however, only Lycurgus deliberately leaves the people he has founded, and then primarily to visit Delphi for confirmation that they will survive. See Plutarch, *Lives*, vol. 1, §30-31, 297-303. On the lawgiver as outsider, see Honig’s *Democracy and the Foreigner* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), especially 18-24.

<sup>387</sup> *Social Contract*, Book II, chapter 7, 69 (OC III, 382): “Cet employ, qui constitue la République, n’entre point dans sa constitution.”

<sup>388</sup> *Social Contract*, Book II, chapter 7, 69, note (OC III, 381, note): “Un peuple ne devient célèbre que quand sa législation commencer à décliner.”

<sup>389</sup> *Social Contract*, Book II, chapter 7, 71 (OC III, 383): “Pour qu’un peuple naissant put goûter les saines maximes de la politique et suivre les regles fondamentales de la raison d’Etat, il faudroit que l’effet put devenir la cause, que l’esprit social qui doit être l’ouvrage de l’institution présidât à l’institution même, et que les hommes fussent avant les loix ce qu’ils doivent devenir par elles. Ainsi donc le Législateur ne pouvant employer ni la force ni le raisonnement, c’est une nécessité qu’il recoure à une autorité d’un autre ordre, qui puisse entraîner sans violence et persuader sans convaincre.”

<sup>390</sup> *Social Contract*, Book II, chapter 7, 71 (OC III, 383): “Voila ce qui força de tout tems les pères des nations à recourir à l’intervention du ciel et d’honorer les Dieux de leur propre sagesse.”

people to the original myth and the resulting contract, when it ceases to have immediacy and the transformative potential embodied by the lawgiver.

For Arash Abizadeh, Rousseau's description of the lawgiver treads the line between persuasion and coercion because "unlike coercion, persuasion affects the body and is not restricted to the rational mind. Effective Rousseauist rhetoric negotiates a realm – that of the heart – between strict dualism's starkly opposed categories of body versus spirit/mind."<sup>391</sup> This is a problem the people continue to confront in the *absence* of the lawgiver. In order for the people to reconstitute themselves in that absence (for the signature to continually invent the signer, in other words), ceremony and ritual will need to supplant the origin story established by the lawgiver. The only means of securing the republic's future rests in the fact that, after the departure of the lawgiver, the people are both citizens and sovereign and thus capable of initiating their own "re-founding." The reconstitution of the state ultimately functions according to the same Derridean logic as the claim that "the signature invents the signer."<sup>392</sup> But unlike founding, the reconstitution can go on in perpetuity, or at least for as long as it is sustained by the citizens who perform the act of re-founding. In the *Contrat social*, this entails civil religion; in the essay on Poland, it entails diverse civic ceremonies. In both cases, the purpose is to make immediate and present the commitments of the past by recasting them as the commitments of the moment.

Here we might take a cue from Rousseau's most notorious descendants, the French revolutionaries, who likewise grappled with this problem. Historian Lynn Hunt argues that the

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<sup>391</sup> Abizadeh, "Banishing the Particular," 562.

<sup>392</sup> This quintessential Derridean puzzle describes what Bernasconi has tagged "the impossible temporality of the contract." "Rousseau and the Supplement to the Social Contract: Deconstruction and the Possibility of Democracy," 1558n.115.

French Revolution, unlike its American and the English predecessors, did not rely on a historical precedent or a call for a return to an early state. Rather, the French invoked a

‘mythic present,’ the instant of creation of the new community; the sacred moment of the new consensus. The ritual oaths of loyalty taken around a liberty tree or sworn en masse during the many revolutionary festivals commemorated and re-created the moment of social contract; the ritual words made the mythic present come alive, again and again.<sup>393</sup>

For the Revolutionaries, “the mythic present was inherently undatable, and, as a consequence, the Revolution’s own history was always in flux.”<sup>394</sup> But if the concept of a mythic present can also be extended to Rousseau’s discussion of ceremony and ritual, we see how its second dimension, transparency, applies: “community, in essence, was this transparency between citizens... Politically, transparency meant that there was no need for politicians and no place for the professional manipulation of sentiments and symbols; each citizen was to deliberate in the stillness of his heart, free from the nefarious influences of connections, patronage, or party.”<sup>395</sup>

Hunt’s emphasis on the importance of the mythic present, appropriated for our own purposes, helps us make sense of two aspects of Rousseau’s thought. First, it offers an explanatory logic for the importance of ceremony by categorizing it as a recreation of “the moment of social contract.” Rather than understand ceremony, civic education, festivals, rituals, and the like as forms of soft power of secondary importance to the arrangement of institutions, the former can be understood to play an important role in the maintenance of the republican state.

Second, the mythic present speaks to the affective disposition we have tried to ascertain in this chapter’s second section and may even help us make sense of a notoriously perplexing

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<sup>393</sup> Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class*, 27.

<sup>394</sup> Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class*, 27.

<sup>395</sup> Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class*, 45. The language of transparency is of course indebted to Starobinski.



passage toward the end of the *Lettre à d'Alembert*.<sup>396</sup> After explaining the importance of open-air festivities for republican politics, Rousseau goes on to ask, “but what then will be the objects of these entertainments? What will be shown in them?” In answer to his own question, he replies,

Nothing, if you please. With liberty, wherever abundance reigns, well-being also reigns. Plant a stake crowned with flowers in the middle of a square; gather the people together there, and you will have a festival. Do better yet; let the spectators become an entertainment to themselves; make them actors themselves; do it so that each sees and loves himself in the others so that all will be better united.<sup>397</sup>

On a first reading, the notion of dedicating a republican festival to “nothing” is counter-intuitive. But by arguing, yet again, that the spectators must become actors, I suggest that this call to ‘self-celebration’ is better understood as a call to celebrate the present – to bear witness to one another as one’s fellow citizens and cultivate civic relationships that no longer depend upon the myths told by the lawgiver. Recall the impromptu dance which Rousseau witnessed, recounted in the previous section. What was the cause, or object, of celebration there? Nothing, if you please. A naturally emerging phenomenon, the dance swelled out of the crowd and dissipated in the same fashion: not to affirm the founding of Geneva but to celebrate the community brought together by the regiment’s presence. Perhaps, even, as “each sees and loves himself in the others,” a balance between *amour de soi-même* and *amour-propre*, with its self-regarding/other-regarding tension, may be met. In the instance of the festival, the mythic present cultivates the affective atmosphere most conducive to republican community.

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<sup>396</sup> See Saint-Amand, *The Laws of Hostility*, 86-90, and Starobinski, *La Transparence et l’obstacle*, 120.

<sup>397</sup> *Politics and the Arts*, 126 (*Lettre à d’Alembert*, 240): “Mais quels seront enfin les object de ces Spectacles? Qu’y montrera-t-on? Rien, si l’on veut. Avec la liberté, partout où regne l’affluence, le bien-être y regne aussi. Plantez au milieu d’une place un piquet couronné de fleurs, rassemblez-y le people, et vous aurez une fête. Faites mieux encore: donnez les spectateurs en spectacle; rendez les acteurs eux-mêmes; faites que chacun se voie et s’aime dans les autres, afin que tous en soient mieux unis.”

## **Conclusion: Amo, Amas, Amat**

Republicanism appears to be an oddly demanding form of government, in that it requires its citizens to possess certain moral faculties in order to succeed but does not openly offer much in exchange besides duty and responsibility. What I hope to have demonstrated here is that a particularly poignant, if subterranean, affective regime operates within, at least, the Rousseauian strand of republicanism. Sympathy and love are crucial factors in the construction and maintenance of the republican state, institutionalized by participation in ceremonies and rituals that recall and ultimately replace the oftentimes mythical moment of founding. In making this larger claim, I have made three contributory arguments.

The first is that the civic ceremonies described by Rousseau, particularly in “Sur le gouvernement de Pologne,” recapitulate the democratic paradox in terms readily understood by the average republican citizen. Through the performance of proscribed ceremonies, one both creates the nation-state and is created as part of a people *by* the nation-state. This is a process that can continue without cessation. Such ceremonies are necessarily specific to particular states and as such Rousseau emphasizes vigorous civic education in order to cultivate “national character,” a substance-less (because necessarily specific) but powerful notion.

The second argument is that such ceremonies, festivals, and rituals are to be organized in order to produce a particular affective response: love of country and one’s fellow countrymen. The chief obstacle is *amour-propre*, which combines tendencies toward jealousy, pride, and vanity. Though *amour-propre* is other-regarding in a way that *amour de soi-même* is not, and thus would seemingly have political potential, the affective orientation of *amour-propre* dictates otherwise. Rousseau suggests that the festival might provide an outlet for the negative qualities associated with *amour-propre* while remaining essentially other-regarding. Civic ceremonies and

rituals likewise provide opportunities for the development of the virtue necessary for men to abide by the general will and to acknowledge its political precedence over their own desires.

The third argument is that Rousseauian ceremonies offer plausible replacements for the origin stories told by the lawgiver that necessarily cease over time to have an affective hold. By making actors out of spectators and cultivating ceremonies that emphasize encounters with one another rather than a return to the past or the worship of the long-dead, the republican rituals emphasize the political present rather than offer a diversion or escape. It likewise substitutes the celebration of virtues for the celebration of history.

In the following chapter, I consider a different range of passions and their role within a new text, Diderot's *Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville*. My purpose in doing so is to continue developing an increasingly complex notion of republican civic virtue with resources encompassing a wide range of affective practices and emotional registers. In tracing the incommensurate affective economies of the French sailors and the Tahitian islanders who populate Diderot's tale, I will consider the place of civic virtue in 'international relations' and the role of the passions in the construction of a shared ethical life with strangers.

## CHAPTER 4 | Tahiti Between Despair and Disrespect

Every one gives the title of barbarism to everything that is not in use in his own country.  
- Montaigne, *Of Cannibals*<sup>398</sup>

We no longer know this beautiful bond of *hospitality*, and we must admit that the times have produced such great changes among peoples and especially among us, that we are much less obligated by the sacred and respectable laws of this duty than the ancients were.  
- Louis de Jaucourt, “Hospitality”<sup>399</sup>

### Introduction: The Politics of Hospitality in Diderot’s *Supplément*

Denis Diderot’s *Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville* ostensibly names itself with its title – a pre-Derridean supplement to Louis Antoine de Bougainville’s *Le voyage autour du monde, par la frégate ‘La Boudeuse’, et la flûte ‘L’Étoile’* (1771). The *Voyage* itself is a fascinating but generically straightforward reportage of Bougainville’s captaining of an exploratory, imperially motivated trip at the discretion of Louis XV during the late 1760s. Yet consideration of Diderot’s full title – *Supplément au voyage de Bougainville, ou Dialogue entre A et B sur l’inconvénient d’attacher des idées morales à certaines actions physiques qui n’en comportent pas* – raises questions about the relationship between the original (Bougainville’s *Voyage*) and its undecidable, unstable supplement (Diderot’s *Supplément*). The *Supplément*’s attachment to, and displacement of, Bougainville’s text; its piecemeal nature; its adoption and adaptation of external texts (for instance, Ben Franklin’s ‘History of Polly Baker’, itself a hoax published anonymously); its mixture of philosophical dialogue and seemingly straightforward narrative –

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<sup>398</sup> “Of Cannibals,” in *The Essays of Montaigne, Complete*, ed. William Carew Hazlitt and trans. Charles Cotton (London: Reeves and Turner, 1877 [1580]).

<sup>399</sup> “Hospitality,” in *The Encyclopedia of Diderot & d’Alembert Collaborative Translation Project*, trans. Sophie Bourgault (Ann Arbor: Michigan Publishing, University of Michigan Library, 2013). “Nous ne connoissons plus ce beau lien de l’hospitalité, & l’on doit convenir que les tems ont produit de si grands changemens parmi les peuples & surtout parmi nous, que nous sommes beaucoup moins obligés aux lois saintes & respectables de ce devoir, que ne l’étoient les anciens.” “Hospitalité,” in *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, etc.*, ed. Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d’Alembert (University of Chicago: ARTFL Encyclopédie Project, Spring 2013 edition, ed. Robert Morrissey).

all of these qualities trouble any effort to define or pin down Diderot's text as 'a whole.' As such, the *Supplément* unsettles the genre to which it ostensibly contributes much the way the encounter it describes – between the people of Tahiti and the French sailors – unsettles the self-understanding of the European states that have set off on colonial, commercial, and exploratory missions.

Diderot speaks in many voices in the *Supplément* and rather appropriately so, if we read the text, as I propose we do in this chapter, as an exploration of the possibilities for a shared life amongst strangers. This shared life is primarily challenged on two fronts: clashing political systems and incompatible affective regimes, which leave both groups (the French and the Tahitians) on a spectrum between despair and disgust. Building on the work of scholars including Michèle Duchet, Sankar Muthu, and Anthony Pagden, I seek to move beyond the increasingly stale debate over whether Diderot was or was not an opponent of colonialism.<sup>400</sup> Instead, I argue that the *Supplément* traces a series of clashes around the ancient notion of hospitality and its chief affective element, respect. In pursuing wealth (and even scientific knowledge) over their shared humanity with the Tahitians they encounter, the French sailors who compose Bougainville's crew neglect both the letter and the spirit of hospitality. While the Tahitians also make claims on the French sailors, their claims are driven not by disrespect but by the specter of despair. As Diderot recognizes, the Tahitians' power, as well as their affective economy, remains bound to their possession of the island, while the power of Bougainville and his crew is abstract and thus eminently motile, though it is also the more destructive of the two.

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<sup>400</sup> The essential text arguing for Diderot's anti-colonialism remains Yves Benot, *Diderot : de l'athéisme à l'anticolonialisme* (Paris: Maspero, 1970). The position has been defended, most recently by Sankar Muthu, *Enlightenment against Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003) and criticized, most recently by Anthony Strugnell, "Diderot's Anti-Colonialism: A Problematic Notion," in *New Essays on Diderot*, ed. James Fowler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 74-85. See also Sunil M. Agnani, *Hating Empire Properly: The Two Indies and the Limits of Enlightenment Anticolonialism* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013).

Without suggesting that the Tahitians represent a “naturally” virtuous alternative, I detail the clashing affective economies of the French and Tahitians, both of which Diderot treats critically. Unlike my readings of Montesquieu and Rousseau in the previous chapters, I do not suggest that there is a republican position articulated within Diderot’s work (a hint, perhaps – but not a fully articulated position).<sup>401</sup>

Rather I suggest that the conundrum Diderot presents us with – disputes in what amount to the international realm – offer us the opportunity to examine the potential of contemporary neo-republican thinking on issues of international justice and affective practices beyond national borders. It is true that one could make the (perhaps more obvious) case for studying the international dimension of republicanism and emotions via Montesquieu or Rousseau. Certainly Montesquieu’s *Esprit des lois* offers considerable attention to the defensive and offensive responsibilities of the state. Rousseau’s *Project de constitution pour la Corse* and “Sur le gouvernement de Pologne” both consider the respective countries’ international position and potential threats. But I want to suggest that the international dynamics brought to the fore by Diderot, premised as they are on both colonial and commercial encounters, offer more of a challenge to the neo-republican tenet of freedom as non-domination. The confrontation of the French sailors, representatives of the French monarchy,<sup>402</sup> and the Tahitian islanders, an insular and self-sufficient community, raises not only the issue of empire but of disparities of power, political and economic, endemic to the international community.

In the first, brief section, I place Diderot’s *Supplément* within its larger context: France’s losses in the Seven Years’ War; Bougainville’s journey and the popularity of his written account

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<sup>401</sup> On Diderot’s contributions to republican thought, see Peter Sahlins, *Unnaturally French: Foreign Citizens in the Old Regime and After* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), 215-219.

<sup>402</sup> This is true not only in Diderot’s fictional *Supplément* but also its historical precedent, Bougainville’s own record of his journeys. Bougainville dedicated his success to Louis XV, who had granted him permission to undertake the journey. See *Voyage autour du monde*, ed. Jacques Proust (Paris: Gallimard, 1982), 33-34.

of it; and Diderot's involvement with the production of Guillaume-Thomas Raynal's *Histoire des deux Indes*. I suggest that the incompatibility characteristic of the relationships between "new" and "old" worlds that Bougainville's *Voyage* and Raynal's *Histoire* describe is paralleled by Diderot in the affective relationship he depicts between the French sailors and the Tahitians in the *Supplément*. But rather than read the *Supplément* and Diderot's contributions to the *Histoire* as part of a larger anti-colonial agenda, I propose reading them as differently scaled explorations of the affective clashes which the colonial relationship demonstrates but does not itself fully capture.

In the second section, I dissect how the *Supplément* complicates the standard narrative of the colonial encounter. More ambivalent than defenders of the Diderot-as-anti-colonialist thesis would argue, the text nonetheless upends underlying eighteenth-century assumptions about colonization and commerce.<sup>403</sup> It does so not by depicting the Tahitian islanders as more or less "natural" than the French sailors who land on their shores, but by reorienting the grounds of the debate to one based on an ethic of hospitality. At stake in encounters between the Tahitians and the French are conflicting views of respect and sociability. To demonstrate this more concretely, I give a detailed reading of "the Old Man's Speech" in the *Supplément*. I argue that, for the "Vieillard," the sailors' treatment of the islanders amounts to disrespect and thus his response, a stirring account of despair for his community's future, points to the incompatibility of these two

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<sup>403</sup> There is certainly a stronger case to be made for Diderot being anti-imperialist than his not but there remains, as I demonstrate, a degree of ambivalence to his critique. In providing the Tahitians with less than salubrious motives for their own interactions with the French sailors, Diderot makes clear that they will become victims of European imperial ambitions but also grants them a degree of agency. See also Dobie, *Trading Places: Colonization and Slavery in Eighteenth-Century French Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010), who suggests that "the question remains whether these critiques [of Diderot and Condorcet as well] betokened a full-fledged anti-imperialist perspective or, rather... an immanent critique of commercial and colonial practices" (206). In all cases, I reject Strugnell's claim that it a "mistake to attribute to a representative of the Enlightenment the kind of unqualified hostility to any kind of European influence over the lives of non-European peoples that we associate with the anti-colonialism of the twentieth century" ("Diderot's Anti-Colonialism," 76) – if only because this is a distortion of the terms of the current debate.

political and affective regimes. The possibility of moving beyond this impasse is hinted at by the final discussion of A and B.

In the third section, I turn to contemporary neo-republican thought to see what resources it provides for the dilemmas of incommensurability facing modern politics. Though I consider the implications of the eighteenth-century texts under consideration for both neo-republicanism and constitutional patriotism in the conclusion, I focus on the former here. I do because the extant literature has purposefully engaged issues of international politics and global justice in ways that constitutional patriotism has not. Specifically, the literature on constitutional patriotism, as one might expect, emphasizes intra-European relations and it does so on the premise that the states are relatively equal. (This is of course more of a premise than a reality but it is one that the constitutional patriotism literature takes seriously.) The neo-republican literature, taking its cues from work in distributive justice and global justice, is more overtly concerned with relationships between states where there exists a notable disparity of power and asks under what conditions freedom may nonetheless be possible.

But first I begin by placing our eighteenth-century materials within their historical context in order to provide the background for Diderot's discussion of hospitality in the *Supplément*. Though the *Supplément* is often regarded primarily as a fictional tale – indeed, the authoritative *Pléaide* edition places it in amongst the *Contes et romans* of Diderot's work, rather than with the *Œuvres philosophiques* – Diderot was responding to contemporary debates and events. Some attention to them at the outset is, therefore, necessary.

### **I. Bougainville, Raynal, and “les nations sauvages”**

Bougainville's *Voyage* and Raynal's *Histoire* first appeared within a year of each other in 1771-



1772.<sup>404</sup> Both were devised in the wake of the Seven Years' War (1754-1763), which saw the loss of France's colonial holdings in North America, primarily to Britain and Spain. With its navy in shambles and heavily indebted, France's international authority was jeopardized.<sup>405</sup> The *Histoire* and the *Voyage* contributed to a larger French discussion about the nation's ambitions as it adjusted to an increasingly powerful Great Britain. As David Bell demonstrates in *The Cult of the Nation in France: Inventing Nationalism, 1680-1800*, public discourse, with the support of the government, took on a notably xenophobic valence, so far as Britain was concerned.<sup>406</sup> In spite of a well-nurtured anglophilia among the elite,<sup>407</sup> France, in part because of government-sponsored propaganda, saw a flourishing of patriotic declarations. A judge speaking to the Académie de Lyon in 1766 declared, "patriotism in France has today reached the highest point of perfection, the same reached by ancient Rome."<sup>408</sup> French lawyer M. Rossel devoted an entire seven volumes to the *Histoire du patriotisme françois* (1769), in which he explained, "there is not a single Frenchman who does not possess this feeling in the depths of his heart (*âme*)... I would dare say that this sentiment is more vivid, more generous in the French Citizen than it ever was in the most patriotic Roman."<sup>409</sup>

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<sup>404</sup> The first edition of *Histoire* bears the date 1770 but it did not appear in print until the following year. See *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissements & du commerce des européens dans les deux Indes*, vol. 1 (Amsterdam, 1780).

<sup>405</sup> The relevant literature is vast. See David Bell, *The Cult of the Nation in France: Inventing Nationalism, 1680-1800* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), chapter 3, and Jay M. Smith, *Nobility Reimagined: The Patriotic Nation in Eighteenth-Century France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), chapter 4. A useful starting point for considering France's imperial ambitions and setbacks is Catherine M. Desbarats, "France in North America: The Net Burden of Empire during the First Half of the Eighteenth Century," *French History* 11 (1997): 1-28.

<sup>406</sup> Bell, *The Cult of the Nation*, 83-91.

<sup>407</sup> Consider, as Bell points out (92), Montesquieu's chapter in the *L'Esprit des lois*, "De la constitution d'Angleterre" and Voltaire's *Lettres philosophiques* (1734).

<sup>408</sup> David Bell, "Recent Works on Early Modern French National Identity," *Journal of Modern History* 68 (1996): 84.

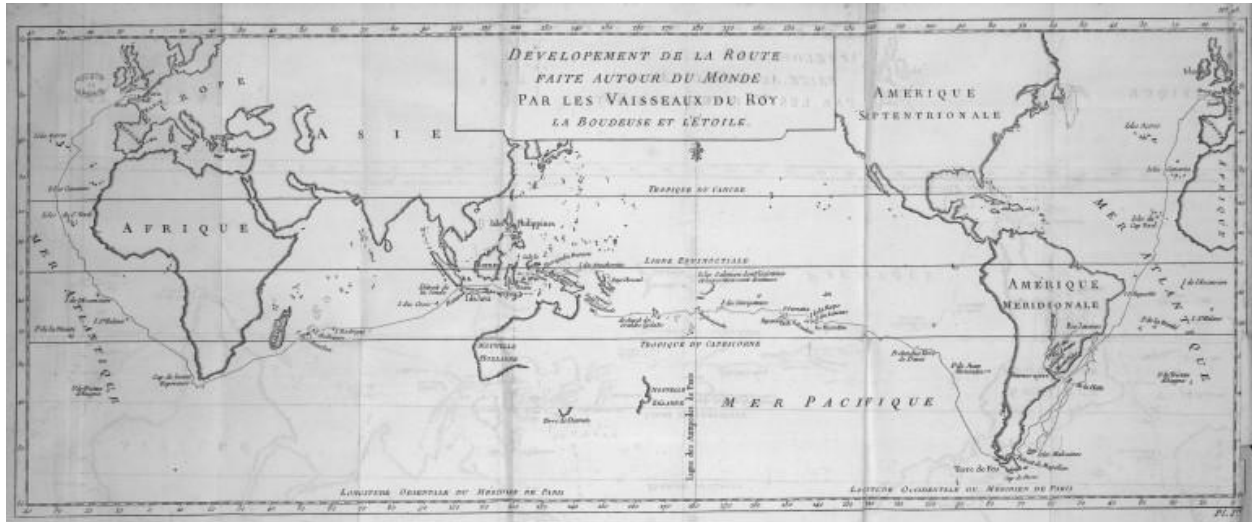
<sup>409</sup> Though we are more accustomed to think of renaissance Italy, particularly Florence, as a self-conscious "new Rome," the image permeated mid-eighteenth-century France as well. M. Rossel, *Histoire du patriotisme françois; ou, Nouvelle Histoire de France: Dans laquelle en s'est principalement attaché à décrire les traits de Patriotisme qui ont illustré nos Rois, la Noblesse & le Peuple François, depuis l'origine de la Monarchie jusqu'à nos jours*, vol. 1 (Paris: Lacombe, 1769), v-vi. Rossel is cited in Smith, *Nobility Reimagined*, 144. "Je sais... qu'il n'y a pas un

Bougainville's voyage was the sort of endeavor precisely suited to encourage similar patriotic stirrings after international embarrassment. Bougainville himself had fought in the Seven Years' War, defending New France and, eventually, helped to negotiate the terms of its surrender to the British as part of the Treaty of Paris. After his return to France, Bougainville set off, at his own expense, to the Malouines (today known as the Falkland Islands) and though Louis XV granted him possession of the uninhabited islands, the Spanish balked at the French presence so near their own colonial interests and Louis forced Bougainville to forfeit his ownership. Having lost personal interests to the British and then the Spanish, Bougainville's next venture would be more successful. Louis XV granted permission to Bougainville to take a crew of roughly three hundred and thirty men on two ships as part of a multifaceted mission.<sup>410</sup> The trip, which lasted from the fall of 1766 to the spring of 1769, was part scientific exploration, part face-saving. Joined by the astronomer Pierre-Antoine Véron, the botanist Philippe Commerson, the cartographer Charles Routier de Romainville, and the adventurer-prince, Karl Heinrich Otto de Nassau-Siegen (also known as Charles de Nassau), Bougainville's crew would return having 'discovered' several new species, including the flower that still bears Bougainville's name, and contributed to the mapping of the Pacific Ocean. (Despite the presence of de Romainville on the trip, it is unknown who contributed the maps that accompanied a 1772 edition of the *Voyage*. The map below shows the route traveled by the two ships, which occasionally diverged.)

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François qui ne l'éprouve au fond de son âme... J'ose même dire que ce sentiment est plus vif, plus généreux dans le Citoyen François, qu'il ne l'a jamais été dans le Romain le plus Patriote."

<sup>410</sup> There is some suggestion, but no evidence (that I have seen), in the secondary literature that Étienne François de Choiseul, who served as either France's Secretary of War or Secretary of the Navy during the Seven Years' War and the disastrous 1760s, played a role in enlisting Bougainville to undertake the journey. It is certainly plausible that the Duc de Choiseul would be looking to improve his reputation through associating himself with an endeavor that would increase French morale and pride.



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

**Image 1** Unattributed. *Développement de la route faite autour du monde par les vaisseaux du roi, La Bordeuse et l'Étoile.* From Louis Antoine de Bougainville and unknown artist, *Illustrations de 'Voyage autour du monde.'* Vol. 1. Paris: Saillant et Nyon, 1772. Courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Much feted upon his return to Saint-Malo, Brittany, Bougainville found that there was much public interest in the journey. Though Commerson, the botanist, contributed to the desire with a short “post-script” published in the *Mercure de France*, Bougainville’s revelation that he had brought with him the first Polynesian visitor to Europe, a Tahitian man named Aotourou of course attracted everyone’s attention. Aotourou’s own reasons for traveling to France and his impressions of European culture remain unknown, for he never learned to speak French (something Bougainville sought counsel with various physicians in order to understand), but it seems that he simply choose to depart with the French sailors when they left Tahiti.<sup>411</sup> Given Aotourou’s relative silence, Nicolas Bricaire de Dixmérie, a minor French writer and follower of Voltaire, attempted to speak for him, publishing *Le sauvage de Taïti aux français ; avec un envoi au philosophe ami des sauvages* in 1770, before even the appearance of Bougainville’s

<sup>411</sup> On Aotourou’s time in France and the debates over his apparent inability to speak French, see Anthony Pagden, *The Enlightenment and Why It Still Matters* (New York: Random House, 2013), 223-227.

*Voyage*.<sup>412</sup> His most noted quality was an unfortunately indiscriminate and outsized lust - that, and failing to live up the reputation of Tahitians as “Herculean” in appearance.<sup>413</sup> Regardless, when he decided to return to Tahiti, Bougainville spent a substantial portion of his own fortune to send him, bankrupting himself in the process. Aotourou would die of measles, however, before he even left France.<sup>414</sup> Though Bougainville’s crew spent only nine days in Tahiti (as opposed to Captain James Cook, who on his last journey spent nearly four months)<sup>415</sup> and though his account of that time takes up only 44 out of some 400 pages in the modern edition of the *Voyage*, Bougainville remains indelibly associated with Tahiti, which he called the Nouvelle-Cythère. Bougainville’s own *Voyage autour du monde* appeared in 1771 and was rapidly translated into English and German, a genuinely European phenomenon.

It is likely that Diderot knew of the faux-Aotourou’s publication. Upon the publication of Bougainville’s *Voyage*, he was commissioned in 1771 by his good friend F.M. Grimm to write a review for the latter’s *Correspondance littéraire*. The review never appeared, however, and by October 1772, it had taken the form of a multi-layered dialogue. It appeared in this form in the *Correspondance littéraire* but continued to revise it, adding the Polly Baker episode, which had already been included in the *Histoire*. It was not published in the form with which we are familiar until after Diderot’s death, as part of an anthology, *Opuscules philosophiques et Correspondance littéraire*, in 1796.<sup>416</sup>

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<sup>412</sup> Dixmérie drew almost exclusively on Commerson’s account. See Robert Nicole, *The Word, the Pen, and the Pistol: Literature and Power in Tahiti* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2001), 65-66.

<sup>413</sup> Mason and Wokler, “Introduction,” xvi, and Pagden, *The Enlightenment*, 223.

<sup>414</sup> Proust, “Préface,” in Bougainville, *Voyage autour du monde*, ed. Proust (Paris: Gallimard, 1982), 11.

<sup>415</sup> Bougainville and Cook are in many ways one another’s doppelgängers, representing their respective countries interests in a number of theaters. Both served in the navy, both fought in the Seven Years’ War, and, moreover, both fought in the Battle of the Plains of Abraham, in which the British gained control of Quebec City from the French in a short but violent battle after a three-month siege by the British. The French loss was arguably a turning point in the war.

<sup>416</sup> For details on the manuscript and publication history of the *Supplément*, see Mason and Wokler, “Introduction,” 32-33.

Like the *Voyage*, Raynal's *Histoire* was the result of a long and labored process, albeit one that covered the globe figuratively rather than literally. Raynal, who took religious orders but left the priesthood for unknown reasons, had previously published l'*Histoire du Stathouderat* (1747), his *Mémoires historiques et politiques* (1754), and l'*Histoire du divorce d'Henry VIII* (1763) and in 1750, was appointed director of the respected *Mercure de France* by the same Duc de Choiseul who would have a hand in setting Bougainville to sea. A regular of the Parisian salons, he traveled through the same circles as Hume, Montesquieu, and Rousseau, even if he did not himself command the same attention.

To the extent that Raynal was known for publishing popular histories and there was a fad for texts about the South Pacific, the *Histoire des deux Indes* has an understandable genesis. But Raynal's genius lay in the organization and management of others rather than the production of original material. Though Raynal is credited as author, he is more properly regarded as the chief editor of a massive collaborative project. Collecting information from all available sources, including recent census data, Raynal pursued information about "the two Indies" from anyone who could provide it, sending out detailed questionnaires and integrating new information in later editions.<sup>417</sup> In spite of his feverish efforts on its behalf, the first two editions of the *Histoire* were published anonymously (though the second featured the Abbé's portrait). This afforded the authors, including Alexandre Deleyre and Baron d'Holbach, a greater liberty in taking increasingly strident positions in their contributions. A second, expanded edition of the *Histoire* appeared in 1774 and a third edition, expanded still, in 1780. Between 1780 and 1790, an

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<sup>417</sup> "The two Indies" ought to be understood as comprehending much more than the name seems to imply: "the East Indies in the eighteenth century usually comprised India and virtually the whole of East and South-East Asia, and the West Indies included both South and North America," as well as Africa. Peter Jimack, "Introduction," *A History of the Two Indies: A Translated Selection of Writings from Raynal's Histoire philosophique et politique des établissements des Européens dans les Deux Indes* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2006), ix.

astonishing thirty new editions appeared, as well as twenty-five editions of extracts.<sup>418</sup> One of the most read books of the Enlightenment, it was condemned by the Conseil du Roi in 1772 and was placed on the Index of Prohibited Books in 1774 and Raynal found himself in exile in 1781.<sup>419</sup>

Raynal and Diderot met through Grimm, who took over another of Raynal's projects, the *Nouvelles littéraires*, in 1753, and renamed it the *Correspondance littéraire*. Diderot seems to have joined Raynal's stable of contributors after the publication of the first edition<sup>420</sup> and the increasingly anti-colonial tenor of the *Histoire* is generally attributed to Diderot's involvement in the production of the 1774 and 1780 editions.<sup>421</sup> Nonetheless, the increasingly strident tone was well in keeping with the project Raynal had set for himself for his "topic—as established by the full title of his work—is not a history of voyages of exploration and discovery; the focus is more specifically on the history of European trade and colonial settlements."<sup>422</sup> Not a hagiography of French explorers<sup>423</sup> nor ethnographic reportage in the style of Bougainville's *Voyage*, the *Histoire* always maintained a critical edge, if it was Diderot who was responsible for sharpening

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<sup>418</sup> Mason and Wokler, "Introduction," xxvii.

<sup>419</sup> On the complex reception of the *Histoire*, see Robert Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1995) and Cecil Patrick Courtney, Gianluigi Goggi, Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink, and Anthony Strugnell, "Introduction générale," *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissements et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes*, vol. 1 (Paris: Centre International d'Étude du XVIII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, 2010), xlvii-lii.

<sup>420</sup> See Hans Wolpe, *Raynal et sa machine de guerre: L'Histoire des deux Indes et ses perfectionnements* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1957), cited in Jimack, "Introduction," xii.

<sup>421</sup> On this point, see Pagden, *Lords of all the World: Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain and France, c.1500-c.1800* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 163-168. I rely on Michèle Duchet, *Diderot et L'Histoire des Deux Indes ou l'écriture fragmentaire* (Paris: Nizet, 1978) for determining which passages were contributed by Diderot to Raynal's *Histoire*. But see also Herbert Dieckmann, "Les Contributions de Diderot à la *Correspondance littéraire* et à L'*Histoire des deux Indes*," *Revue d'Histoire littéraire de la France* 51 (1951): 417-440 and Gianluigi Goggi, *Denis Diderot: Pensées détachées, Contributions à L'Histoire des deux Indes*, 2 vols. (Siena: Tip. Del Rettorato, 1976-1977). The general scholarly consensus is that Diderot is responsible for up to one-third of the 1780 edition.

<sup>422</sup> Jimack and and Jenny Mander. "Reuniting the World: The Pacific in Raynal's *Histoire des deux Indes*," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 41 (2008): 191.

<sup>423</sup> Though "admiration for the heroic enterprising individual is a theme running through the whole of the *Histoire des deux Indes*, and in the context of the Pacific, Raynal sees such men (be they pioneering navigators like Magellan, Lemaire, or Drake, or even an administrator such as Alberoni) as key agents in the opening up of the world to trade and hence to prosperity" (Jimack and Mander, "The Pacific in Raynal's *Histoire des deux Indes*," 195).

it.<sup>424</sup>

At the same time that Diderot worked on the *Histoire*, he was rewriting and adding to his *Supplément*.<sup>425</sup> It has been suggested that “the absence of any reference [in the *Histoire*] to Bougainville’s circumnavigation of the globe and his visit to Tahiti in 1768 is perhaps all the more surprising.”<sup>426</sup> Though this may seem almost intuitively correct at a distance of 230 years, it may be more productive to consider the so-called absence from Diderot’s perspective. For him, the two projects are deeply aligned, each considering the tensions of cross-cultural exchange occurring under conditions of inequality. What the *Supplément* examines in detail, the *Histoire* catalogues on a grand scale.<sup>427</sup> The different scales permit different critiques and observations. In the following section, I consider how Diderot uses the two texts’ different scales to treat the role of hospitality, primarily through his discussions of colonization and commerce. I then focus on the competing affective and political economies we find in the *Supplément* with an interpretation of the Vieillard’s speech.

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<sup>424</sup> Diderot’s stance is certainly more radical than that of Raynal, who was willing to ignore certain forms of servitude. As Jimack points out, though Raynal gives a “graphic evocation of the appalling conditions in which plantation slaves are forced to live,” the “discussion of sugar-cultivation, including detailed proposals for making it more profitable, appears to have taken entirely for granted the need for slave-labour” (“Introduction,” *A History of the Two Indies: A Translated*, xxv). See also Srinivas Aravamudan, *Tropicopolitans: Colonialism and Agency, 1688-1805* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), 292-295, and Pagden, *The Enlightenment*, 200-202, for the gap between Raynal’s own beliefs and public perception of them.

<sup>425</sup> On the nature and extent of the substantive relationship between the *Histoire*, the *Supplément*, and the *Voyage*, see two pieces by Duchet: “Bougainville, Raynal, Diderot et les sauvages du Canada : une source ignorée de *L’Histoire des deux Indes*,” *Revue d’Histoire littéraire de la France* 63 (1963): 228-236 and “Le *Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville* et la collaboration de Diderot à *L’Histoire des deux Indes*,” *Cahiers de l’Association internationale des études françaises* 13 (1961): 173-187. See Duchet’s *Anthropologie et histoire au siècle des lumières* (Paris: François Maspero, 1971) for Raynal’s influence, in particular, on those who followed, including Buffon, Diderot, Rousseau, and Voltaire.

<sup>426</sup> Jimack and Mander, “The Pacific in Raynal’s *Histoire des deux Indes*,” 200. “In all its nineteen books the name of Bougainville does not even appear once, at least not in the edition of 1780—in the edition of 1774 he had been referred to once, mistakenly, as the discoverer of Tahiti (10:2). Moreover, Tahiti, the so-called island of love that had very much become the main focus of public fascination with the Pacific, does not command any significant attention within Raynal’s work: it is only mentioned twice in passing” (191).

<sup>427</sup> Thus Jimack and Mander are not incorrect so much as they miss the point in observing that “the two texts have many themes in common... However, the thrust of the *Supplément* is to foreground the negative effects, not (just) of imperial colonialism, but of ostensibly benign European contact with Polynesian peoples” (“The Pacific in Raynal’s *Histoire des deux Indes*,” 200). That effect is precisely what Diderot’s focused meditation on one fictionalized example permitted.

## II. “Unfeeling hearts”: Violations of Hospitality

For one of the most inquisitive of the *philosophes*, with interests in, and writings on, innumerable subjects, Diderot’s disinclination for travel seems at first glance like an aberration, a paradoxical personal quirk at odds with his curiosity.<sup>428</sup> (His only notable journey was a trip to St. Petersburg at the behest of Catherine the Great, who was to become his patron.) The paradox remains at the level of the surface however: for Diderot, civility requires the *civitas*. As Anthony Pagden notes, “Diderot’s traveller... is not a man to wonder. He does not travel in order to experience and to record, to make his own world wider through contact with others... Unrestrained by laws and customs he is, ultimately, an identityless being.”<sup>429</sup> Rather than seek out common interests with one’s fellow countrymen, the traveller, almost by definition, rejects the national bonds of the *patrie*. The traveller acts from the wrong motivations, profit and self-interest. He is, essentially, an imperialist: “bereft of the social and cultural bonds that normally would have humanized him and that might have moderated his outlook and behavior, the imperialist runs wild in the New World, clamoring for profit, brutalizing fellow human beings, and destroying foreign nations.”<sup>430</sup>

But there is a second thread at work in Diderot’s treatment of “international relations” and it stems from the collision of the ancient tradition of hospitality with the eighteenth-century concern with sociability. The coexistence of these two threads – the traveller as imperialist and the traveller as guest – is ultimately what produces the sense of clashing affective and political regimes at work in the *Supplément*. In declaring French sovereignty over Tahiti, Bougainville’s

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<sup>428</sup> Diderot shares this distaste with Montesquieu, for whom such disinclination somehow seems more appropriate. Montesquieu, the sprawl of the *Esprit des lois* notwithstanding, is the consummate researcher and compiler of information and though his writings on China and Persia in particular would have benefitted from actual time in China and Persia, it is nonetheless unsurprising that he would feel confident that such material as he required could be acquired through prodigious reading and, in the case of China, discussions with an émigré (on which see Pagden, *The Enlightenment*, 281-282).

<sup>429</sup> Pagden, *European Encounters with the New World: From Renaissance to Romanticism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 164.

<sup>430</sup> Muthu, *Enlightenment against Empire*, 74.



crew reneges on an ancient tradition. Essential to the tradition of hospitality is a “position of humility” on the part of the traveller.<sup>431</sup> Referring to the women and girls offered to the French soldiers, the Vieillard insists that the latter “took possession of the tender victim of our obligations as hosts.”<sup>432</sup> Sankar Muthu argues that “under global empires, the weakening of hospitality arises not only from the technological means of European colonists and merchants to create their own habitations abroad, but also from their lack of a set of humanizing characteristics that Diderot views as essential for basic human decency and that he sees at the heart of social life, both European and non-European.”<sup>433</sup> At stake, then, is not only a political system, but also the correct affective disposition that permits a shared (but temporarily so!) ethical life with strangers.

The ethic of hospitality constitutes the background to both the *Supplément* and Diderot’s discussions in the *Histoire des deux Indes* about the “principles of colonization.” Hospitality permits a degree of interaction in spite of conflicting affective dispositions by providing rules for engagement and, perhaps more importantly, disengagement. By abiding by the rules of hospitality, one can formally demonstrate respect for another party without committing to the

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<sup>431</sup> Muthu, *Enlightenment against Empire*, 85.

<sup>432</sup> *Diderot: Political Writings*, ed. and trans. John Hope Mason and Robert Wokler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 45. Citations in English from both the *Supplément* and the *Histoire* will be drawn from this volume. The French edition of the *Histoire* cited is *Œuvres : Politique*, vol. 3, ed. Laurent Versini (Paris: Éditions Robert Laffont, 1995) and will be referred to as *OP*. “Te voilà possesseur de le tender victim du devoir hospitalier” (*CR*, 550). I set aside here a point worthy of its own exploration, i.e. that the women and girls of Tahiti function as currency in this exchange. It is worth noting that Muthu misses this completely when he remarks that “Diderot portrays Tahiti as a society at ease with the personal and social dynamics of human sexuality. In Tahiti, Diderot asserts, women are not confused with property and, thus, intimate relationships are more liberated and relaxed” (*Enlightenment against Empire*, 63). Thia, daughter of Orou and most notable for being childless, would likely beg to differ that there is no shame involved in Tahitian sexual politics. Sharon Stanley responds to Muthu’s claim explicitly, remarking, “Tahitians are not particularly concerned with sexual pleasure. Rather, they celebrate sex to the extent that it is procreative. And procreation deserves praise because it enhances the island’s productivity... Only by conflating sexual desire with the desire for procreation can one imagine Tahiti gives free rein to sexual instincts.” “Unraveling Natural Utopia: Diderot’s *Supplement to the Voyage of Bougainville*,” *Political Theory* 37 (2009): 278, 281. See also Lynn Festa, “Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Tahitian *Jouissance*,” *Romance Quarterly* 54 (2007): 303-325.

<sup>433</sup> Muthu, *Enlightenment against Empire*, 85.

substantive affective dimension of respect – deference, humility, receptivity – that ideally accompanies interactions between strangers. Hospitality, in other words, provides a rule-based method for avoiding affective entanglements. It is superior when accompanied by a genuine affective dimension – when one gives respect and feels respected – but it is not essential for hospitality to function.

In Book 8 of the *Histoire*, Diderot carefully distinguishes between the possible permissible actions within a colonial encounter governed by hospitality, basing permissibility upon the conditions in which one finds a foreign land: “either the country is deserted, or it is partly deserted and partly inhabited, or it is fully inhabited.”<sup>434</sup> Only in the case of the deserted country can one fully lay claim without regard for others or established norms. “If [a country] is fully inhabited I can lay legitimate claim only to the hospitality and assistance which one man owes another.”<sup>435</sup> This includes sustenance and temporary shelter. If not provided, they can be taken by requisite force. If, after a period of time, “I have become acquainted with the country’s laws and *mœurs*,” and request to be allowed to settle there, it is a favor to me to be so permitted and a refusal is entirely their prerogative.<sup>436</sup>

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<sup>434</sup> Diderot: *Political Writings*, 175 (OP, 690): “Ou la contrée est déserte, ou elle est en partie déserte et en partie habitée, ou elle est toute peuplée.”

<sup>435</sup> Diderot: *Political Writings*, 175 (OP, 690): “Si elle est toute peuplée, je ne puis légitimement prétendre qu’à l’hospitalité et aux secours que l’homme doit à l’homme.”

<sup>436</sup> Diderot: *Political Writings*, 175 (OP, 690): “J’ai pris connaissance des lois et des mœurs. Elles me conviennent. Je désire de me fixer dans le pays. Si l’on y consent, c’est une grâce qu’on me fait, et dont le refus ne saurait m’offenser.” A significant undercurrent to Diderot’s discussions of the right to settle is the eighteenth-century preoccupation with population – particularly with the concern that France’s population was declining. As Leslie Tuttle argues, for early modern rulers, “no crisis was necessary for a pronatalist policy to make sense” but an increasingly pessimistic attitude made it seem wise. In this sense, Tahiti is utopic, for as Orou tells the Aumônier, “you’d hardly believe how much our morals are actually improved by the extent to which we’re inclined to identify private and public gain with the growth of population” (*Diderot: Political Writings*, 62). “Tu ne saurais croire combine l’idée de richesse particulière ou publique unie dans nos têtes à l’idée de population épure nos mœurs sur ce point” (CR, 568). See Tuttle’s *Conceiving the Old Regime: Pronatalism and the Politics of Reproduction in Early Modern France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 6. The concerns spurred both government involvement in reproduction – see Louis XIV’s Edict on Marriage of 1666 – and developments in demography. The result, predictably, was a surge in population by the nineteenth century. See also Carol Blum, *Strength in Numbers: Population, Reproduction, and Power in Eighteenth-Century France* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press,

Making a Lockean argument, Diderot goes on to claim that if the land is partially inhabited, that which is deserted is fairly claimed through one's labor, with resources such as forests and rivers available to all (unless necessary for the previous inhabitants' existence). The only claim prior inhabitants can make on newcomers is that they behave peaceably - if, Diderot notes wryly, "I set up a stockade, amass weapons, and put up fortifications, a people's deputies would be wise if they came and said to me: 'Are you our friend? Are you our enemy?'"<sup>437</sup> Any attempts to violate certain norms – by seizing women, children, or property; attempting to enslave free persons; infringing on religious liberty; or attempting to impose oneself as a ruler – would warrant a violent response "with no offence against the laws of humanity and justice."<sup>438</sup>

Following this elaboration of the conditions under which one can expect hospitality, Diderot compares these practices to what he depicts as common European practices (he singles out the Spanish for particular derision):

Their explorers arrive in a region of the New World unoccupied by anyone from the Old World, and immediately bury a small strip of metal on which they have engraved these words: *This country belongs to us*. And why does it belong to you? Are you as unjust and stupid as some primitive men who are accidentally carried to your shores, where they write on the sand or the bark of your trees: *This country is ours*.? You have no right to the natural products of the country where you land, and you claim a right over your fellow-men. Instead of recognizing this man as a brother, you only see him as a slave, a beast of burden. Oh my fellow citizens! You think like that and you behave like that; and you have ideas of justice, a morality, a holy religion and a mother in common with those whom you treat so tyrannically?<sup>439</sup>

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2002) and Joshua Cole, *The Power of Large Numbers: Population, Politics, and Gender in Nineteenth-Century France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000).

<sup>437</sup> Diderot: *Political Writings*, 176 (OP, 691): "Si je forme une enceinte redoutable, si j'amasse des armes des armes, si j'élève des fortifications, ses députés seront sages s'ils viennent me dire : 'Es-tu notre ami ? es-tu notre ennemi ?'"

<sup>438</sup> Diderot: *Political Writings*, 176 (OP, 691): "sans blesser les lois de l'humanité et de la justice."

<sup>439</sup> Diderot: *Political Writings*, 177 (OP, 691-691): "... arrivent-ils dans une région du Nouveau Monde, qui n'est occupé par aucun peuple de l'ancien aussitôt ils enfouissent une petite lame de métal, sur laquelle ils ont gravé ces mots : CETTE CONTRÉE NOUS APPARTIENT. Et pourquoi vous appartient-elle? N'êtes-vous pas aussi injustes, aussi insensés que des sauvages portés par hasard sur les productions insensibles et brutes de la terre où vous abordez, et vous vous en arroyez un sur l'homme votre semblable. Au lieu de reconnaître dans cet homme un frère, vous n'y voyez qu'un esclave, une bête de somme. Ô mes consitoiyens ! vous pensez ainsi, vous en usez de cette

Diderot moves swiftly here, from imperialism to tyranny. What gives his argument momentum is the sense of desire and entitlement that allows those of ‘the Old World’ to forsake their duties toward their fellow-men of ‘the New World.’ Though this behavior would be unacceptable were it done without pretense, it is the conflict that the Europeans’ hypocrisy introduces which Diderot finds most troubling: “*You think like that and you behave like that.*” As Jimmy Casas Klausen has argued, “by claiming Tahiti for France, the French rob the Tahitians of hospitality by robbing them of the gift of the Frenchmen’s own absolutely temporary presence as guests. In brief, to take advantage of hospitality is to turn the temporary extension of a claim into an exclusive right of possession.”<sup>440</sup> The guest who refuses to leave becomes an interloper or, in Bougainville’s case, an imperialist.

According to Diderot’s typology of appropriate actions, whatever rituals of appropriation the guest performs have no legal – or ethical – standing: making a declaration or planting a flag does not create, or transfer, ‘ownership.’ The Tahitians’ horror at the idea runs counter to the notion that “the savage [lived] in a world of his own making, a world of extremes, of inexplicable and frequently repellent ritual behavior, a world controlled by passion rather than reason.”<sup>441</sup> The Vieillard expresses this view most forcefully when he gives a speech nearly identical to the passage quoted above, emphasizing the disrespect the French demonstrate for the Tahitians when they so readily violate the norms of hospitality.

For Diderot, this is a regrettable but understandable historical phenomenon. Several years earlier, in 1765, he had published Louis de Jaucourt’s *Encyclopédie* entry on hospitality. The

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manière ; et vous avez des notions de justice ; une morale, une religion sainte, une mere commune avec ceux que vous traitez si tyranniquement.” This passage appears, in largely the same form, in the *Supplément* (CR, 548).

<sup>440</sup> Jimmy Casas Klausen, “Of Hobbes and Hospitality in Diderot’s *Supplement to the Voyage of Bougainville*,” *Polity* 37 (2005), 185.

<sup>441</sup> Pagden, “The Savage Critic: Some European Images of the Primitive,” *The Yearbook of English Studies* 13 (1983): 33.

*Chevalier* closed his not inconsiderable essay with this wistful observation, riddled with the same ambivalence one finds in the *Supplément*:

The spirit of commerce, while uniting all nations, has broken the ties of benevolence between individuals; it has caused much good and evil; it has produced incalculable commodities, more extensive knowledge, easy luxury and a love of interest. This love has replaced the secret movements of nature which formerly linked men through tender and touching bonds. In their travels, wealthy individuals have gained the enjoyment of all the delights of the country they visit, joined to the polite welcome that is offered proportionally to their expense. We see them with pleasure and without attachment, just like those rivers that fertilize more or less the lands through which they pass.<sup>442</sup>

Because movement has grown increasingly easy since ancient times, with established routes and hostels, “this act of humanity” is no longer indispensable for those who can pay their way and those who cannot are looked upon with suspicion. Even if the French should have a good reason for being far from home, another condition of hospitality per Jaucourt, the Tahitians have good reason to suspect that they harbor “prejudicial intentions.”

Yet while most critical attention focuses on the French blunders and errors in engaging with Tahitian society, it is crucial to note that the Tahitians also make demands of their guests, demands that are at the very least controversial and of which Diderot is also critical. Though I want to insist that the Tahitian demands do not compare to the disrespectful actions of the French, their relationship is marked by exchanges that subvert the other-regarding intentions generally held to underpin hospitality. The men offer their wives, daughters, food, and homes to

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<sup>442</sup> Louis de Jaucourt, “Hospitality,” in *The Encyclopedia of Diderot & d’Alembert Collaborative Translation Project*, trans. Sophie Bourgault (Ann Arbor: Michigan Publishing, University of Michigan Library, 2013). “L’esprit de commerce, en unissant toutes les nations, a rompu les chaînons de bienfaisance des particuliers; il a fait beaucoup de bien & de mal; il a produit des commodités sans nombre, des connoissances plus étendues, un luxe facile, & l’amour de l’intérêt. Cet amour a pris la place des mouvemens secrets de la nature, qui lioient autrefois les hommes par des noeuds tendres & touchans. Les gens riches y ont gagné dans leurs voyages, la jouissance de tous les agrémens du pays où ils se rendent, jointe à l’accueil poli qu’on leur accorde à proportion de leur dépense. On les voit avec plaisir, & sans attachement, comme ces fleuves qui fertilisent plus ou moins les terres par lesquelles ils passent.” “Hospitalité,” *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, etc.*, ed. Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d’Alembert (University of Chicago: ARTFL Encyclopédie Project, Spring 2013 edition, ed. Robert Morrissey).

the sailors but out of a concern for their own community's future rather than a sense of ethical obligation to the wanderer (who is, of course, in this case not a wanderer at all). Orou tells the Aumônier that, "while more robust and healthy than you, we saw at once that you surpassed us in intelligence, and we immediately marked out for you some of our most beautiful women and girls to receive the seed of a race superior to ours. We tried an experiment which may still bring us success."<sup>443</sup> The Tahitians' infringements on the code of hospitality are not marked by violence but by subterfuge. (Perhaps they are better conceived of as negotiations than infringements.)

Sharon Stanley has convincingly argued that not only does Diderot's conception of nature differ significantly from that of Rousseau, with whom he is frequently compared, "but even the very concept of nature as a stable, fixed referent" is questionable within the *Supplément*.<sup>444</sup> Indeed, the attempts to 'breed' a superior, or distinctly *useful*, kind of Tahitian reek of the subversion of nature that would come to the literary fore over the next century.<sup>445</sup> The commonplace juxtaposition, therefore, between the natural Tahitians and the artificial French does not hold, though readers have long gone against A's warning and "fallen prey to the myth of Tahiti."<sup>446</sup> Rather, "if Tahiti can, at least in certain respects, be deemed superior to Europe, it is not [just] because it is closer to nature but also because it is, from an economic standpoint, a

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<sup>443</sup> *Diderot: Political Writings*, 64 (CR, 570): "Plus robustes, plus sains que vous, nous nous sommes aperçus au premier coup d'œil que vous ne nous surpassiez en intelligence, et sur-le-champ nous vous avons destiné quelques-unes de nos femmes et de nos filles les plus belles à recueillir la semence d'une race meilleure que la nôtre. C'est un essai que nous avons tenté et qui pourra nous réussir."

<sup>444</sup> Stanley, "Unraveling Natural Utopia," 267. Sankar Muthu has also distinguished between Rousseau and Diderot on the issue of what is natural; see *Enlightenment against Empire*, especially 59-71. This runs counter to the influential account given by Strugnell in *Diderot's Politics: A Study of the Evolution of Diderot's Political Thought After the Encyclopédie* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhof, 1973), especially 31-37.

<sup>445</sup> For more on the relationship between breeding and colonization, see Agnani, *Hating Empire Properly*, chapter 1.

<sup>446</sup> *Diderot: Political Writings*, 41 (CR, 546): "Est-ce que vous donneriez dans la fable d'Otaïti?"

more rational society.”<sup>447</sup> Yet this rationality does not empower the Tahitians to resist the imperial overtures of the French, only to recognize it.

If we try to view the French sailors’ arrival to Tahiti from the perspective of the Tahitians, there is initially little reason to suspect that the two groups’ relationship will be susceptible to the violation of hospitality and the ensuing despair. The Tahitians assume there will be an open exchange based on comparable affective economies. There is no wariness when faced with “the menacing mediatory figure of the traveller/colonizer.”<sup>448</sup> The French assumption, however, is that the Tahitians will be subsumed under their own dominant regime, characterized by hierarchy and domination. It is an assumption so implicit that the only person to recognize the consequences of this encounter is the Vieillard. While B, a European ostensibly ‘reading’ the anonymous *Supplément*, rhapsodizes over the “spectacle of hospitality” greeting the French soldiers upon arriving at Tahiti, the Vieillard relates a different story. Speaking to the Frenchmen, he reminds them of how

you had hardly set foot on our soil before it reeked of blood. The Tahitian who ran to meet you, to greet you, who welcomed you crying, ‘*taïo*, friend, friend’, you killed. Any why did you kill him? Because he had been tempted by the glitter of your little serpent’s eggs. He offered you his fruits, his wife, his daughter, his hut, and you killed him for a handful of beads which he took without asking.<sup>449</sup>

Thus the two incommensurate cultures, one abiding by an ethics of hospitality and the other its rejection, collide. Were the Frenchmen guilty of no other trespasses, this act alone would have

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<sup>447</sup> Dobie, *Trading Places*, 236. Guillaume Ansart argues that the rationality demonstrated by the Tahitians (Orou in particular) is of a specific kind: “Orou shows a clear and general tendency to apply purely cognitive-instrumental forms of rationality to the solution of moral or social problems, thereby ignoring the whole domain of ethics or reducing it to a mere subcategory of technical-empirical knowledge’ about the objective world.” The same cannot be said, of course, of the Vieillard. “Aspects of Rationality in Diderot’s ‘Supplément au voyage de Bougainville,’” *Diderot Studies* 28 (2000): 13.

<sup>448</sup> Pagden, *European Encounters*, 155.

<sup>449</sup> *Diderot: Political Writings*, 44 (CR, 550): “Écoute la suite de tes forfaits : Á peine t’es-tu montré parmi eux, qu’ils sont devenus voleurs ; à peine es-tu descendu dans notre terre, qu’elle a fumé de sang. Cet Otaïtien qui courut à ta rencontre, qui t’accueillit, qui te reçut en criant *taïo*, ami, ami, vous l’avez tué. Et pourquoi l’avez-vous tué? Parce qu’il avait été séduit par l’éclat de tes petits œufs de serpent. Il te donnait ses fruits, il t’offrait sa femme et sa fille, il te cédait sa cabane, et tu l’as tué pour une poignée de ces grains qu’il avait pris sans te les demander.”

guaranteed it, for, as Jaucourt reminds us, “the rights of *hospitality* were so sacred that one looked upon the murder of a guest as the most unforgivable crime; and even if this murder was involuntary, one believed that it would attract the vengeance of the gods.”<sup>450</sup>

With hindsight, we know that the Vieillard is correct, that the Europeans will return, and that the Tahitians’ way of life will be compromised and complicated. But how is the Vieillard himself to know?<sup>451</sup> If we take seriously the notion that his message is not prophetic (though it may also be that), his and Orou’s chief complaint against the French is that they have compromised the Tahitians’ happiness by violating the ethic of hospitality. Specifically, the Aumômnièr and other sailors that they have contributed to the destruction of the Tahitians’ happiness by introducing variable and unnatural affective states. In other words, they have infringed on the code of hospitality that places visitors in a ‘naturally’ subservient position. Consider how strongly the Tahitians (primarily the Vieillard and Orou) criticize one) the introduction of irrational, fear-based emotion into their society and two) the corruption of natural happiness.

When we meet the Vieillard, “he [is] inwardly lamenting the eclipse of his countrymen’s happiness.”<sup>452</sup> To the sailors, he proclaims, “we are innocent, we are content, and you can only spoil that happiness. We follow the pure instincts of nature, and you have tried to erase its impression from our hearts.”<sup>453</sup> “You enflamed [our daughters and our wives] with a frenzy they had never known before. They have begun to hate each other. You have butchered one another

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<sup>450</sup> Jaucourt, “Hospitality” (“Hospitalité”): “Les droits de l'*hospitalité* étoient si sacrés, qu'on regardoit le meurtre d'un hôte, comme le crime le plus irrémissible; & quoiqu'il fût quelquefois involontaire, on croyoit qu'il attiroit la vengeance de tous les dieux.”

<sup>451</sup> On the Vieillard’s paradoxical position, see Claudia Moscovici, “An Ethics of Cultural Exchange: Diderot’s *Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville*,” *CLIO* 30 (2001): 289-307.

<sup>452</sup> *Diderot: Political Writings*, 41 (CR, 547): “Il gémissait en lui-même sur les beaux jours de son pays éclipsés.”

<sup>453</sup> *Diderot: Political Writings*, 42 (CR, 547): “Nous sommes innocents, nous sommes heureux, et tu ne peux que nuire à notre bonheur. Nous suivons le pur instinct de la nature, et tu as tenté d’effacer des nos âmes son caractère.”



for them, and they have come back stained with your blood.”<sup>454</sup> “Our pleasures, once so sweet, are now accompanied with remorse and fear.”<sup>455</sup> “What more honest and noble sentiment can you put in the place of the one which we have inspired in them and which nurtures them?”<sup>456</sup> “With your unfeeling heart you have no sense of pity and do not deserve any.”<sup>457</sup>

Even if we accept that the picture the Vieillard paints of Tahiti is idealized, that the island was subject to a complex sexual politics the privileged procreation and readily employed shame to enforce its rules,<sup>458</sup> the Frenchmen’s violation looms larger both for the old man and for Diderot.<sup>459</sup> To offer hospitality is to make oneself vulnerable, to blur distinctions between *mine* and *thine*, public and private.<sup>460</sup> Hence the importance of respect in preserving and, to some degree, masking what Kant in 1784 called our unsocial sociability, in the service of peaceful coexistence.<sup>461</sup>

In the closing pages of Diderot’s *Supplément*, A and B debate what lessons to draw: “what then shall we do? Return to nature? Submit to laws?” B, who has actually read the

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<sup>454</sup> Diderot: *Political Writings*, 42 (CR, 547-548): “Elles sont devenues folles dans tes bras, tu es devenu féroce entre les leurs ; ells ont commencé a se hair ; vous vous êtes égorgés pour elles, et elles nous sont revenues teintes de votre sang.”

<sup>455</sup> Diderot: *Political Writings*, 44 (CR, 549): “Nos jouissances autrefois si douces sont accompagnées de remords et d’effroi.”

<sup>456</sup> Diderot: *Political Writings*, 44 (CR, 550): “Quel sentiment plus honnête et plus grande pourrais-tu mettre à la place de celui que nous leur avons inspire et qui les anime?”

<sup>457</sup> Diderot: *Political Writings*, 45 (CR, 550): “... car tu ne mérites aucun sentiment du pitié, car tu as une âme feroce qui ne l’éprouva jamais.”

<sup>458</sup> See note 35.

<sup>459</sup> Andrew Curran mistakenly attributes to the Vieillard a “forceful, regressive view of history,” noting that he “enumerates the inevitable consequences of colonization: contamination, enslavement and perhaps the eventual extermination of the Tahitians.” Considering the accuracy of the Vieillard’s insights, it is unclear why they would be considered “regressive” –nostalgic, perhaps? “Logics of the Human in the *Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville*,” in *New Essays on Diderot*, ed. James Fowler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 158.

<sup>460</sup> On this point see, *inter alia*, Tracy McNulty, *The Hostess: Hospitality, Femininity, and the Expropriation of Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007); Mireille Rosello, *Postcolonial Hospitality: The Immigrant as Guest* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001); and Judith Still, “Acceptable Hospitality: From Rousseau’s Levite to the Strangers in Our Midst Today,” *Journal of Romance Studies* 3 (2003), 2. I regret that James A.W. Heffernan’s *Hospitality and Treachery in Western Literature* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014) appeared too recently for me to consult.

<sup>461</sup> “Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose,” in *Kant: Political Writings*, ed. Hans Reiss, trans. H.B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991 [1970]), 41-53.

*Supplément* and brought the matter up for discussion originally, proposes, “let’s follow the good chaplain’s example and be monks in France and savages in Tahiti.” A, warming to the idea, adds, “wear the costume of the country you visit, but keep your own clothes for the journey home.”<sup>462</sup>

As Diderot’s biographer, Arthur M. Wilson, notes, these are “conclusions regarded as sensible and liberal and progressive by some and as being unduly conformist by others.”<sup>463</sup> After a radical discussion of sexual politics and the most inflammatory of all taboos, incest, Diderot seems to refrain from imparting a moral or anything more than a pat resolution (A and B wonder if “the women” will want to dine out).

But I would suggest, by way of concluding this section, that there is an alternative ethic at work in Diderot’s reticence, which is not reticence at all but a demonstration of the attitude which he wishes his reader to adopt, that of the humble guest. Hospitality, again according to Jaucourt,

is the virtue of a great soul that cares for the whole universe through the ties of humanity. The Stoics regarded it as a duty inspired by God himself. One must, they said, do good to people who come to our countries, less for their sake than for our own interest, for the sake of virtue and in order to perfect in our souls human sentiments, which must not be limited to the ties of blood and friendship, but extended to all mortals... the just measure of this type of beneficence depends on what contributes the most to the great end that men must have as a goal, namely reciprocal help, fidelity, exchange between various states, concord, and the duties of the members of a shared civil society.<sup>464</sup>

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<sup>462</sup> *Diderot: Political Writings*, 74-75 (CR, 580-581): “Que ferons-nous donc? Reviendrons à la nature? Nous soumettrons-nous aux lois?” “Imitons le bon aumônier, moine en France, sauvage dans Otaïti.” “Prendre le froc du pays où l’on va, et garder celui du pays où l’on est.” This is notably one of the few times Diderot uses the word “savage” to describe an inhabitant of Tahiti and one cannot help but feel that A and B have not fully learned what Diderot has sought to teach them.

<sup>463</sup> Arthur M. Wilson, *Diderot* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 589.

<sup>464</sup> Jaucourt, “Hospitality” (“Hospitalité”): *l’hospitalité* est la vertu d’une grande ame, qui tient à tout l’univers par les liens de l’humanité. Les Stoïciens la regardoient comme un devoir inspiré par Dieu même. Il faut, disoient - ils, faire du bien aux personnes qui viennent dans nos pays, moins par rapport à elles que pour notre propre intérêt, pour celui de la vertu, & pour perfectionner dans notre ame les sentimens humains, qui ne doivent point se borner aux liaisons du sang & de l’amitié, mais s’étendre à tous les mortels... la juste mesure de cette espece de bénéfice dépend de ce qui contribue le plus à la grande fin que les hommes doivent avoir pour but, savoir aux secours réciproques, à la fidélité, au commerce dans les divers états, à la concorde & aux devoirs des membres d’une même société civile.”

The emphasis on reciprocity and shared civic duties resonates with the values of contemporary republican political theory, particularly those threads which are concerned with its international potential.<sup>465</sup> To “wear the costume of the country you visit, but keep your own clothes for the journey home” is not necessarily to pursue a hypocritical or relativistic worldview; instead we might understand it as an instruction to adopt the appropriate affective stance with regard to our position in the world, mindful that our “shared civil society” extends to the “whole universe through the ties of humanity.”

### **III. Republican Virtues Abroad: Neo-Republicanism and International Politics**<sup>466</sup>

One of the difficulties confronting republican political theory is the degree to which it has anything to say about contemporary international politics. As recently as 2009, Pettit and Lovett referred to the turn to international politics as an “area of recent and promising neorepublican developments.”<sup>467</sup> Since then, however, a steady trickle of works has emerged, primarily attempting to sort out how neo-republicanism may contribute to ongoing discussions in global justice.<sup>468</sup> Cécile Laborde has argued persuasively that republicanism is well-suited for the current conditions of global politics because republicans are “motivated by a sense of collective responsibility for their states” – that while “republican values of mutual trust and reciprocity

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<sup>465</sup> See, for example, John Maynor, “Fighting Back Against Domination: Republican Citizenship and Unbounded Reciprocity,” *Diacritica* 24 (2010): 73-90.

<sup>466</sup> My focus here is primarily on scholars who identify as part of the neo-republican school of thought. Nonetheless, republicanism has made some slight inroads in traditional international relations theory. Central texts there include Daniel Deudney, *Bounding Power: Republican Security Theory from the Polis to the Global Village* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007); Nicholas Onuf, *The Republican Legacy in International Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Lawrence Quill, *Liberty after Liberalism: Civic Republicanism in a Global Age* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005); and Steven Slaughter, *Liberty beyond Neo-Liberalism: A Republican Critique of Liberal Governance in a Globalising Age* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005).

<sup>467</sup> Lovett and Pettit, “Neorepublicanism,” 21.

<sup>468</sup> See Mira Bachvarova, “Non-domination’s Role in the Theorizing of Global Justice,” *Journal of Global Ethics* 9 (2013): 173-185; Laborde, “Republicanism and Global Justice: A Sketch,” *European Journal of Political Theory* 9 (2010): 48-69; Lovett, “Republican Global Distributive Justice,” *Diacritica* 24 (2010): 13-30; and Martí, “A Global Republic to Prevent Global Domination,” *Diacritica* 24 (2010): 31-72. (This volume of *Diacritica* has an extensive and excellent section devoted to neo-republicanism beyond the works cited here.)

cannot be extended much beyond spheres of political citizenship, it is also undeniable that there is a growing awareness that the actions of rich and powerful states, notably, contribute to, affect, and dominate the lives of others.”<sup>469</sup>

Primary among the difficulties facing neo-republicanism who wish to consider their theory’s international implications is the widely held belief “that republican liberty is institution-dependent,” that “for many republicans, freedom as non-domination only makes sense in a political environment where certain properly constituted republican institutes are present. The problem for republicans, then, is that it appears that globalization has diminished the ability of the very institutions they rely on to minimize domination and shield individuals from external sources of domination.”<sup>470</sup> Indeed, Pettit’s response to questions raised by international politics is to provide explicitly institutional solutions based on the legitimacy of national institutions.<sup>471</sup>

Pettit’s treatment of international affairs reveals a largely conservative vision. His most complete treatment to this point appears in his essay, “A Republican Law of Peoples,” where he begins, again, with the national. The essay advocates “a regime in which effective, representative states avoid domination – whether by another state, or by a non-state body – and seek to enable other states to be effective and representative too. This is an attractive ideal... because it is required for the protection of individuals within those states against domination. The ideal is richer than that of non-interference, yet not so utopian as the cosmopolitan ideal of justice.”<sup>472</sup> For Pettit, this avoids the mistakes made by other republican theorists, who “tend to look, more radically, at how individuals can be better served by transformations in the international

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<sup>469</sup> Laborde, “Republicanism and Global Justice,” 50-51. Emended slightly for an apparent grammatical error in the original.

<sup>470</sup> Maynor, “Republican Citizenship and Unbounded Reciprocity,” 74.

<sup>471</sup> See “Legitimate International Institutions: A Neo-Republican Perspective,” in *The Philosophy of International Law*, ed. Samantha Besson and John Tasioulas (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 139-162.

<sup>472</sup> “A Republican Law of Peoples,” *European Journal of Political Theory* 9 (2010): 73.

order.”<sup>473</sup>

And certainly Pettit’s proposals for “avoiding” domination require no such radical transformation. Indeed, what he presents as normative goals are largely descriptive facts about the contemporary international sphere. He begins by noting that he “shall assume that states divide on two relevant dimensions, one related to the measure in which they operate effectively, the other to the measure in which they represent their peoples properly... The second distinction divides effective states into those that are fit to speak for their people as a whole and those that are not; I shall describe this as a distinction between representative and non-representative states.”<sup>474</sup> The majority of his discussion of international politics deals with relations between effective, representative states (fifteen pages), with a minimum devoted to ineffective, non-representative states (three pages). Each case presents certain difficulties.

Between effective, representative states, Pettit details a normative “ideal” that essentially describes the status quo: that entrusting a single state to act as the “world’s policeman,” or a “benevolent despot” remains ill-advised; that a world state remains an untenable aspiration unworthy of pursuit; that international bodies, such as the United Nations, generate discourse about desirable norms that may have a beneficial effect, even if they are operationally ineffective.<sup>475</sup> Though Pettit claims to “apply the very republican theory of non-domination,” it is

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<sup>473</sup> Pettit cites, in addition to Quill and Slaughter, James Bohman, whose theory of transnational democracy intersects with what he calls “republican cosmopolitanism.” See *Democracy Across Borders: From Dêmos to Dêmoi* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2007) and “Nondomination and Transnational Democracy,” in *Republicanism and Political Theory*, 190-216.

<sup>474</sup> “A Republican Law of Peoples,” 71. Incidentally, Pettit frequently relies on a rhetorical strategy of acknowledging the *possibility* but not the *substance* of potential objections. Here, for instance, he notes that “applying the distinction between representative and non-representative states – and to a lesser extent the distinction between effective and ineffective states – is bound to raise tricky issues but I shall abstract from these here” (71). In a different essay on international institutions in which Rousseau poses a problem for a generalization he is making, Pettit notes that “Rousseau may seem to be the great exception... but Rousseau is an innovative thinker who draws on many sources and he is not a typical representative of the neo-Roman republican tradition that I have in mind.” See “Legitimate International Institutions,” 145n.11.

<sup>475</sup> “A Republican Law of Peoples,” 80-84.

not clear that republican theory is at all necessary to draw these conclusions.<sup>476</sup> Without debating the value of the conclusions themselves, a combination of liberalism and deliberative democratic theory would provide the same conclusions about the international sphere without the introduction of the language – some might say the distraction – of republicanism.

Pettit justifies the relative lack of attention paid to ineffective, non-representative states on seemingly plausible grounds that “the international order is an order created and sustained by effective states.”<sup>477</sup> An effective state has “the capacity to provide for basic services to their populations.”<sup>478</sup> This claim and definition run into some immediate issues, however. From lesser to great import, for our purposes here: first, this definition of an effective state is so minimalist as to serve only to failed states without even the meanest of infrastructure. Second, the capacity to provide services is not the equivalent of either having services to provide *or* actually providing those services. Third, the claim that “the international order is an order created and sustained by effective states” is normative and may or may not align with actual conditions. Presumably by not mandating that such states also be representative, Pettit felt the condition was sufficiently descriptive rather than normative, but the weak definition of ‘effective’ leaves us at sea. If we conceive of a richer understanding of “basic services” than Pettit’s definition offers, then increasingly fewer countries dominate the international order. This may be accurate but is it normatively desirable? By trying to play Solomon, Pettit’s hybrid normative-descriptive discussion of non-domination in the international realm is, ultimately, both and neither.

If, as Pettit’s attempt may demonstrate, institutions do not represent the most promising path forward for an international theory of republicanism, perhaps the form of soft power under

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<sup>476</sup> “A Republican Law of Peoples,” 71.

<sup>477</sup> “A Republican Law of Peoples,” 71.

<sup>478</sup> “A Republican Law of Peoples,” 71.

discussion in this chapter – hospitality – may point us in a more profitable direction.<sup>479</sup> Seyla Benhabib, drawing on Kant, rightly warns against misinterpreting hospitality as “a virtue of sociability, as the kindness and generosity one may show to strangers who come to one’s land or who become dependent upon one’s act of kindness through circumstances of nature or history.”<sup>480</sup> But we might instead consider hospitality as an affective practice and a concrete demonstration, not of kindness and generosity, but of the political principle of republican virtue.

Laborde, in her “Sketch,” suggested that “the international order does involve publicly recognized rules that all acknowledge – the discourse of human rights among them – and does provide a shared basis for the public justification of actions and the mutual socialization of international actors.” It is against this background that “the gross inequalities that characterize the global order have come to be seen as iniquitous.”<sup>481</sup> This raises a series of challenges regarding the “psychological and moral foundations of such transnational solidarity – whether and how cosmopolitan republican virtue can be motivated” which she unfortunately demurs from considering. In the dissertation’s conclusion I return to this question of motivation in order to consider how affective practices may operate on both a national and an international scale when faced with varying degrees of domination and inequality.

### **Conclusion: Unsocial Sociability Across Borders**

The central argument of this chapter has been that Diderot’s *Supplément*, informed by Raynal’s *Histoire* and of course Bougainville’s own *Voyage*, uses the ancient concept of hospitality and its

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<sup>479</sup> There is a long-standing interest in practices of hospitality within anthropology. For a recent overview of the literature, see Matei Candea and Giovanni Da Col, “The Return of Hospitality,” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 18 (2012): 1-19.

<sup>480</sup> Seyla Benhabib, *Another Cosmopolitanism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 22. For further neo-Kantian treatments of hospitality, see Benhabib, *The Rights of Others: Aliens, Residents, and Citizens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), chapter 1, and Georg Cavallar, *The Rights of Strangers: Theories of International Hospitality, the Global Community, and Political Justice since Vitoria* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2002).

<sup>481</sup> Laborde, “Republicanism and Global Justice,” 50-51.

central affective component, respect, to explore the issues with which it is more typically associated: colonialism and commerce. The encounter between the Tahitians and the French sailors is profitably understood as the clash of two different affective regimes, one based in an ethic of hospitality and one driven by what Louis de Jaucourt labeled “the spirit of commerce.”

In advancing this argument, I demonstrated that the *Supplément* emerged in the midst of a public discourse concerned with the restoration of French pride in the wake of the Seven Years’ War, a restoration that was to be chiefly accomplished through increasing exploration and overseas commerce through ventures like that of Bougainville. Nonetheless, Raynal’s open-ended and anonymous project provided Diderot with an ideal cover for working through a set of criticisms about “the spirit of commerce” while also providing him with a plethora of source material. Though the *Supplément* may not be as firmly anti-imperialist as some have claimed, it is certainly a radical critique of his own society.

Within the *Supplément*, it is the figure of the Vieillard who articulates the ethic of hospitality which, he insists, Bougainville and his crew have violated since the moment of their arrival. Pessimistic as the Vieillard’s account may be, Diderot gives us no reason to think he disagrees with it – indeed he substantively replicates it in the *Histoire* – nor, it is worth noting, are the French given, in the text, any means of replying. All further action that takes place on the island has preceded the Vieillard’s speech, even if it appears after it in the text. Diderot thus refuses to grant them an appeal.

Those who do speak “after” the Vieillard are A and B, who stand in for Diderot’s well educated, curious readers. The work concludes as they mull over what lessons have been imparted by their discussion of the *Supplément* (which for them refers to the extra scenes that take place on Tahiti between Orou and the Aumônier, and the Vieillard’s speech, but which for



us also includes the existence of A and B as a framing device).<sup>482</sup> I suggested that a conclusion that is usually perceived as some combination of conformist and non-committal (to be a monk in France and a “savage” in Tahiti) is in fact a means of evoking an ethic of hospitality in the modern world. Because there is no longer an *imperative* of hospitality – because guides, hotels, and safer roads exist, keeping the traveller out of private homes – one must instead adopt an affective practice of hospitality, a disposition of hospitality, not only toward those who ask for assistance but to all those with whom we coexist in civil society.

In the chapter’s third section, I offered a critique of contemporary neo-republican theory that, in confronting modern international relations, relies too heavily on institutions that are themselves implicated in the practices of domination republicanism seeks to alleviate. I suggested that we take inspiration from the ethic of hospitality operating under the surface of Diderot’s *Supplément* in order to develop a set of affective practices grounded in republican virtue that may help facilitate international solidarity in the face of domination.

As I move into the dissertation’s conclusion, I return to this issue, bringing to bear upon it the affective resources developed in previous chapters. I step back, fittingly, from the eighteenth century to the present to consider what lessons we might draw from the previous chapters’ readings. My purpose throughout has been to mine my eighteenth-century materials for a more affectively engaged, substantive account of civic virtue. In the conclusion, I attempt to summarize our findings from Montesquieu, Diderot, and Rousseau and discuss their implications for constitutional patriotism and neo-republicanism. I begin, however, by recounting a well-known story in which affective practices alone proved insufficient.

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<sup>482</sup> See Dena Goodman, “The Structure of Political Argument in Diderot’s *Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville*,” *Diderot Studies* 21 (1983): 123-137, for an essential account of the *conte*’s structural complexity.

## CONCLUSION | The Reinvigoration of Republican Virtue

*France lured me forth.*  
- Wordsworth, *The Prelude*<sup>483</sup>

### I. Wordsworth at the Champ de Mars

In November of 1791, William Wordsworth returned to France for the second time and, for the first time, made his way to Paris. It was a different city, a different country, than it had been during his previous visit. Then, he had left Cambridge and traveled to Calais to begin a walking tour through France and Switzerland with a college friend, Robert Jones. It had been a fortuitous date: July 14, 1790, considered the first anniversary of the French Revolution and celebrated with the Fête de la Fédération in Paris.<sup>484</sup> A week's worth of celebrations followed the Fête throughout France and as the twenty-year-old student and his friend made their way to the Alps, they joined in local festivities – usually consisting of drunken dinners, followed by dancing. Yet in spite of the stories Wordsworth and Jones must have heard during their travels, they were not moved to stop in Paris, instead heading for the mountains and back to Cambridge in time for their next, and final, term.

Though Wordsworth missed the Fête itself in Paris, he experienced its reverberations.

The Champ de Mars, previously used for military drills, was excavated by enthusiastic French patriots at the height of their revolutionary fervor, with plans to build a Roman-style

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<sup>483</sup> William Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, in *Poetical Works*, ed. Ernest de Selincourt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936 [1904]), Book IX, line 34, 556. The Selincourt edition relies on Thomas Hutchinson's previous edition, which appeared in 1850, under Wordsworth's guidance. It thus includes the 1850 version of the *Prelude*. In the 1805 version of the poem, France is not so alluring: the line quoted is missing. Instead, Wordsworth claim more agency for himself, writing that "I... betook myself to France, / led thither chiefly by a personal wish / To speak the language more familiarly". See *The Prelude in The Major Works, including The Prelude*, ed. Stephen Gill (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008 [1984]), Book IX, lines 35-37, 509-510.

<sup>484</sup> My account of Wordsworth's travels, revolutionary France, and the Fête draws primarily on Jonathan Israel, *Revolutionary Ideas: An Intellectual History of the French Revolution from The Rights of Man to Robespierre* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014); Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*; Simon Schama, *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution* (New York: Random House, 1989); and Adam Sisman, *The Friendship: Wordsworth and Coleridge* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006).

amphitheater intended for 400,000 delegates on a rock-filled field in a mere three weeks, the time left after bureaucratic haggling. A stage, with an altar – paying tribute to France’s Catholic heritage – and a secondary pavilion for the royals, was constructed. Heavy rains during the short construction period turned the site into a mud pit. Yet the spirit of camaraderie – of *fraternité* – was unmistakable: all classes and trades contributed, as did women – even the king took part, or so the story went. Only the nobility, technically if not practically abolished on June 19, was notably, pointedly absent. Families brought children; local vendors supplied food and wine. At the end of each day’s work, those in attendance would march out of the Champ de Mars with arms interlocked, to the beat of a drum, in a quasi-military, quasi-religious procession, invoking the lessons imparted by the now much celebrated (if oftentimes misunderstood) Rousseau.



**Image 2** Unattributed. *Vue des travaux du Champ de Mars, par les patriotes*. 1790. Print. Courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France and the French Revolution Digital Archive. The range of the participants’ classes can be seen in the variety of outfits depicted.

On the day of the Fête itself, it poured rain but the anticipated 400,000 delegates showed, eager to bow at the “Altar of the Fatherland.” The royal family and the members of the National Constituent Assembly entered in solemn procession, circling the amphitheater. (In retrospect, the procession grimly prefigured the king’s journey from his imprisonment in the Temple, a medieval fortress, to his trial before the National Convention at the Salle du Manège. Even more so, it calls to mind his final trip from the Temple to the *place de la Révolution* – today, the place de la Concorde – on the day of his execution, which took two hours and proceeded past windows closed on order of the Paris Commune.)<sup>485</sup>



**Image 3** Isidore-Stanislas Helman and Antoine-Jean Duclos. *Fédération générale des Français au Champ de Mars, le 14 juillet 1790*. 1790. Print. Courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France and the French Revolution Digital Archive. Mirabeau reportedly found the procession tedious in the extreme, particularly considering the weather.

<sup>485</sup> Schama, *Citizens*, 668-669.

Once everyone was settled, Talleyrand professed Mass in the driving rain, hoping to draw traditional believers to the new national order. Lafayette administered an oath to the revolutionaries to defend the National Assembly. Louis, previously “King of France” and now “King of the French,” swore to do the same. Canons fired, echoing the oaths that could not otherwise be heard by the majority of this in attendance. Austere though it was, particularly compared to some of the more spontaneous and participatory regional fêtes that Wordsworth joined, it was a spectacle on a scale unmatched by any that would follow. The delegates, relegated to the role of spectator, nonetheless bore witness to an electrifying affective experience, that of having, in Talleyrand’s words, made France anew.<sup>486</sup>

When Wordsworth arrived in France for a second time, in November 1791, Paris was in the painful throes of that same project of remaking. After Louis’s unwise attempt to flee to sympathetic arms abroad, only to be captured at Varennes, fractures within the Constituent Assembly turned into full-fledged factions. Though the moderate Feuillants far outnumbered the more radical Jacobins, demands that the king be stripped of his throne culminated in July 1791 with a shooting by the National Guard of between thirteen to fifty protestors on the very same Champ de Mars that had been home to the Fête de la Fédération a year earlier. Since the incident, the Feuillants’ call for moderation had dominated public discourse, but Robespierre’s speeches grew more thunderous in the smaller Jacobin clubs and unease lingered across the city. In September, Louis agreed to the new constitution delivered by the Constituent Assembly, which essentially established a constitutional monarchy and, in trying to be all things to all parties, would fall within a year. This is the Paris in which a young, provincial Englishman, who had

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<sup>486</sup> There were of course various criticisms of the Fête made, with the majority saved for Lafayette himself: “for showing the king exaggerated respect on this occasion as well as hogging center stage for himself, Desmoulins’s paper heaped insults on Lafayette. Others, too, including Robespierre derided Lafayette’s posturing” (Israel, *Revolutionary Ideas*, 131).

recently failed to distinguish himself at Cambridge largely through a lack of dedication and interest, found himself in November 1791.

By 1805, in attempt to reflect on what he descriptively if enigmatically referred to as “spots of time,” Wordsworth had composed the thirteen-book *Prelude*, amending it periodically until his death in 1850. Of this time in Paris, he wrote,

Through Paris lay my readiest course, and there  
Sojourning a few days, I visited  
In haste, each spot of old or recent fame,  
The latter chiefly, from the field of Mars  
Down to the suburbs of St. Antony,  
And from Mont Martre southward to the Dome  
Of Geneviève. In both her clamorous Halls,  
The National Synod and the Jacobins,  
I saw the Revolutionary Power 50  
Toss like a ship at anchor, rocked by storms;  
The Arcades I traversed, in the Palace huge  
Of Orleans; coasted round and round the line  
Of Tavern, Brothel, Gaming-house, and Shop,  
Great rendezvous of worst and best, the walk  
Of all who had a purpose, or had not;  
I stared and listened, with a stranger's ears,  
To Hawkers and Haranguers, hubbub wild!  
And hissing Factionists with ardent eyes,  
In knots, or pairs, or single. Not a look 60  
Hope takes, or Doubt or Fear is forced to wear,  
But seemed there present; and I scanned them all,  
Watched every gesture uncontrollable,  
Of anger, and vexation, and despite,  
All side by side, and struggling face to face,  
With gaiety and dissolute idleness.

Where silent zephyrs sported with the dust  
Of the Bastille, I sate in the open sun,  
And from the rubbish gathered up a stone,  
And pocketed the relic, in the guise 70  
Of an enthusiast; yet, in honest truth,  
I looked for something that I could not find,  
Affecting more emotion than I felt;  
For 'tis most certain, that these various sights,  
However potent their first shock, with me  
Appeared to recompense the traveller's pains  
Less than the painted Magdalene of Le Brun,  
A beauty exquisitely wrought, with hair  
Dishevelled, gleaming eyes, and rueful cheek  
Pale and bedropped with overflowing tears. 80

But hence to my more permanent abode  
I hasten; there, by novelties in speech,  
Domestic manners, customs, gestures, looks,

And all the attire of ordinary life,  
Attention was engrossed; and, thus amused,  
I stood 'mid those concussions, unconcerned,  
Tranquil almost, and careless as a flower  
Glassed in a green-house, or a parlour shrub  
That spreads its leaves in unmolested peace,  
While every bush and tree,  
the country through, 90  
Is shaking to the roots: indifference this  
Which may seem strange: but I was unprepared  
With needful knowledge, had abruptly passed  
Into a theatre, whose stage was filled  
And busy with an action far advanced.  
Like others, I had skimmed, and sometimes read  
With care, the master pamphlets of the day;  
Nor wanted such half-insight as grew wild  
Upon that meagre soil, helped out by talk  
And public news; but having never seen 100  
A chronicle that might suffice to show  
Whence the main organs of the public power  
Had sprung, their transmigrations, when and how  
Accomplished, giving thus unto events  
A form and body; all things were to me  
Loose and disjointed, and the affections left  
Without a vital interest. At that time,  
Moreover, the first storm was overblown,  
And the strong hand of outward violence  
Locked up in quiet. For myself, I fear 110  
Now, in connection with so great a theme,  
To speak (as I must be compelled to do)  
Of one so unimportant; night by night  
Did I frequent the formal haunts of men,  
Whom, in the city, privilege of birth  
Sequestered from the rest, societies  
Polished in arts, and in punctilio versed;  
Whence, and from deeper causes, all discourse  
Of good and evil of the time was shunned  
With scrupulous care;  
but these restrictions soon 120  
Proved tedious, and I gradually withdrew  
Into a noisier world, and thus ere long  
Became a patriot; and my heart was all  
Given to the people, and my love was theirs.

What Wordsworth describes – and here I come to my reason for discussing him – is a failed alignment between his internal emotional experience and his external affective behavior in the pursuit of a republican ethos.<sup>487</sup> Consider his confession that he visited the ruins of the Bastille “in the guise/ Of an enthusiast; yet, in honest truth, / I looked for something that I could not find, / Affecting more emotion than I felt” (lines 70-73), whereas viewing Charles Le Brun’s *Repentant Magdalene* (1655) was a more satisfying emotional experience.<sup>488</sup> Indeed, after attempting to understand the fervor of those around him, the “hubbub wild! / And hissing Factionists with ardent eyes” (lines 58-59), the young poet essentially concedes, admitting that he was “unprepared / With needful knowledge” (lines 92-93): “I stood ‘mid those concussions, unconcerned / Tranquil almost, and careless as a flower / Glassed in a green-house” (lines 86-88).

Wordsworth, even in 1850, chalks his disengagement up to “having never seen / A chronicle that might suffice to show / Whence the main organs of the public power / Had sprung, their transmigration, when and how / Accomplished” so that “all things were to me / Loose and disjointed, and the affections left / Without a vital interest” (lines 100-104; 105-107).<sup>489</sup> This suggests that Wordsworth’s lethargic response to the French Revolution (in its pre-Terror phase) could have been directed toward a more energetic engagement by some external force capable of cultivating a genuine affective investment that aligned with his external behaviors. To some extent, this is what he finds upon leaving the polite society whose “privilege of birth / Sequestered from the rest” (lines 115-116) and withdraws “Into a noisier world, and thus ere

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<sup>487</sup> *Prelude* (1850), in *Poetical Works*, Book IX, lines 40-124, 556-557. Further lines will be cited in the body of the text.

<sup>488</sup> Given that Le Brun was a particular favorite of Louis XIV, Wordsworth’s preference for him to the sites of revolutionary glory is all the more pointed.

<sup>489</sup> One might have expected the older, conservative Wordsworth to offer other reasons for his lukewarm reception of republicanism.

long / Became a patriot” (lines 122-123).

My purpose in introducing this episode from the *Prelude* is thus to suggest that successful affective practices – that is, those which contribute to the cultivation of, in this case, a shared republican political culture that values civic virtue – require *both* the appropriate internal affect *and* the commensurate external behaviors. A mirror image of Massumi’s affective subject, discussed in chapter 1, for whom affect precedes and indeed supplants political behavior, Wordsworth describes his younger self as quite literally going through the motions – visiting important sites, attending meetings – in the hope of generating the concomitant or desirable affective response. Both accounts – that of Massumi and that of the young Wordsworth – are insufficient because they ignore the need to attune internal affect with external behavior in order to fulfill the potential of affective practices for promoting sustained political action.

## **II. A Republican Ethos of Affect?**

If we take this insufficiency seriously, then we must ask: how are we to promote the attunement of internal emotion and external affective practices so that individuals’ experiences are conducive to a republican politics reliably premised on an emotionally rich understanding of virtue? Neither constitutional patriotism nor neo-republicanism seems to provide a means for doing so. In this section, I will return briefly to the problem that opened this dissertation and probe for the affective fault lines. In the following, concluding section, I suggest how the intervening exploration of our various eighteenth-century texts has offered a way forward for contemporary republican political theory.

Recently, Jan-Werner Müller (who will here stand as a representative for constitutional patriotism, or CP, being one of its more vocal advocates) has responded to criticisms that CP



lacks an affective dimension or creates one through constitutional sleight of hand.<sup>490</sup>

Constitutional patriotism, according to Müller, “is not simply traditional patriotism” but instead “ideally involves a much more reflective attachment and, crucially, a critical – and, above all, a self-critical – stance which never takes it for granted that the universal liberal-democratic norms and values have been successfully instantiated in any given constitution.”<sup>491</sup> CP thus becomes the exercise of judgment, here presented as a solely cognitive faculty. But Müller continues:

It follows that we do not have – more or less desperately – to search for objects that can be plausible candidates for ‘passionate attachment’ and ‘fervor’ in order to make the case for some form of constitutional patriotism... There is no reason a priori to assume that only certain types of emotions can sustain a liberal democratic polity over time; a reflective, self-critical kind of loyalty might in fact be much better suited to democracy understood as a form of *contained conflict* and *institutionalized uncertainty*... Such an understanding of liberal democracy in fact requires a disposition to compromise and to restrain political passions.<sup>492</sup>

This paragraph epitomizes much of what is confused and confusing about constitutional patriotism. It raises at least the following issues and questions. First, if one speaks of loyalty, which is the dominant affect referred to in Müller’s essay, should not one clarify to what or whom one is loyal? In other words, the question about “objects” of “attachment” is hardly out of place. Critics of CP do not, for the most part, take issue with the fact that it calls for self-reflection rather than thoughtless, frenzied nationalism, as Müller implies here. Rather, the issue is *what, precisely, one is loyal to*. Müller is more specific about what one is not loyal to: not “majority culture,” not ethnicity, nor even, *contra* Habermas, a claim to “universal norms and values.”<sup>493</sup> The closest Müller comes to indicating to what one is loyal is during his discussion of immigration, for “states cannot reasonably demand of immigrants that they full adopt a particular

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<sup>490</sup> He responds primarily to Patchen Markell’s argument in “Making Affect Safe for Democracy?” that CP engages in a “strategy of redirection,” shifting allegiance from the ethnic (for example) to the civic.

<sup>491</sup> Müller, “Constitutional Patriotism Beyond the Nation-State,” 1926.

<sup>492</sup> Müller, “Constitutional Patriotism Beyond the Nation-State,” 1926.

<sup>493</sup> Müller, “Constitutional Patriotism Beyond the Nation-State,” 1925, 1926.

interpretation of a political value.” Instead, “what they can demand is that immigrants understand how a particular interpretation came about for historical or cultural reasons within a national context.”<sup>494</sup> Aside from sounding quite similar to pledging loyalty to a “majority culture,” the affective force summoned by a history lesson is bound to be rather low. So far, constitutional patriotism has yet to address the motivational gap that continues to plague it.

Second, there may be “no reason a priori to assume that only certain types of emotions can sustain a liberal democratic polity over time,” but we can certainly rule some out. Boredom, for instance, excessive acquisitiveness, and rage are unlikely to perpetuate the values of a liberal democracy. Moreover, it seems questionable as to whether “loyalty” is itself an emotion – is it not more the case that loyalty is the *product* of emotions, such as affection and respect? Loyalty has more in common with honor, both of which we might describe as second-tier affects or as affective outcomes, as they requires display and acknowledgment from external parties. We might even hazard a guess at which emotions might contribute to the success of a liberal democracy and if that were the case, why would we not try to cultivate them?

Third, Müller ultimately retreats, drawing on a respectable tradition of asserting the passions are simply too dangerous, and that a milquetoast “disposition” is simply preferable for what are ostensibly obvious but are in fact unstated reasons. (This would seem to be undermined by, if nothing else, his previous assertion that there is “no reason a priori to assume that only certain types of emotions can sustain a liberal democratic polity over time.”) As discussed in chapter 1, this argument has been used to exclude the passions from the political realm since the Plato exiled the poets in the *Republic*. If proponents of constitutional patriotism were willing to seriously grapple with the first question (what one is loyal to when one practices “a reflective,

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<sup>494</sup> Müller, “Constitutional Patriotism Beyond the Nation-State,” 1927. He notes that this stipulation justifies “the importance and... legitimacy of ‘history lessons’ in civics exams.”

self-critical kind of loyalty”), I suspect it would be perceived as a more thoroughly humanistic, rather than simply formalistic or proceduralist, ideology. Yet much like Euro-patriotism, there are as yet few hopeful signs.

What about neo-republicanism? What inklings of affective aspiration might we identify there? The most promising area for the inclusion of an affective dimension is in the domain that offers the most challenges to republicanism overall, that of global justice and international politics. In part, this is due to the fact that the subfield’s agenda-setters like Pettit continue to resist directly attending to the question of virtue.<sup>495</sup> In part this reflects the latest preoccupations and trends within the greater field of political theory, which has been increasingly interested in global relations beyond nationalism and cosmopolitanism, now seen as conceptually limited or at least incomplete for thinking through the complexities of twenty-first century politics.<sup>496</sup>

Republican theorists who have taken up questions of international politics, though not concerned with affect and the passions to the degree that I am advocating, nonetheless come closer to the topic than others. Because the historical republican model is statist, with virtue derived from and dedicated back toward the nation, those who consider the international necessarily face the question of a motivational deficit (which I suggest is an affective deficit) more immediately, while those who remain within the statist model can feel free to assume is not a problem and thus ignore it. In other words, republican political theory that focuses on the national model can continue to rely on its largely empty notion of virtue, because the historically rich theory of virtue to which it pays lip service is oriented toward the nation-state. Only in

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<sup>495</sup> See Pettit’s *Just Freedom* and *On the People’s Terms*.

<sup>496</sup> Some political theorists, however, argue against the desirability or plausibility of “global democracy” in any form. David Miller is a prominent representative of this position. See, *inter alia*, *National Responsibility and Global Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); “On Nationality and Global Equality: A Reply to Holtug,” *Ethics and Global Politics* 4: 165-171; and the recent collection, *Justice for Earthlings: Essays in Political Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

turning to a “new” domain for virtue, the international, does one need to confront its substance.

Though this is not the language used by neo-republican theorists writing on global politics, they frequently resort to ideas consonant with the eighteenth-century theory of circles of sympathy. Theorists like James Bohman and Cécile Laborde have proposed abstract but defined moral commitments to peoples and states beyond national borders both as practical and moral imperatives.<sup>497</sup> Recognizing that deep, affectively motivated, ethical commitments to unknown strangers are difficult to conceptualize, let alone sustain, global republicans (to give them a name) can – though they do not yet quite do so – argue instead for the extension of an affectively motivated sense of virtue that has been successfully implemented on a national level without requiring the same degree of attachment or commitment.

### **III. Overcoming the Affective Deficit**

The problem of civic virtue has always been one of motivation.<sup>498</sup> If, as I underscored in the previous section, the motivational deficit troubling both constitutional patriotism and neo-republicanism is in fact an affective deficit, then this dissertation’s exploration of the passions and its conductivity to particular forms of soft power should suggest methods for the reintegration of passion, virtue, and republican politics. By way of conclusion, let us review the methods of cultivating and sustaining a republican ethos that have emerged in the previous pages: other-regarding actions, civic ceremony, and hospitality.

Other-regarding action is admittedly the most abstract of these three ideas and is perhaps

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<sup>497</sup> See Bohman, *Democracy Across Borders* and “Nondomination and Transnational Democracy,” and Laborde, “Republicanism and Global Justice.” See also Ryoa Chung, “The Cosmopolitan Scope of Republican Citizenship,” *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 6 (2003): 131-154.

<sup>498</sup> Compare Laborde, “Republicanism and Global Justice,” 51, and Stuart White, “Republicanism, Patriotism, and Global Justice,” in *Forms of Justice: Critical Perspectives on David Miller’s Political Philosophy*, ed. Daniel Bell and Avner de-Shalit (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003), 251-268.

best thought of as a method for political transitions, as a means of adopting republican practices and inculcating civic virtue. I argued in chapter 2 that Roxane rejects the isolation endemic to a despotic regime and claims her autonomy through the paradoxically other-regarding act of committing suicide, something which the condition of fear that characterizes despotic regimes should have prohibited. Her rejection of Usbek's despotism is an indication of her own virtue. Outside of the novel, in more pedestrian circumstances, we might think of "other-regardingness" as the necessary affective disposition that provides for the affective practices of republican virtue. Given the republican emphasis on selfless qualities and commitment to a cause or concept greater than the individual self, other-regarding action is a fundamental prerequisite for the development of a republican ethos.

Civic ceremony is precisely the sort of affective practice that affirms republican virtue and it is a fundamentally other-regarding action. Whether we think of solemn rituals, memorial celebrations, parades, or even extend the category to include civic education, ceremony has the ability to emphasize civic unity in the present, beyond the myths of origin whose allure fades with time. As I argued in chapter 3, civic ceremony has the added benefit of steering the passions to responsibly republican ends by providing an outlet (the celebration itself) and an object (the *patria*) in the name of virtue. Ceremony has the ability to keep citizens accountable to one another – recall Rousseau's insistence that the citizens themselves were the 'object' of the celebration – by increasing interactions and figuratively widening the public sphere.

Hospitality is another instance of other-regarding action that can potentially uphold a republican ethos and embrace its affective dimension. If institutions are where traditional forms of power are displayed, fought over, and navigated, hospitality is – potentially – the domain of affect and virtue. As I suggested in chapter 4, through shows of respect, rather than bare power,

individuals, rather than states, have the potential to cultivate their own internal sense of republican virtue and communicate it to others – including others beyond national borders, the historical and normal limit of republican values. Yet republican ethos of hospitality also works on an institutional levels and would bring issues of domination to the foreground in debates over immigration, in particular.

I was motivated to take up this project about the relationship between the passions and republicanism because it seemed to me that, contrary to the contemporary neo-republican literature, the emotions had a historically important part in the republican tradition that was now not only overlooked but actually denied. As a consequence, civic virtue had become a placeholder for all of aspirations and ideals that neo-republican thinkers had for a republican revival that might challenge the seemingly waning star of deliberative democracy. A more historically informed republican political theory would reinvigorate the listless notion of virtue so prevalent today. In tracing the genealogy of the relationship between emotions connected to love of country and virtue, and by focusing on the essential role of several bundles of emotions in eighteenth-century French thought, I hope to have persuaded the reader of the veracity of the historical claim. In arguing for the desirability of the passions' role in motivating civic virtue, and thus republicanism, I hope to have persuaded the reader to take seriously a slightly modified dictate from Rousseau, that “a [person] devoid of all passions would certainly be a very bad citizen.”

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