

# The Modern Muse: Inspiration in the Age of Enlightenment

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# THE MODERN MUSE: INSPIRATION IN THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

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This dissertation argues that eighteenth-century literature is shaped by the modern encounter with—and transformation of—enthusiasm. By examining the rhetorical paradigms of invocation in the eighteenth century, this approach redefines the relationship of secularization to literary history and casts new light on the assumption that the Enlightenment represents a straightforward movement toward secularization. Literary critics have long agreed that the political and religious turmoil of the seventeenth century set the stage for widespread critiques of enthusiasm in the early eighteenth century. But early eighteenth-century literature did not simply reject enthusiastic expression; rather, this period saw a secularization of enthusiasm—a change that arose as a need to preserve inspiration’s instrumental relationship to artistic production. The inception of this secularization is linked to the rise of aesthetic philosophy and to modernity’s shifting relationship to the public sphere.

The anxieties about enthusiasm in the Restoration period cause Augustan authors to reconsider the role of inspiration in modern writing and to reform enthusiasm through innovations in genre. These evocations of inspiration both exhibit an aestheticization of a theological category and import the affective fervor of an ancient theological practice into their modern redactions. This dissertation examines rhetorical paradigms of invocation in the works of Milton, Shaftesbury, Pope, and Fielding. These writers formally revise enthusiasm in a way that generates a new and distinctive representation of the author, in a process that relies on a rhetorical device that reformulates the passive structure of ancient invocation by subjecting it to the more dialogical methods of modern apostrophe and address. Incorporating invocation into their experiments in genre, these authors allow the figure of the muse to survive, but she is now

construed as something secular, an apostrophe to a friend or judging spectator, or at times an allusion to the mental or aesthetic faculties of the author himself—his genius. This dissertation, therefore, argues that secularization impacts literary form long before the Romantic period and that secularization, in its relationship to aesthetic form and experience, is not merely an effect of Enlightenment rationality.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Sarah Emily Eron was born in the Catskill region of upstate New York. She received a B.A. with honors in English Languages and Literatures at Brown University in 2005 before pursuing her Masters and Doctoral degrees in English at Cornell University. Sarah has published articles in a number of journals and online publications on issues of religion and aesthetics, time and form, gender and genre, secularization, and Romanticism. Her publications engage the works of a variety of authors of eighteenth and nineteenth-century poetry, prose, and philosophy such as: Henry Fielding, William Blake, David Hume, Adam Smith, and A.C. Swinburne. Sarah will be returning to Providence in the fall to work as an Assistant Professor at the University of Rhode Island.

To Al Wachtel, My First Inspiration  
And to my family for their constant love and support...

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## Secular Enthusiasm

Since the publication of M.H. Abrams's *Natural Supernaturalism*, literary critics have sought to describe the modern story of secularization in a number of ways. Whereas Abrams's account focuses on nature, Colin Jager confines his study of the secular to a pattern of design, and Charles Taylor charts secularization along the lines of popular faith, or belief.<sup>1</sup> Like Abrams, many of these critics have continued to locate an historical moment of secularization in literature and philosophy with the emergence of Romanticism in the wake of the French Revolution. Looking back to Milton, Romantic secularization entails a break from eighteenth-century theology and Enlightenment rationality. Nevertheless, what lies between Miltonic invocation and a Wordsworthian apostrophe to nature reveals an absorption of the problem of "supernaturalism" into the literary culture of the eighteenth century, an aesthetic development that remains unexplored by modern scholarly approaches to secularization.

This dissertation argues that eighteenth-century literature is shaped by the modern encounter with—and transformation of—enthusiasm. Literary critics and historians have long agreed that the political and religious turmoil of the seventeenth century set the stage for widespread critiques of enthusiasm in the early eighteenth century. I argue that, despite or by means of these critiques, early eighteenth-century literature saw a secularization of enthusiasm—a change that arose as a need to preserve inspiration's instrumental relationship to artistic production. What had hitherto been seen as a religious phenomenon was in the early eighteenth-century appropriated by poets and novelists as a means of figuring poetic inspiration; thus eighteenth-century authors reconsider enthusiasm as an aesthetic rather than a theological issue.

What I call the literary reform of enthusiasm in the eighteenth century entails both an aestheticization of enthusiasm and a reconception of its relationship to issues of sociability. The latter transformation makes the reform of enthusiasm the responsibility of the viewer, or reader, and places it within the context of an aesthetic paradigm. Enthusiasm's reform is entirely dependent upon the reader's critical faculties of judgment. Once it sheds its purely religious connotation and becomes regarded as an aesthetic phenomenon, enthusiasm enters into the eighteenth-century aesthetic debate between theories of empiricism and rationalism.

Rhetorically, many of these interconnected factors in the transformation of enthusiasm are evident in the Augustan practice of invocation. These evocations of inspiration both exhibit an aestheticization of a theological category and import the affective fervor of an ancient theological practice into their modern redactions. In this respect, the impact of secularization on literary form can be seen to have begun long before the Romantic period. My insistence upon aligning the terms "enthusiasm" and "inspiration" stems largely from the fact that "enthusiasm" was primarily defined as "supernatural inspiration" in the years leading up to 1700. Only in the Restoration period and the beginning of the eighteenth century does enthusiasm become associated with a discourse of the "passions" and finally assume the connotation of a "misguided" or misdirected form of "religious" passion by the mid 1700s.<sup>2</sup> The very allusion to the theological or the metaphysical in the eighteenth-century effort to (paradoxically) secularize inspiration, to move the animating forces of poetry away from the figure of the godhead and towards the aesthetic, language producing faculties of the author himself, is what aligns enthusiasm with inspiration in this period. The anxieties about enthusiasm in the early eighteenth century cause Augustan authors both to reconsider the role of inspiration in modern writing and to reform enthusiasm through innovations in genre. My dissertation, therefore, engages the

perspectives of writers who might not normally be read alongside one another by analyzing a formal paradigm which is comparable across genres. All the revisions of enthusiasm that my approach uncovers contribute to the invention of the modern author, a process that consistently relies on rhetorical devices that reformulate the passive structure of ancient invocation by subjecting it to the more dialogical methods of modern apostrophe and address.

*The Language of Enthusiasm: Community, Contagion, and Communication*

Enthusiasm in its ancient context, as Frederick Beiser notes, was a real phenomenon, or at least regarded as such. Derived from the Greek *enthusiasmos*, enthusiasm implied “divine inspiration,” which Plato would place in the aesthetic sphere of poetry (88). In general, enthusiasm had religious connotations in its association with the Dionysian rites; the enthusiast in drinking the Dionysian wine would have an ecstatic experience and become divinely *inspired*.<sup>3</sup> But what would happen to the word “enthusiasm” in the context of modernity?

If we look at Johnson’s definition of enthusiasm in his *Dictionary*, we note that the word had taken on decidedly negative connotations, implying: “a vain belief of private revelation; a vain confidence of divine favour or communication.” Enthusiasm for Johnson was implicitly linked to vanity, which takes on a double meaning here as both “false or deluded” and (in the ecclesiastical sense) “empty, immaterial, or insubstantial.” Johnson thus puns on enthusiasm’s literal association with the spiritual in also characterizing it as “vain” in the sense of untrue. Similarly, Jonathan Swift’s account of the “spirit” in his critique of religious enthusiasm, or inspiration, in *A Tale of the Tub* would employ the same pun in its attacks on radical, Dissenting

claims to enthusiasm; according to Swift, such expressions of enthusiasm were grossly immaterial, vain, false, and insubstantial<sup>4</sup>:

[Enthusiasm] . . . is a Vapour, which the World calls Madness . . . [and which leads to a] “belief in Things Invisible. . . [It is] a “Disturbance or Transposition of the Brain, by the Force of certain Vapours issuing from the lower Faculties; Then has this Madness been the parent of all those mighty Revolutions, that have happened in Empire, in Philosophy, and in Religion (171).

Although enthusiasm manifests itself as a disorder that effects social institutions such as government, religion, and philosophy, Swift argues that its origins are rooted in something much less substantial, in those “vapours” which issue from the lower faculties” to affect the mind. In other words, enthusiasm is a disorder of the unseen passions, a humoral infection, rooted in the invisible and by extension causing a delusional “belief in the invisible.” To return to Johnson’s definition, we note yet another interesting aspect that fueled so many such critiques of inspiration; enthusiasm, for Johnson, is associated with *private*, concealed revelation or worship. Johnson’s use of the word “communication” here thus carries a somewhat ironic implication, for the unsociable enthusiast in believing he was “communicating” with God, would fail to “communicate” with his fellow beings. He would arise as a case of exception, an outlier in the social sphere whose disease would prevent him from functioning socially.

Similarly, J.G.A. Pocock encounters this problem in the work of Hume when he attempts to distinguish superstition as a social and material form of religious worship from the asocial tendencies of enthusiastic worship.<sup>5</sup> For Hume, says Pocock, “enthusiasm was the worship of the godhead in the ideas that the human mind formed concerning it, and then disastrously supposed to be the godhead itself, working within the mind, inspiring and possessing it” (21-22). Thus enthusiasm in this context becomes linked to a kind of Swiftian madness, a diseased interiority, or terribly psychological mishap, that causes the worshipper to turn inwards in the process of

religious reflection. The problem is one of transference; when focusing on the singular godhead, the worshipper, in identifying with the god, isolates himself from society and ultimately even from God himself.

The problem of enthusiasm's relationship to the social sphere, however, is one that has challenged many writers, philosophers, theorists, and literary critics from Swift's time to the present. As Lawrence Klein states, the paradox of enthusiasm in light of its relationship to socialization can be described as follows: "Insofar as enthusiasm represented a deficiency of sociability, its cure involved socialization. However, insofar as enthusiasm represented an excess or unregulated form of socializing, its cure required a degree of social abstinence, a kind of solitude in which the social passions could be understood and addressed (157)."<sup>6</sup>

Peter Fenves in his essay "The Scale of Enthusiasm" elegantly unwraps this paradox about enthusiasm and the rhetoric of sociability.<sup>7</sup> "Enthusiasm," Fenves argues, "becomes an ironic term of excuse—ironic at the very least because the community to which the enthusiast belongs is always only momentary, a temporary community whose origin is supposed to be divine" (118). Thus the enthusiast, for Fenves, belongs to an ironically and peculiarly asocial type of community, one which Fenves seeks to explain in the association of enthusiasm with the German "schwärmerei": "swarmers associate with one another precisely because they desire something more than terrestrial society...the desire to make a swarm is thus the definitive mark of the Schwärmer. By disassociating themselves from civil society, schwärmer collect into non-civil (if not un-civil) non-social (if not anti-social), non-natural (if not un-natural), and always temporary, multiplicities (120-121)." What is markedly unnatural about the schwärmer's community, for Fenves, is that it is temporary. The very fact that the enthusiasts' community is momentary, or flighty, exposes its temporariness as temporal, and, therefore, as truly mortal or

human. The enthusiastic tendency to swarm is one driven by a desire to become divine; this desire for divinity—and not the divine itself—is what marks the enthusiast, and thus the tendency to swarm is only a symptom of that desire. Hence, the swarm acts as an illusion of a community; it is not sustained or communicative but rather a mere amassing of exclusive objects, whose desire to be divine prompts them to commune only on a bodily level, shaping these schwärmer, or swarmers, into a corporeal mass that is only deceptively sublime.

Of course, in German, Fenves is able to make a distinction between *schwärmerei*<sup>8</sup> and *enthusiasmos*. The schwärmer, Fenves argues, exhibits a “non-transcendent” form of enthusiasm; schwärmer exist in a non-ordered community in which they distinguish themselves from society while simultaneously failing to distinguish between themselves. Like Shaftesbury’s “panic,” the *schwärmerei* lack a systematic order, which Fenves still ascribes to enthusiasts. Through his philosophical account, Fenves thus creates a distinction between panic and inspiration by what he terms the “chain of enthusiasm.” The distinction between enthusiasm and schwärmerei for Fenves lies in the ability to communicate. The schwärmer’s “community” is non-communicative whereas the enthusiast never exists in communicative isolation. Rather, he is part of a chain of communication in which “the god communicates to the poet...the poet communicates to the rhetor..., and the rhetor communicates to his auditors this enthusiasm” (117). Thus we begin to see how the problem of enthusiasm within a social context, in fact, becomes an issue concerning the fate of language and linguistic expression.

According to J.G.A. Pocock, enthusiastic communication is peculiar in its connection to prophesy, for the enthusiast, or prophet, Pocock explains must “speak with tongues not his own” (9).<sup>9</sup> For Fenves, however, the problem with enthusiastic communication does not lie in the borrowed speech act but rather in what is- or is not -communicated in this chain of enthusiasm.

All that is communicated, says Fenves, is God's ability to communicate, and the members of such a chain acquire no further ability to communicate amongst themselves. The enthusiast's community, argues Fenves, is a paradoxical one; it entails a "community of singularities whose ecstatic members are unaware of its [the community's] very existence" (118). No one in this community serves a social function, argues Fenves; each individual member of the enthusiast's community lacks a self in lacking a social purpose, or identity, and, therefore, a social knowledge of who he is. If Fenves's philosophical definition of enthusiasm is "any inexplicable singularity," (117) then his definition of the enthusiast's community is an "inexcusable singularity...brought into a new multiplicity" (118). In other words, the enthusiast's community, like the schwärmer's community, lacks a kind of communication necessary to social welfare. If the schwärmer belongs to a chaos defined as a community that fails to communicate, then for Fenves the enthusiast belongs to a community ordered only by its ability to communicate *only* the ability to communicate. As a result, the enthusiast's community hangs together by a thread that is fragile and transient, with its origin leading back to what Fenves terms the "supposed divine." The distinction between the schwärmer's and the enthusiast's community is, therefore, minimal. If the former's lacks communication, then the latter's depends on a "vain" form of communication (to use Johnson's term), which never affirms the individual within his social context. As for Pocock, so for Fenves, does this community, therefore, embody a chain of passive communication.

Thus we might derive from these theorists the notion that the problem of enthusiasm within the context of modernity concerned its relationship to society and a desire for social—as opposed to asocial—forms of community and communication. Fenves's depiction of the

schwärmerei, like Shaftesbury's enthusiastic panic in *The Letter*, represents a pathological, asocial form of socialization devoid of rational communication:

One may with good reason call every passion 'panic' which is raised in a multitude and conveyed by aspect, or as it were, by contact or sympathy. Thus popular fury may be called 'panic' when the rage of people, as we have sometimes known, has put them beyond themselves, especially where religion has had to do. And in this state their very looks are infectious. The fury flies from face to face, and the disease is no sooner seen than caught . . . Such force has society in ill as well as in good passions, and so much stronger any affection is for being social and communicative . . . And thus is religion also panic when enthusiasm of any kind gets up as oft, on melancholy occasions, it will. For vapours naturally rise and, in bad times especially, when the spirits of men are low . . . at this season the panic must needs run high, and the magistrate of necessity give way to it. For to apply a serious remedy and bring the sword or fasces as a cure must make the case more melancholy and increase the very cause of the distemper. The magistrate, if he be any artist, should have a gentler hand and, instead of caustics, incisions and amputations, should be using the softest balms, and, with a kind sympathy, entering into the concern of the people and taking, as it were, their passion upon him, should, when he has soothed and satisfied it, endeavor, by cheerful ways, to divert and heal it (p.10-11).

Shaftesbury's use of the word "communicative" here does not represent communication on a verbal level or on the level of what Jack Prostko would call Shaftesbury's notion of a "natural conversation set in view."<sup>10</sup> Rather, what is communicated is something pathological, or biophysical, a disease that is bodily as well as mental and which is strangely caught through the force of the spectacle. Notably, the panic is "conveyed by aspect"; it is the very look of the enthusiasts, which becomes catching. Yet Shaftesbury's panic hints at a more idealistic paradigm of a social enthusiasm, which begins to solve the problem that Fenves's theoretical critique so eloquently illustrates. What is peculiar about Shaftesbury's depiction of the social sphere in this passage and his rhetoric of communication as contagion is that he uses the same terminology to denigrate the realm of the social as he does to reform it. Shaftesbury's use of the word "sympathy" carries a particularly paradoxical status as it becomes both the *cause* and the *cure* of this panic.

In fact, this paradox may be explained through the very psychology of sympathetic identification. If sympathy transpires through two opposing, yet conjoined actions within the psyche, then Shaftesbury parses out these two actions in his double usage of the term. Sympathy is defined by the ability to enter into the feelings, or state, of another.<sup>11</sup> However, this process of identification can be achieved in two ways—either through an absorption of or—or a projection onto—another subject. In Shaftesbury’s first paradigm, sympathy occurs as an act of identificatory absorption; one takes on the “feelings of another” when he is already in a self-absenting state. Shaftesbury alludes to such a notion of sympathy in his first use of the word by connecting it to a state of ecstasy: the “popular fury” of “panic,” the contagious contact of “sympathy,” arises when “the rage of [the] people” has led them into an affective state that puts them “beyond themselves.” Having exceeded the limits of the self, the individual thus becomes predisposed to a kind of sympathy, which will fill “the void.” The problem with this sympathetic paradigm is that it both derives from an affective disorder and stems from a perceived need, a psycho-physical want or desire. Thus “sympathy” here becomes self-serving, and the community arises out of a mutual need, or panic, as opposed to a mutual feeling. We might identify this type of sympathy as mimetic, for it creates a community that amasses and coheres only in a physical manner as individuals copy one another so as to repair their own feelings of identificatory loss. Like Fenves’s notion of the enthusiastic swarm, this community is non-communicative, connected only by way of visual contact or contagion and not by way of dialogic exchange. Thus the religious community in a state of panic fails to preserve the necessary distinctions between its social members, or its individual parts, since such a concept of community is based from the outset upon an assumed sacrifice of the individual self.

Notably, Shaftesbury's secondary usage of the term "sympathy" exposes an opposing situation. Here, the individual never sacrifices his self, for he must assert himself in order to heal others, in order to implement his social reform. In this scenario, sympathy arises somewhere in the middle of its two, defining, and yet counter-opposing trajectories. Through a process of both *absorption* and *projection*, the magistrate achieves his goal of curing the enthusiastic malady. In this manner, Shaftesbury argues, the cure cannot resemble the cause. Hence, the "sympathy that cures sympathy" entails a kind of self-assertion, or projection, which mends the other party's loss of self. The magistrate never loses himself, nor acts out of self-desire. His "self-sacrifice" still preserves his individuality. Thereby, the community's violent disorder of chaos is replaced with a peaceful harmony that remedies the ecstatic state of the other.

The difference between these two pictures of social exchange lies in the distinction between a kind of community that acts as a mere indistinguishable unity and one that strives for the harmonic unity of its distinctive parts. In the case of the ideal magistrate, sympathy becomes only a metaphoric act of absorption as the priest figure takes the other's passion upon him only "as it were." Instead of entering into the state of the people, he "enters into the *concern* of the people" and thereby extracts their bodily malady without assuming, or mimicking, it himself. In this manner, the magistrate never loses his sense of self nor his sense of rational control. By soothing and satisfying his patient, he leaves him in a state of submission. Thus the sympathizer, not the sympathized, retains the capacity of agency here. Through this process of self-preservation, the magistrate may finally "divert" the public's ailment. Notably, this diversion is marked by a particular style and tone that links to Shaftesbury's use of humoral theory (and his notion of the venting effects of the *humorous*),<sup>12</sup> for the magistrate "heals" in his endeavors to "divert cheerfully."

Essentially, we might read the magistrate as a metaphor for the satirist, for the author whose use of wit sympathetically persuades his audience into a state of social and enthusiastic reform. Shaftesbury's scenario of "panic" unlocks the key to his project in *The Letter Concerning Enthusiasm*. As he begins to imagine a "communicative" type of sympathy, which marks out the ideals of an authorially-controlled literary project, he opens up a space for conceiving of an enthusiastic society, which facilitates and never inhibits, actual communication. As I will argue in the following chapter, this vision is not fully realized until Shaftesbury's later epistolary dialogue, *The Moralists*. Yet here in *The Letter*, Shaftesbury alludes to the magisterial role of the author by carefully constructing his rhetoric so as to resolve enthusiasm's problematic relationship to the social sphere.

Moreover, this passage reveals the motivations behind Shaftesbury's desire to reconstruct a new type of reformed enthusiasm. Perhaps Shaftesbury's most important use of metaphor in this passage is that which compares the ideal magistrate to "any artist." If the magisterial role is likened to the situation of the author or artist, then Shaftesbury must preserve inspiration in light of its literary importance so that he may emphasize a type of socially-constructive, or reformative, philosophy as literature. Just as the magisterial scenario reforms our concept of sympathy so as to heal a socially- pathological version of that sympathy, so must Shaftesbury reform enthusiasm so as to use it for his own literary purposes. In fact, the term "sympathy" here acts as an almost coded definition for Shaftesbury's double vision of "enthusiasm" in light of its social potentialities. As sympathy becomes an act of "communication," and as Shaftesbury implies a relationship between the priestly magistrate and the author, Shaftesbury's depiction of panic begins to envision a social reform of the problem of enthusiasm that specifically addresses the distinction between "communication" and "contagion." By stressing a need for

“communication” over “contagion” in the religious approach to inspiration, this distinction not only resolves and remedies the conflict of enthusiasm’s paradoxical relationship to the social sphere, but it carries with it implications for a modern, poetic approach to enthusiasm as well.

To return to Fenves’s and Pocock’s accounts of the problem of enthusiastic expression, we might consider the link between enthusiasm’s relationship to the social sphere and to linguistic expression as significant for poetic accounts of inspiration. If as Fenves says, enthusiasm is the poet’s attempt to “speak in tongues not his own,” then enthusiastic invocation becomes a passive act of divine ventriloquy. A traditional, ancient approach to enthusiasm deprives the author of his voice, his agency, and his autonomy. Poetry’s reliance on enthusiastic expression would, according to Fenves’s account, therefore, undermine the role of the individual within society, subjecting authorship and readership to a collective act of passive and mimetic “communication,” in which “language” would never be expressed but only “caught” through divine “contagion.”<sup>13</sup>

This defining characteristic of ancient inspiration would begin to create anxieties about the role of the author in society even before the appearance of the philosophical and literary doctrines of authorial genius and autonomy that emerged to define the literature of the modern period. Even in *Paradise Lost*, Milton’s efforts to reconsider a kind of epic inspiration that would conform to the Christian standards of the early modern period would locate issues of authorial autonomy in the epic’s reliance on the structures of ancient invocation. Miltonic revisions of the epic set the stage for the secular invocations that appeared in the literature of the modern period.

*An 'Earthly Guest': Milton's 'Governed Song'*

In the opening invocation in Book Seven of *Paradise Lost*, Milton distinguishes divine speech from human speech, imploring Urania to come to him in a dream so that he may not “err” beyond his human bounds (ll. 1-39).<sup>14</sup> Evident in the solution of the dream is the inherent danger of divine invocation, an implicit authorial anxiety that intermittently surfaces throughout Miltonic inspiration, preparing us for the secular invocations of the Augustan period:

. . . Up led by thee  
Into the Heav'n of Heav'ns I have presumed  
An earthly guest and drawn empyreal air,  
Thy temp'ring. With like safety guided down  
Return me to my native element.  
Lest from this flying steed unreined . . .  
. . . I fall  
Erroneous there to wander and forlorn.  
Half yet remains unsung but narrower bound  
Within the visible diurnal sphere:  
Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,  
More safe I sing with mortal voice unchanged . . .  
Yet not alone while thou  
Visit'st my slumbers nightly or when morn  
Purples the east. Still govern thou my song” (7. ll. 12-30).

For decades, critics have approached Milton's invocations in *Paradise Lost* as Christian departures from the pagan tradition of inspiration.<sup>15</sup> This is precisely the topic of Phillip Edward Phillips' recent book on Milton in which he accounts for the tensions between the Christian and pagan traditions of invocation in *Paradise Lost* by claiming that Milton borrows the pagan “name,” or figure, of the muse only to endow her with the symbolism and meaning of a Christian doctrine.<sup>16</sup> Similarly, Estelle Haan has argued that Milton's Christian adaptation of a pagan tradition of inspiration can be seen in his invocations of the muse in books 1, 7, and 9.<sup>17</sup> In her analysis of Milton's invocation in Book 1, Haan argues that the Miltonic-poetic bard transcends

his mortal status so as to “view” heaven; soaring above the boundaries of Helicon, the poet reaches for heaven in more than “middle flight” (88). Here, Haan makes an apt comparison between the poet’s flight and Satan’s demonic flight from hell. From the very outset of *Paradise Lost*, we might argue, therefore, that Milton’s illustrations of poetic inspiration are infused with the language of an enthusiastic overreaching that becomes the predominant subject of his verse. Yet the critical arguments about the opening invocation of book 7 have taken on a much more controversial nature. Here, Milton finally “names” his muse “Urania,” and she is a figure whose name characterizes her by her celestial, heavenly nature.<sup>18</sup>

However, Milton’s enthusiastic rhetoric of inspiration takes a decided turn in his appeal to Urania as divine muse. “Up led” by his celestial muse into the center of the heavenly spheres, “the Heav’n of Heav’ns,” Milton’s poetic bard, a mere “earthly guest,” foresees his own fall. Rather than commit such an “error,” rather than wander from his “native element,” the speaker, therefore, asks safely to return to his proper, mortal sphere. Stanley Fish accounts for this poetic hesitancy in his article “With Mortal Voice: Milton Defends Against the Muse.”<sup>19</sup> Prior to this moment in the poem, Fish argues, Milton’s “song” is in fact God’s song; the poet’s monotheism has led him into a Christian illustration of inspiration in which the poetic bard and the “muses” themselves become mere derivatives, voices that collectively sing the words of God (512-513). Nevertheless, Fish claims that an anxiety begins to surface for Milton regarding the nature of poetic agency in this schema of a song that is designed to be sung in the service of one voice. Paying deference to the word of God, the poet loses his autonomy, his individualism, his agency. Thus the pattern of invocation shifts in Book 7 when the poet “safely” reclaims his “mortal voice.” The second half of Milton’s epic will be sung in “narrower bounds,” a phrase which Fish attributes to the poet’s reclamation of his own voice. Abandoning divine invocation, the poet

now stands on his own, in the “earthly,” “diurnal” sphere, claiming “credit,” Fish argues, “for his own progress.” Fish describes this movement towards poetic autonomy as a decided avoidance of enthusiastic “rapture”; no longer “in Urania’s grasp,” no longer “rapt above the pole,” the poet owns his poem and reclaims his voice by leaving behind a tradition (whether pagan or Christian in its nature) of a divinely-bestowed, poetic enthusiasm.

This interpretation, however, causes Fish to read Milton’s future applications to the muse quite skeptically. Once the poet lays claim to his own utterances, Fish argues, we cannot read his requests for divine speech as genuine. Fish, therefore, refuses to read the poet’s request that Urania visit him in his sleep as any real act of “governance” on the part of the muse. However, I want to argue that the paradoxical disavowal and reclamation of the muse in the opening of Book 7 should be read differently. Just as Milton’s anxieties about authorial autonomy and poetic speech lead his bard to assert his “mortal voice” in defiance of a classical account of poetic enthusiasm (and here I agree with Fish’s reading), Milton reclaims his muse by asserting another classical paradigm of inspiration: that of the poet as prophet. As Pocock has argued, the poet-as-prophet account of enthusiasm illustrates a type of poetic ventriloquism in which the poet passes on the word of God by “speaking in tongues not his own.” In this manner, one might argue, Milton “vindicates the ways of God to man.”

Yet Milton’s application to his muse, Urania, does not support, or reiterate, such an account of poetic prophesy or enthusiasm. The poet never asks Urania to deliver to him the word of God through the medium of his dreams. Rather, Urania must visit the poet in his sleep so that she will “govern” his song. Such an application to the muse confirms the many arguments in Milton criticism that the spirit of Milton’s song (often attributed to that of the holy ghost) represents a kind of inspiration as instruction. For the first time in the history of the early modern

epic, the muse takes on a “governing” role. No longer does she sing for the poet, but she “guides” him, becoming a figure of restraint who tempers the poet’s enthusiasm, his flights into divine rapture.

As Fish argues, the poet departs from the invocational structure of “Sing, Heav’nly Muse” used in Book 1 to an assertion “I sing” in the later invocations of *Paradise Lost*. However, Milton never shakes his need for the muse as he departs from a pagan account of inspiration. Instead, he establishes a new account of poetic enthusiasm in which the “muse” becomes the didactic, restraining guide to the poet’s “governed song.” It is this early modern modulation of enthusiasm, which will come to influence a new pattern of invocation in the modern period. These modern invocations will re-envision the role of the muse as Milton does in their continued attempts to avoid the trappings of enthusiasm while preserving the importance of inspiration in its relationship to poetic production.

For the authors of the modern period, however, the didactic muse will become secular in nature. Unlike Milton’s Urania, who represents and imparts the laws of Milton’s Christian god in her celestial character, the modern muse, who appears in early eighteenth-century literature as a friend, a critic, or a member of the poet’s a judging audience will “govern” the author’s work. This secular account of poetic enthusiasm for authors such as Shaftesbury, Pope, and Fielding will provide a safe space for the autonomous authorship of the modern period. As the author’s voice issues forth from his own “genius,” poetic enthusiasm in the modern period will become redefined through the laws of early-eighteenth century aesthetics. In this manner, by balancing rapture with restraint, by tempering genius with guidance, such secular accounts of modern enthusiasm will take their cue from the didactic muse of Milton’s “governed song.”

*Sacred Secularization and Reasonable Affect?: Embracing the Paradox*

By arguing that secularization impacts literary form long before the Romantic period, this work will take the perspective that secularization, in its relationship to aesthetic form and experience, is not merely an effect of Enlightenment rationality. Trends in recent scholarship on secularization from the early modern period through Romanticism, have shown that secularization may not have exhibited a straightforward progression in the early stages of the modern period. A tendency to acknowledge the mixture of the sacred with the secular has come to inform such critical approaches to secularization as Regina Maria Schwartz's account of the early modern period's "sacramental poetics,"<sup>20</sup> Sarah Ellenzweig's semi-religious characterization of the politics of Restoration free-thinkers,<sup>21</sup> and recent attempts by Romantic scholars such as Colin Jager to complicate the dichotomy often put forward between the Enlightenment and Romanticism.<sup>22</sup> To some extent, these mixed approaches to the history of secularization all begin to ask a similar question: what are the conditions of "secularization," and how do we characterize the "secular"?<sup>23</sup>

For the writers of the Augustan period, "secular enthusiasm" in the form of poetic invocation begins to establish a secular trend in literary form and production even within theological contexts. In other words, the authors of the modern period rely on a secular, non-divine, source for authorial inspiration; however, they do not necessarily label themselves, or even their works, as "secular" subjects. Shaftesbury, for example, arrives at a secular conception of enthusiasm in its relationship to genre within the context of a predominantly theological philosophy. And Alexander Pope, whose *Rape of the Lock* seeks to repair a breach between two, noble Catholic families, would, ironically, promote a poetic vision of "secular enthusiasm" in his

invocations of the muse in the very same poem. Finally, Fielding promotes a Christian, moral understanding of the universe in *Tom Jones*, and yet this understanding accompanies his many attempts at secularizing invocation in the novel's innovative approaches to form. In the vein of such recent scholarship on secularization, my work encounters secular approaches to enthusiasm where one might rather expect to find a philosophy of the sacred.

Moreover, I hope to acknowledge yet another paradox about secular form in these early eighteenth-century accounts of inspiration. Not only do we find an Augustan reverence for Enlightenment reason as it relates to aesthetic judgment in these modern modulations of enthusiasm, but Augustan invocations also rely on the affective powers of the aesthetic as they promote authorial autonomy in their modern versions of secular inspiration. The author's image-producing faculties, his reliance on spectacle, and his attempts to invoke eighteenth-century practices of "invention" and "genius" are the affective elements that work in concert with a critical reliance on reason and judgment in these authors' attempts at reforming and secularizing poetic enthusiasm.

### *The Modern Muse*

In the chapters that follow, I focus on a diverse set of texts, in order to demonstrate that the eighteenth-century preoccupation with the social effects of enthusiasm impacts the period's innovations in literary form. These innovations are evident across genres in the modernization of invocation occurring in the wake of Milton, and emerge as attempts to invent the modern author, highlighting his aesthetic faculties of judgment and genius.

My second chapter, “Amused and Bemused: Shaftesbury’s Enthusiasm on the Social Stage,” argues that Shaftesbury’s philosophy attempts to reform enthusiasm by way of generic innovation. Although Shaftesbury treats enthusiasm as a natural phenomenon related to the psychology of the human condition, his tolerance for enthusiasm is, nonetheless, coupled with an awareness of its problematic social status. He therefore seeks to reform, or redefine, enthusiasm so as to preserve its literary import and artistic function. More importantly, Shaftesbury’s work exposes the link between enthusiastic reform and literary form—a link revealed in *The Characteristics*’ conscientious attention to the use of genre and style. Shaftesbury’s own philosophy, therefore, impacts his use of genre. In his expositions on enthusiasm, he subtly marks out certain generic and stylistic tendencies, which will embody, or enact, these movements towards a new type of aesthetic inspiration fit for the public sphere. Using Shaftesbury’s opening modern invocation of the muse in his *Letter on Enthusiasm* as a way of framing his later redactions of enthusiasm in *The Moralists*, this chapter argues that Shaftesbury’s modernization of the Socratic dialogue as it is intertwined with his forays into epistolarity is a stylistic choice that allows him actively to reform enthusiasm as he dialogizes, and thereby modernizes, an ancient custom of invoking of the muse.

Chapters 3 and 4, “‘Eyes that Must Eclipse’: Vain Enthusiasm in Pope’s *The Rape of the Lock*” and “Curtain, Muse!: Invention and Poetic Example in Pope’s Invocations,” argue that Pope remodels invocation along the lines of poetic apostrophe and address in order to redefine enthusiasm’s relationship to the formal dimensions of poetry. I examine four moments in Pope’s poetic oeuvre which collectively synthesize his modernization of invocation: modern redactions of enthusiasm taken from *The Essay on Criticism*, *The Essay on Man*, *The Rape of the Lock*, and *The Dunciad*. Pope’s mock invocations reveal an attempt to revise the sources of poetic

composition in order to produce a secular poetics dependent upon the constraints of a critical aesthetics. From the classical epic, Pope borrows a need for a muse, or a form of inspiration, which can constitute the poetic center of his work. The difference between the invocation of the muse in the mock epic and the epic, of course, lies in the fact that Pope's muse is a secular one. This movement toward a modern muse raises issues of poetic authority as it redefines the formal role of enthusiasm. The poet, no longer a conduit for divine communication, gains agency over his poem and "inspires" a new kind of enthusiastic readership steeped in the work of critical contemplation.

Chapter 5, "Genius, Muse: Inspiration and Invocation in Fielding's *Tom Jones*," argues that Fielding's employment of the dialogic form in *Tom Jones* arises as a consequence of his anxieties about the enthusiasms of his day. His project to craft a realist-modern form of writing, an effort that begins in the *Preface to Joseph Andrews* and extends deep into the consciously-stylized prose of *Tom Jones*, arises out of an attempt to revise the modern author's relationship to inspiration. This chapter examines the narrator's modern redactions of invocation along with Fielding's narrative employment of metaphor, arguing that Fielding aestheticizes enthusiasm by subjecting inspiration both to the author's faculties of genius and to the reader's critical judgment. In this regard, the novel form unfolds as a practice of disclosure between author and reader, which imports the power of a theatrical scenario and an ancient reliance on enthusiasm, while subjecting the text to a critically aesthetic paradigm fit for modern writing.

Incorporating invocation into each of their experiments in genre, these authors allow the figure of the muse to survive, but she is now construed as something secular, an apostrophe to a friend or judging spectator, or at times an allusion to the mental faculties or aesthetic powers of the author himself—his genius. This dissertation, therefore, argues that secularization impacts

literary form long before the Romantic period and that secularization, in its relationship to aesthetic form and experience, is not merely an effect of Enlightenment rationality.

## Amused and Bemused: Shaftesbury's Enthusiasm on the Social Stage

As I have illustrated in the introductory chapter to this work, many critics have connected the problematization of enthusiasm within a social context with the contemporary understanding of language and linguistic expression. According to J.G.A. Pocock, enthusiastic communication is peculiar in its connection to prophesy, since the enthusiast, or prophet, as Pocock explains, must “speak with tongues not his own” (9).<sup>24</sup> And Peter Fenves locates the distinctive nature of enthusiastic communication not in the borrowed speech act but rather in what is- or is not - communicated through a channel of enthusiasm. The enthusiast, he writes, is part of a chain of communication in which “the god communicates to the poet...the poet communicates to the rhetor..., and the rhetor communicates to his auditors this enthusiasm” (117).<sup>25</sup> In this chain of enthusiasm, all that is communicated, argues Fenves, is God's ability to communicate; the members of the chain acquire no further ability to communicate amongst themselves. By aligning enthusiasm with inspiration, both of these contemporary treatments of enthusiasm regard inspiration as an ancient custom, a position which has significant consequences for the writers of early modernity.

The prevailing tendency in Shaftesbury criticism, however, has been to consider enthusiasm as a social problem related not so explicitly to language, or linguistic expressiveness, but to the extremes of religious passion which ran counter to the emerging, early-eighteenth century triumph of reason. In his book *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness*, Lawrence Klein writes that the character of Theocles in *The Moralists* is a “sociable enthusiast,” not a “zealot,” due to his attempts to temper the passions with reason.<sup>26</sup> Similarly, Stephen Darwall

argues that *The Moralists* is Shaftesbury's account of a "reasonable," or "noble," enthusiasm that results from "the creative, imaginative activity involved in the rational grasp of order and design." Frederick Beiser aptly synthesizes the nature of early eighteenth-century philosophical critiques of enthusiasm in his book *The Sovereignty of Reason* when he states that reason would provide an "antidote" to enthusiasm by "determin[ing] the natural causes of 'fits of frenzy' or 'transports of delight,' whether these were physical, mental, or social . . . [by] demand[ing] sufficient evidence for any pretense to divine inspiration. . . , [and by] undermin[ing] the divine origin of the feeling of inspiration" (184).<sup>27</sup> Certainly, we might read Shaftesbury's many approaches to enthusiasm in *The Characteristics* as attempts to reform enthusiasm through this very process. In *The Letter Concerning Enthusiasm*, Shaftesbury pathologizes enthusiasm as a natural disorder of the humors and distinguishes true enthusiasm from false enthusiasm by associating the former with "inspiration" and "sublimity": "inspiration may be justly called 'divine enthusiasm' . . . for the word itself signifies . . . whatever [is] sublime in human passions" (27).<sup>28</sup> Moreover in *The Letter*, and to an even greater extent in *The Moralists*, Shaftesbury attempts to discover a "non-divine" source for enthusiasm, or inspiration.

In considering Shaftesbury's attempts to argue for the existence of a "reasonable" enthusiasm, many critics have observed in his philosophy a pattern of what I will call "secular enthusiasm." Ernst Cassirer has read Shaftesbury's *Moralists* as an early account of the genius doctrine, which begins to establish artistic genius as a natural-and not an exclusively theological-phenomenon (197).<sup>29</sup> Similarly, Stanley Grean writes that *The Moralists* exposes Shaftesbury's poetic, or artistic, need to preserve the cult of enthusiasm (28).<sup>30</sup> Whereas for many critics *The Moralists* has become an occasion to examine Shaftesbury's philosophical debt to a neo-Platonist aesthetics,<sup>31</sup> others have taken an interest in Shaftesbury's use of style in *The Characteristics* and

thus have found formal import in the curious generic structure of Shaftesbury's *Moralists* as a dialogue set within an epistolary frame.<sup>32</sup> Part of my intention in the following chapter will be to link these two critical traditions by arguing that Shaftesbury's dialogic style in *The Moralists* enacts and embodies his theory of enthusiastic reform. This approach to style in Shaftesbury's work will follow in the tradition of such critics as Robert Markley and Michael Prince who have argued that language and form in Shaftesbury's essays reflect, embody, and even shape social values, structures, and institutions.<sup>33</sup> As Markley writes: "Style in *The Characteristics* is part revelation, part complex game. It does not simply convey or passively reflect objective ideas but demonstrates, even embodies, the values it upholds" (143). More specifically, I will argue that Shaftesbury reforms enthusiasm in *The Letter* and *The Moralist* through a revised rhetorical approach to invoking the muse. In this manner, I would like to expand upon previous gestures towards Shaftesbury's secular treatment of such issues related to enthusiasm as artistic genius and inspiration by arguing that Shaftesbury's efforts to modernize enthusiasm and inspiration are grounded in his authorial anxieties about the origins of written language, form, and linguistic expression. Notably these secular accounts of inspiration and invocation, in their relationship to aesthetic form and experience, do not merely arise as effects of Enlightenment rationality. Rather Shaftesbury's secular enthusiasm blends a critical need for judgment and reason with an acceptance of the natural origins and sublime powers of the passions.

In *The Moralists*, Shaftesbury's modernization of the Socratic dialogue as it is intertwined with his forays into epistolarity becomes a stylistic choice that allows him actively to reform enthusiasm as he dialogizes, and thereby modernizes, an ancient custom of invocation.<sup>34</sup> Thereby, Shaftesbury socializes inspiration, rendering it a communicative form of expression through a process that consistently relies on a rhetorical device that reformulates the passive

structure of ancient invocation by subjecting it to the more dialogical methods of modern apostrophe and address. Written as a publicly private response (a letter in dialogic form), *The Moralists* represents the narrative account of a recollected conversation. Yet embedded within this larger formal framework, we encounter a variety subgenres (staged dialogues, rhapsodic interludes, dream visions etc...). In distinct ways, these generic frames are all interconnected as they come to mark Shaftesbury's attempts at reforming and socializing enthusiasm by way of the author's conscientious application of genre and style. However, Shaftesbury's modernization of inspiration begins with his famous citation of the "muse" in *The Letter*. Unlike *The Moralists*, *The Letter* never delivers a socially communicative, or dialogical, account of inspiration. Nevertheless, both *The Letter* and *The Moralists* attempt to revise inspiration by stripping it of its traditional associations with ventriloquism and borrowed speech, problems emphasized in Fenves's and Pocock's contemporary theories of enthusiastic expression.

If Shaftesbury concludes his critique in *The Letter* by attempting to salvage the term "enthusiasm" through a process of redefinition, marking out a good kind of enthusiasm related to "inspiration" and "sublimity," then in *The Moralists* he observes enthusiasm as a philosophical, as opposed to a biophysical, phenomenon. Here, the reform of enthusiasm becomes linked to the reform, or salvation, of a morally aesthetic philosophy. Moreover, the term "enthusiasm," as it becomes aligned with sociability and what Shaftesbury calls a "reasonable ecstasy" takes on a decidedly positive connotation whose redefinition requires no new terminology in its agreeable associations. It is easy to read these two works as counter opposites: one as the critique, one as the defense, of enthusiasm. Yet they share two similarities in their approach; both texts observe enthusiasm as connected to nature and natural occurrences, and both texts seek to reform enthusiasm by way of its relationship to the social sphere.

At first glance, however, the differences between the enthusiasm of *The Letter* and that of *The Moralists* is most striking. Both works seem to have opposite conceptions of enthusiasm's relationship to the public sphere, with the former seeing the public as a site for enthusiastic contagion and the latter assuming it as the site for enthusiastic restraint and reform. Likewise, a cursory look at the theses I will posit for both works in their reform of enthusiasm elicits an apparent contradiction between the two texts. If dialogue is that which checks enthusiasm in *The Moralists* as the interlocutor becomes the judging mediator, then it is the addressee himself in *The Letter*, Shaftesbury's "imagined audience," who acts as the inspiring source, and not the mediating element for enthusiasm. Thus both works in seeking to define the social nature of inspiration and the relationship of transport to the presence of others arrive at a seeming contradiction in terms. Does inspiration derive from, or is it diverted by, these enthusiastic moments of apostrophe and address?

Perhaps, such contradictions are what have led so many critics to read *The Moralists* and *The Letter* separately. However, I would like to read these texts together and against one another in order to exhibit a distinctive continuity between the two. The former, I will argue, is but a continuation of the latter, an expansion upon Shaftesbury's already existent, albeit incomplete, argument for the redefinition of enthusiasm. The relationship between *The Letter* and *The Moralists* sheds light upon the fact that if we read these two expositions in isolation from one another, then we can never fully comprehend the structure behind Shaftesbury's project to reform enthusiasm. In fact, both essays strictly resemble one another in their two-step revisionary processes. On a structural level, these works exemplify the same attempt in Shaftesbury's philosophic strategy. First, Shaftesbury's theology argues for a necessary mediation of our relationship to the divine. This mediation is always achieved by way of an

aesthetic principle. In *The Moralists*, it lies in man's affective transports into Nature; in *The Letter*, it is constituted in the projecting forces of the imagination. Thus enthusiasm, even in a predominantly theological philosophy, becomes for Shaftesbury a secular phenomenon through this essential process of aestheticization. Once enthusiasm is aestheticized, however, it must undergo a secondary form of mediation. This process figures around the mind's rationalist impulses, which will help to restrain the movement towards excess, or transcendence, that can result from a purely affective experience. In other words, Shaftesbury's revision of enthusiasm stems from his critique of an exclusively empiricist aesthetics. The purely aesthetic, Shaftesbury argues, must be checked by a critical moment of judgment that is often related in literature to the dialogical. Dialogue, whether internalized (and paradoxically monological) as in the context of *The Letter*, or externalized as in the context of *The Moralists*, becomes the critical mechanism that mediates all aesthetic experience.

Moreover, by relating enthusiasm to dialogue, Shaftesbury can rid enthusiasm of its questionable status in the social sphere. In his essay *Sensus Communis*, Shaftesbury couches his project to "free wit" in a rhetoric similar to his adjacent project to reform enthusiasm. Wit, like the venting of the humours in Shaftesbury's *Letter*, must have free reign. However, it is within the social sphere, that wit, like enthusiasm, gains moral freedom as it becomes something seen, examined, and brought to "light": "we may be charged perhaps with willful ignorance and blind idolatry for having taken opinions upon trust and consecrated in ourselves certain idol-notions, which we will never suffer to be unveiled or seen in open light" (29). Here, Shaftesbury associates idolatry with blindness and ignorance by conceiving of it as something privatized. Only in the "open light" of the social sphere can we publicly examine and discuss our opinions instead of merely adopting them through blind acceptance and trust. The social sphere, like the

public stage, thus becomes the site of an unveiling, the place where the idol opinion is revealed for what it truly is. For this reason, Shaftesbury is able to reform enthusiasm in *The Moralists* through his discussion of the “sociable enthusiast” whereas in *The Letter* Shaftesbury’s work remains incomplete. It is because of the apostrophic (and not explicitly dialogical) mode of *The Letter* that Shaftesbury cannot yet in his earlier writing incorporate a sense of judgment or reason into the term “enthusiasm” itself. Thus *The Letter* must conserve the notion of judgment as a countervailing, remediating force, which is juxtaposed against the affective associations of enthusiasm. What is peculiar about this dualism in *The Letter*, however, is that it foreshadows Shaftesbury’s redefinition of the term enthusiasm in *The Moralists*, for *The Letter* already locates the opposing capacities of inspiration and judgment in the same, aesthetically-configured site of the imagination. Shaftesbury’s use of literary genre and style thus allows him to establish a kind of enthusiasm, or inspiration, which can accommodate his philosophical ideals for social communities. As Shaftesbury implements a stylistic mode of address that is fit for the modern author’s inspiration, he resolves his pathology of enthusiasm as a social ailment. Once Shaftesbury establishes a critically aesthetic paradigm of enthusiasm in *The Moralists*, enthusiasm sheds its pathological status so as to establish generic modes of literature and inspiration, which can safely enter, and even shape, the public sphere.

### *The Muse on Stage: Imagining Inspiration*

David Marshall is one of the few critics to have commented extensively on the revisionary role of the muse that opens Shaftesbury’s *Letter*.<sup>35</sup> In his book *The Figure of Theater*, Marshall sees Shaftesbury’s discussion of the antiquated muse as a set up for the muse’s modern

“replacement” (14). Lord Sommers thus becomes the human substitute, the modern figure, of inspiration in what I will read as Shaftesbury’s secular invocation. “From the imagined presence of what Shaftesbury has called ‘angelical company,’ we have passed to the ordinary presence of the company of men,” Marshall writes (15). Of course, for Marshall, Shaftesbury’s decision to revise the muse in this manner becomes interesting in light of its reliance on a theatrical metaphor. Indeed, the sympathetic register of imagining another’s presence, of casting oneself in the view of an imagined audience, recalls definite, psychological aspects of a theatrical scenario, and Marshall is right to read this prefatory staging as one which raises important issues surrounding Shaftesbury’s choice of style and the *Letter*’s complicated relationship to a public-private divide.

However, I want to suggest that the metaphor of the theater, which so heavily undergirds Shaftesbury’s address to Lord Sommers, unlocks the key to Shaftesbury’s reform of enthusiasm in *The Characteristics*. The language of the theater that pervades Shaftesbury’s mode of address first, I will argue, aestheticizes, and thereby secularizes, an ancient custom of divine inspiration, making it fit for modern writing. More important, however, is Shaftesbury’s seemingly paradoxical critique of the theatrical mode, which he invokes as an instrument of secularization and reform. Herein lies the basis behind Shaftesbury’s aesthetic reform of enthusiasm.

Shaftesbury’s critique of the modern invocation of a muse, as writers from Fielding onward have pointed out, has to do with the fact that it appears as a literary anachronism. In a Christian world, which no longer believes in muses, invocation serves as an empty convention, a poetic formality representative of false inspiration. Embedded in this discussion of the role of the muse is not a mere critique of prophetic or poetic enthusiasm, but rather a larger critique on imitation. The dangers of mimesis, for Shaftesbury, as for many late-eighteenth century aesthetic

philosophers (Rousseau, Smith, and Hume for example), lie in its link to affectation and performance. The performative, or mimetic, nature of a feigned enthusiasm both highlights Shaftesbury's preoccupation with true versus false inspiration and his emphasis on the contagious nature of enthusiasm as a potentially social and pathological disorder. Just as Shaftesbury congratulates himself for avoiding imitation in his choice not to adopt this classical convention, he emphasizes the possibly false or performative implications behind the poetic impulse to invoke a muse:

It has been an established custom for poets, at the entrance of their work, to address themselves to some Muse and this practice of the ancients has gained so much repute that even in our days we find it almost constantly imitated. I cannot but fancy, however, that this imitation, which passes so currently with other judgments, must at some time or other have struck a little with your Lordship, who is used to examine things by a better standard than that of fashion or common taste. You must certainly have observed our poets under remarkable restraint, when obliged to assume this character, and you have wondered perhaps why that air of enthusiasm, which sits so gracefully with an ancient, should be so spiritless and awkward in a modern. But, as to this doubt, your Lordship would have soon resolved yourself, and it could only serve to bring across you a reflection you have often made on many occasions besides, that truth is the most powerful thing in the world, since even fiction itself must be governed by it and can only please by its resemblance. The appearance of reality is necessary to make any passion agreeably represented. And to be able to move others, we must first be moved ourselves, or at least seem to be so, upon some probable grounds. Now what possibility is there that a modern, who is known never to have worshipped Apollo or owned any such deity as the Muses, should persuade us to enter into his pretended devotion and move us by feigned zeal in a religion out of date? But as for the ancients, it is known they derived both their religion and polity from the Muses' art. How natural must it have appeared in any, but especially a poet of those times, to address himself in raptures of devotion to those acknowledged patronesses of wit and science? Here the poet might with probability feign an ecstasy, though he really felt none, and, supposing it to have been mere affectation, it would look however look like something natural and could not fail of pleasing (4-5).

The force of enthusiasm here lies in its performative nature, in its ability to "please." Whether or not one experiences an ecstasy or feigns an ecstasy, the effect of that ecstasy on others remains

the same. In both cases, it is catching, and, therefore, its infectious nature links to its visionary status, to its ability to be seen.

Shaftesbury's theory of enthusiasm thus highlights its theatrical nature through its association with spectatorship. The irony here, of course, arises from *The Letter's* own performativity. Essentially, Shaftesbury's argument performs the same theatrical gestures it tries to avoid in attempting to depart from the imitative nature of false inspiration. We see this impulse even in the opening lines of the essay in which Shaftesbury urges his addressee: "...if you care to be entertained a while with a sort of idle thoughts . . .you may cast your eye slightly on what you have before you..." (p. 4). The letter itself thus acts as a venue for, or object of, entertainment; its motive is to please. In its attempts to perform its own critiques and reformations of the cult of enthusiasm, *The Letter* risks the dangers of enthusiasm as it turns into something not merely read, but seen; "cast your eye slightly on what you have before you," Shaftesbury urges his reader. However, Shaftesbury does not simply place, or force, his reader, Lord Sommers, into the status of the viewer, but rather he attempts to entice him with the carefree, almost flippant, language of the author's own self-effacement.

If the letter is a kind of performance, Shaftesbury suggests, it must be a comic, and not a tragic, one. Although the author may attempt to perform a semi-critique of the muse as poetic-inspiration, he cannot avoid the theatrical mode simply because he cannot, and does not want to, avoid a necessary impulse towards pleasure. After all, it is pleasure which lies at the heart of Shaftesbury's attempt to reform religious enthusiasm, a phenomenon, which he argues must avoid gravity (ill humours) by finding its antidotes in wit and ridicule. Satire, or humor, then becomes the cure for enthusiastic disorders.<sup>36</sup>

Thus Shaftesbury's opening lines along with his mode of address in *The Letter* act as a performance of what he calls "wit" as opposed to mere enthusiasm. When you look upon this letter, Shaftesbury warns his reader, you should not be inspired, or *moved*, but rather you should be amused, entertained with "idle thoughts." Shaftesbury thus sets up a theatrical situation which pleases not by "moving" the passions but by "idling" in reason. If "wit" becomes the antidote to a pathologized version of a divine enthusiasm, then it is the satiric gesture of the author's own self-effacement, what Shaftesbury will demonstrate in *The Letter* as a need for self-judgment, that opens up the space for an aesthetic enthusiasm salvaged by the author's or reader's critical impulses. Thus the paradox that underlies *The Letter's* double critique of the theatrical unfolds as Shaftesbury establishes his aesthetic ideals for the performative style.

Theater, like all forms of art, literary or otherwise, is bound up in the problems of the public sphere. As such, it shares a distinctive relationship to enthusiasm, which Shaftesbury ultimately reads as an aesthetic, and not merely a religious, phenomenon. Enthusiasm, whether false or true in nature, must be mediated by our critical impulses. In Shaftesbury's *Letter*, this critical approach will entail the individual's judgment, his capacity for self-examination, his "moral sense." Enthusiasm like all affective movements must be governed by a set of internal laws. In *The Moralists*, this critical register will move from the site of the individual, from a value of self-judgment, into the conversational aspects of the public sphere as a type of secular, or aesthetic, enthusiasm finds its mediation in the dialogical. On a similar level, Shaftesbury argues in *The Letter* that theater, like any performance, enthusiastic or otherwise, safely enters the public realm only by way of a critical spectatorship. Thus the safest performance is one which calls not only upon the audience's faculties of judgment, but one which reveals a certain authorial self-consciousness. For Shaftesbury, the ideal generic instantiation of the theater

always errs on the side of self-judgment, as the author/orator continually assumes a tone of satiric self-effacement.

We see evidence of such a tone in Shaftesbury's revisionary "replacement" of the muse. In fact, this replacement is a formal imitation of an ancient custom, which seeks to secularize enthusiasm by replacing, as Marshall notes, muse with man. As he criticizes the modern invocation of an ancient divinity, Shaftesbury addresses Sommers as his substituary, modern, and secular source of inspiration. Of course, it is not *actually* Sommers who acts as muse here. Rather, as Marshall suggests, Sommers serves as a kind of figure for the theatrical audience. The "true" modern muse of Shaftesbury's *Letter*, I want to argue, lies in the force of the imagination itself; it is the role of the imagination, which in conjuring up an addressee, takes on all of the aesthetic powers of inspiration fit for the modern author. Inspiration, suggests Shaftesbury, whether ancient or modern, divine or secular, privately or publically conceived, is by nature theatrical, for it relies on an audience. Thus even in the context of the ancients' relationship to the muse, even in a letter about religious, or divine, enthusiasm, inspiration is already and always an aesthetic problem.

We feel a presence and are compelled to apostrophize it; this is the definition of enthusiasm for Shaftesbury. As such, ancient and modern enthusiasm share a certain commonality, for the modern genius and his imaginative renderings require the supposition of an audience, the feeling of a presence, to attain inspiration:

How much the imagination of such a presence must exalt a genius we may observe merely from the influence which an ordinary presence has over men. Our modern wits are more or less raised by the opinion they have of their company, and the idea they form to themselves of the persons to whom they make their addresses. A common actor of the stage will inform us how much a full audience of the better sort exalts him above the common pitch. And you, my Lord, who are the noblest actor and of the noblest part assigned to any mortal on this earthly stage, when you are acting for liberty and mankind, does not the public presence,

that of your friends and the well-wishers to your cause, add something to your thought and genius? Or is that sublime of reason and that power of eloquence, which you discover in public, no more than what you are equally a master of in private and can command at any time alone or with indifferent company or in any easy or cool hour? This indeed were more godlike; but ordinary humanity, I think, reaches not so high (6-7).

We now arrive at the reasoning behind Shaftesbury's choice to fashion Sommers as his figurative "muse." For one, Sommers is, in fact, the ideal audience, the ideal critic "of the better sort," since his perceptions are "used to examin[ing] things by a better standard than that of fashion or common taste." The images that Shaftesbury conjures in his philosophical performance will "strike" Sommers's reason, or his judgment, and not merely his affect. However, Sommers himself might also be likened to the "actor on the stage" as Shaftesbury is quick to make the metaphorical leap from the theatrical to the socio-political sphere in his description of Sommers as both ideal critic and ideal orator. Here, the public audience "adds to thought and genius"; the addressee is the source of inspiration, but there is something tenuous about this relationship between audience and actor, addressee and speaker. Shaftesbury implies that it borders on a certain affective illusion. Like Shaftesbury's illustrative versions of a contagious public sphere threatened by social panic, the audience always has the potential to move by appearance, or through feeling alone. For this reason, the man who commands inspiration in the cool sobriety of the private is "indeed more godlike." It seems as though Shaftesbury's conception of an audience in this instance differs from the "social enthusiasm" of *The Moralists* in which addressee and orator encounter an inspiration always mediated by dialogic exchange. In *The Moralists*, the public checks; the interlocutor, in a moment of interruption, speaks back, and it thus becomes the critical interjection of the dialogic moment, which restrains enthusiasm. However, in *The Letter*, Shaftesbury has not yet arrived at such a dialogical vision of the public sphere. Of course, Shaftesbury's conception of this dialogic turn is somewhat restricted in this instance, given the

generic form of *The Letter* itself. Taking on an apostrophic mode, *The Letter* elicits no response. The addressee is silenced; he becomes an aesthetically objectified version of an audience, a quiet spectator whose only actions, only voice, is entirely bound up within the workings of the author's own imaginative machinations.

Perhaps, for this very reason the public and private orator in *The Letter* share a suppressed kind of resemblance even as they are pitted against one another as characteristic opposites. The public orator may ascribe his inspiration to the force of the crowd, to the existence of an addressee, but even in the real company of the public, it is the aesthetic powers of the imagination, which work to conjure inspiration. The public speaker, like the "wit," derives his genius, his eloquence, from the "idea [he] form[s] to [himself] of the persons to whom [he] make[s] [his] addresses." Thus it is the imagination, which through a process of sympathetic identification, determines the identity and nature of the orator's audience. Whether real or imagined, the audience members are always subject to the speaker's own conceptions; they lack autonomy and agency even as they "inspire." Our assumption, of course, is that the privately inspired too rely on a similar force of the imagination. Unimposed upon, the mind wanders to its inspiring source. The "sublime of reason" is here perhaps less infected by the supposed passion of the crowd; yet the imagination is essentially what still operates here in a moment of self-authorized enthusiasm. As man finds his muse, the very nature of inspiration formally relies on the authorial impulse towards apostrophe.

Shaftesbury implicates this submerged resemblance between the nature of the public and private enthusiast when he makes his confession to Lord Sommers of his own reliance on inspiration. This is an enthusiasm of a privatized-public. Like *The Letter* itself, the speaker walks

the line between public and private address as his “inspiration,” funded by the sources of the imagination, issues forth from a private moment of public conception:

For my own part, my Lord, I have really so much need of some considerable presence or company to raise my thoughts on any occasion that, when alone, I must endeavor by strength of fancy to supply this want and, in default of a Muse, must inquire out some great man of a more than ordinary genius, whose imagined presence may inspire me with more than what I feel at ordinary hours. And thus, my Lord, have I chosen to address myself to your Lordship, though without subscribing my name, allowing you, as a stranger, the full liberty of reading no more than what you may have a fancy for, but reserving myself the privilege of imagining you read all with particular notice as a friend, and one whom I may justifiably treat with the intimacy and freedom which follows.

Essentially, Shaftesbury’s “enthusiasm” here relies on a Longinian moment of inspiration.

Longinus says in his work on the sublime that in an effort to achieve rhetorical sublimity, we must imagine we are speaking to a Homer or a Virgil. As sublime author becomes audience, and the spectator becomes an imaginary one, Shaftesbury’s inspiration, like a Longinian conception of the sublime, departs from the characteristic definition of an ancient version of enthusiasm. No longer does the inspired give himself over to an act of divine “possession.” Unpossessed by his muse, inspired by the forces of his own imagination, the author reclaims his oratorical agency. This secular form of inspiration as imagination thus gets at the heart of Shaftesbury’s problem with a type of classical enthusiasm; enthusiasm in its ancient, literary form is marked by an authorial loss of autonomy or agency. In the Longinian paradigm of sublimity, however, possession turns to dispossession. It is the sublime source of inspiration, and not the inspired rhetorician, that loses his agency. Silenced and disempowered, the inspiring audience gives itself over to the author. Once inspiration is subjected to the conceptual laws of the imagination, the author may become his own autonomous maker. Shaftesbury’s Longinian moment thus moves enthusiasm into an aesthetic register insofar as the imagination becomes necessary to inspiration within the modern context of writing.

Of course, this move only marks the first step in Shaftesbury's stylistically conscious reform of enthusiasm. The latter involves, as I have suggested, reason, or the role of critical judgment. Nevertheless, Shaftesbury must first prove the possibility of an aesthetic enthusiasm (and even the inherently aesthetic nature of divine enthusiasm) in order to bind inspiration to the philosophical laws of critical reflection. Once enthusiasm becomes an aesthetic problem, it can be linked to an affective mode of transport, to a kind of philosophical empiricism, which Shaftesbury will revise through his rationalist mode, a movement that many critics have justly associated with Shaftesbury's concepts of "moral sense" and a "disinterested aesthetics."

It is important to note that this critical step in revising enthusiasm in *The Letter* is not equivalent, though it proves to be deeply related, to Shaftesbury's reform of enthusiasm in *The Moralists*. As I have already begun to suggest, Shaftesbury's attempt to circumscribe enthusiasm in *The Letter* can only be conceived of as semi-dialogical. In this manner, the *Letter's* purpose, its solution in reforming enthusiasm, differs slightly from *The Moralists*. If the *Letter* becomes a generic instance of the Longinian moment, then it is stylistically and rhetorically inscribed in an act of inspiration as apostrophe. This mode of apostrophic address can thereby never attribute a critical responsibility to the author's audience, since enthusiasm becomes an act of possession as dispossession, silencing the reader just as it invokes him. The responsibility of the critical or dialogical "check" of enthusiasm thus turns back upon the author himself. In dialogue with himself, the orator alone, by addressing an imagined public, must rationally check his own enthusiasm; he must apply self-restraint and self-judgment so as not to transcend, or transgress, his own boundaries by passing from sublime inspiration into what Shaftesbury describes as a false, or "melancholic" enthusiasm that has the potential to lead to social panic.

The imagination thus becomes the site of both conception and limitation, a locus of iteration and restraint, of affect and reason. Shaftesbury's double depiction of the imagination and its potential faculties becomes evident in the above quotation with his varied uses of the term "fancy." First and foremost, Shaftesbury describes fancy as simply another term for the imagination: "I have really so much need of some considerable presence or company to raise my thoughts on any occasion that, when alone, I must endeavor by strength of *fancy* to supply this want and, in default of a Muse, must inquire out some great man of a more than ordinary genius, whose *imagined* presence may inspire me with more than what I feel at ordinary hours." Fancy as imagination becomes a faculty of conception whose strength supplies whatever is "wanting" on the part of the subject. Thus fancy creates something out of nothing, filling the gaps of nonpresence with a presence that is necessary for inspirational thought. Moreover, this creative capacity of the imagination links to the faculties of affect, for the "imagined presence" inspires the author with a "feeling," one which transcends the ordinary. As such, the imagination acts as an aesthetic organ, one with a dangerous affective potential. It creates simply to fill in the gaps which exist only within the realm of the subject's desire. Linked to reproductivity, fecundity, and yearning, the mind thus takes on a kind of bodily sensibility in its ability to spontaneously invoke the supersensible.

As Shaftesbury's "imagination" sets about locating a substitutory muse, it imagines only the best kind of critical audience when the author "reserv[es]... the privilege of imagining [Sommers] read[ing] all with particular notice." Therefore, the imagination posits an other as a mere extension of itself, so that the "inspired" author may arrive at a critical moment of self-judgment. (Thus the imagination limits the very inspiration it generates). Only in this manner, can the orator see himself from a perspective, which is actually internal to, though apparently

outside of himself. The imagination thus creates a double readership which opens up the possibility of a critical aesthetics and a safe place for artistic enthusiasm. This move also reiterates a Longinian notion of sublimity as the imagination takes part in a type of possession as dispossession that centers around Shaftesbury's secondary usage of the term "fancy." "I have chosen to address myself," Shaftesbury writes, "to your Lordship, though without subscribing my name, allowing you, as a stranger, the full liberty of reading no more than what you may have a *fancy* for." In the very instant before Shaftesbury deprives Sommers of any readerly agency by determining his actions through the lens of an authorial imagination, he solicits the judgment of his imagined addressee. Although this judgment is immediately silenced, it seems pertinent that Lord Sommers' opinion is so important to Shaftesbury's project of reforming enthusiasm in his *Letter*. Here, "fancy," of course, takes on less of a direct connotation of the "imaginative" and becomes connected to matters of taste. Sommers will examine only what satisfies his literary appetite; his opinion will dictate his readership.

As he ascribes a "fancy" to his imagined addressee, Shaftesbury suggests the possibility of an imagination which possesses both the creative faculties of conception and the critical faculties of judgment. Imagining Lord Sommers' fancy, Shaftesbury momentarily dispossesses himself of the object of his inspired possession, only, of course, to repossess it. With this momentary loss, inscribed in the language of "liberty," the imagination gives itself over to the possibility of a public readership so that it may limit itself by assuming the critical powers of judgment. The author's refusal to subscribe his name appears at first as a solicitation for a type of objective readership, and yet Shaftesbury immediately retracts such a possibility as he admits to the desires of his own fancy, which allow only for the private intimacy of a one-sided correspondence between friends. *The Letter* thus expresses the desire for a private space of

authorship and readership, which can only be conceived of by way of an imagined, objective public. Shaftesbury's mode of address, his apostrophic inspiration, thereby alludes to an enthusiasm subjected to and checked by a space of public-privacy. Thus *The Letter* arises as an internal self-dialogue. Marked by the creations and judgments of a necessarily conflicted imagination, it is a stylistic conceptualization of an enthusiasm, which is both secularized through the aesthetic register of the imagination and checked by internal laws that approximate the mediating tendencies of a dialogical mode. Moreover, the author's anonymity restrains his inspiration and accords with the Longinian paradigm of a rhetorical sublimity as possession by way of dispossession. Shaftesbury's secret signature serves as an authorial self-effacement, which borders on the satiric. Ironically, the author's humble self-disavowal becomes the instrument for his authorial assertion.

The double nature of Shaftesbury's occasional irony in *The Letter on Enthusiasm* always arises from a gesture towards mild self-mockery and is constrained only to his addresses to Lord Sommers in the letter's opening and closing "signatures." These moments of authorial assertion, which remain always anonymous and marked by a paradoxical self-humility, unlock the generic key to Shaftesbury's modern, literary reform of enthusiasm. In both cases, the author, upon critiquing enthusiasm, openly proclaims himself an "enthusiast." However, this authorial admittance to the cult of enthusiasm refers to a new, reformed tradition of inspiration, which is both secularized through an aesthetic register and then criticized through the lens of self-judgment:

And now, my Lord, having after all, in some measure, justified enthusiasm and owned the word, if I appear extravagant in addressing to you after the manner I have done, you must allow me to plead an impulse. You must suppose me (as with truth you may) most passionately yours and, with the kindness which is natural to you on other occasions, you must tolerate your enthusiastic friend who,

excepting only in the case of his over-forward zeal, must ever appear, with the highest respect,

My Lord, Your Lordship's, etc. (28).

Essentially, what Shaftesbury accomplishes by naming himself the nameless enthusiast is an avowal of both wit and judgment. His satiric tone in this moment of address thus brings about his philosophical reform of enthusiasm through the medium of his stylistic gesture. Enthusiasm is critically restrained by the author's own markless mark, his self-critical turn, his self-mocking wit. By effacing himself from the text, Shaftesbury attributes the power of enthusiasm to his imagined addressee. Yet Sommers, addressed only by way of an apostrophe, becomes a mere figure of tolerance (religious or aesthetic), a silent audience, who only represents, and never effects, the critical restraint of enthusiasm. In actuality, limited by a powerless irresponsiveness, he cannot express his judgment. Thus the critical gesture falls on the author himself as it is the imagination alone here which can conjure and check enthusiasm, reforming inspiration in a literary context by connecting it to the mind's rationalist impulses. Shaftesbury's generic reform of enthusiasm in *The Letter* thus comes down to a performative epistolarity, which in relying on an apostrophic form of address, requires a critical, authorial awareness so as to create a literary space that can safely express Shaftesbury's aestheticized enthusiasm.

*The Muse in The Moralists: Shaftesbury's Plastic Enthusiasm*

Shaftesbury's *The Moralists*, subtitled *A Philosophical Rhapsody, Being a Recital of Certain Conversations on Natural and Moral Subjects*, and previously titled *The Sociable Enthusiast*, deserves its intricate name with all of its facets and instantiations. In fact, as its first titling suggests, this is a work about enthusiasm and enthusiastic reform; its ultimate objective is

to establish a new kind of enthusiasm marked by sociability. Here, enthusiasm will acquire the ability both to function within, and aide the establishment of, an ideal society. Of course, the essay's later title proves as apt as its original and even delves deeper into the many components of Shaftesbury's attempt at reforming enthusiasm. The subtitle to Shaftesbury's essay is most telling. His desire to highlight the philosophical nature of his text, in fact, unearths several important aspects of the essay's style and structure. If Shaftesbury's main objective in this portion of *The Characteristics* is to revisit, and even revise, his former musings on the subject of enthusiasm, then he frames this project amidst a secondary one: to salvage the reputation of philosophy itself.

The essay both begins and ends with the subject of philosophy, at first bemoaning its place within the modern world and finally attempting to redefine philosophy's status in the context of modernity. In an era focused on "pleasure" and "entertainment," even politics, argues Philocles, has taken on a theatrical air. Yet philosophy, "immured" and inactive, relegated to the solitary scholarship of the "empiric" and the "pedantic sophist," has been kept from the glory of what Philocles calls the "public stage" (232).<sup>37</sup> Essentially, the problem with philosophy as Philocles describes it lies in its removal from the public sphere. As with enthusiasm, Shaftesbury's project, therefore, becomes to socialize philosophy. Moreover, Shaftesbury achieves this movement through a conscientious implementation of genre and style. It is the essay's dialogic form, its mixture of rhapsody and response, its intention of "reciting" and recording "conversation," which establishes both the philosophy of enthusiasm and the subject of philosophy itself as socially-regarded phenomena.

Dialogue in *The Moralists* relates to Shaftesbury's theories of art and a plastic nature, which he derives from the Cambridge Platonists. Shaftesbury's dialogic design, I will argue,

reflects and expounds his efforts at reforming enthusiasm by subjecting it to the laws of a critical aesthetics. The most important role of the dialogic mode in *The Moralists*, however, arises in Shaftesbury's most direct attempts at reforming enthusiasm by revising the rules of an ancient tradition of inspiration. In his revisionary invocations of the muse, an effort carried forth from his project in *The Letter*, Shaftesbury socializes enthusiasm and subjects it to aesthetic judgment. Here, the apostrophic mode of invocation gives way to a moment of dialogic address and exchange. As such, invocation becomes secularized and socialized for the purposes of the philosophic writer. These moments in the text in which dialogue serves to revise and modernize an ancient paradigm of enthusiasm also depend upon the formal constraints of the essay itself. A letter written in the dialogic form, *The Moralists* is both a public and private response. Philocles's narrative account recollects and records a past, philosophical conversation. Yet the essay complicates even this larger, formal framework as it incorporates various subgenres into the style of its narrative account. Staged dialogues, rhapsodic interludes, and dream visions all become interwoven into the essay's larger structure, marking Shaftesbury's attempts at reforming and socializing enthusiasm by subjecting it to the revisionary gestures of genre and style.

In *The Moralists*, philosophy is always enacted, as it were, on the "public stage," forever subjected to the aesthetic responses of a viewer. Of course, Shaftesbury's notion of a dialogic aesthetic moves beyond any definition of the aesthetic which has been perverted by the extremes of sophistry and empiricism,<sup>38</sup> two philosophical schools that Philocles immediately attacks at the outset of the dialogue. If, as the subtitle of Shaftesbury's essay suggests ("*A Philosophical Rhapsody, Being a Recital of Certain Conversations on Natural and Moral Subjects*"), this is a work about the topics of "nature" and "morality," then its author subtly seeks to intertwine these

two subjects, suggesting that in *The Moralists* we will encounter a *moral* philosophy of *aesthetics*.<sup>39</sup> This notion of a moral aesthetics for Shaftesbury sets aesthetic experience (an affective response often brought on by the contemplation of an artistic form) within a critical paradigm.

Shaftesbury's moral aesthetics, I will argue, is bound up in his illustration and implementation of the philosophical dialogue. If philosophy and enthusiasm are both related to aesthetic experience in Shaftesbury's essay, then the dialogic frame will situate the aesthetic within a rationalist paradigm by emphasizing the role of the viewer's (or listener's) judgment. In dialogue, philosophy is subjected to an oppositional balance, argues Shaftesbury, in which orator and interlocutor, through a process of exchange, may arrive at more accurate truths. The dialogue is constructed, as we will see, of oppositional elements; it is essentially a mixture held together by each party's questioning. The implication is that something of reason lies in the interstices, in this liminal state of existing in between two viewpoints. As an examination, the dialogue thus becomes an exposition of human judgment, a form which embodies Shaftesbury's principles of art as a rational-critical practice. Shaftesbury's aesthetic ideal in *The Moralists* will harp on this concept of the composition as the artistic or authorial coherence of oppositional parts into an harmonic whole.

It is thus the assumed separation of the moral and the aesthetic, which Shaftesbury seeks to remedy in order both to reform enthusiasm and salvage the reputation of philosophy. His solution lies in a redefinition of the aesthetic experience, in the formation of a rationalist-empiricism, which, I will argue, is bound up in his illustration and implementation of the philosophical dialogue. If philosophy and enthusiasm are both to become tied to a rhetoric of aesthetic experience over the course of Shaftesbury's essay, then the dialogic frame will situate

the aesthetic within a rationalist paradigm by emphasizing the role of the viewer's (or listener's) judgment. In dialogue, philosophy is subjected to an oppositional balance, argues Shaftesbury, in which orator and interlocutor, through a process of exchange, may arrive at more accurate truths. Philocles thus highlights the virtues of dialogue as such in his complaint of what is absent from the world of modern philosophy:

We need not wonder, therefore, that the sort of moral painting, by way of dialogue, is so much out of fashion and that we see no more of these philosophical portraitures nowadays. For where are the originals? . . . You know, too that in this academic philosophy I am to present you with, there is a certain way of questioning and doubting which no way suits the genius of our age. Men love to take party instantly. They cannot bear being kept in suspense. The examination torments them they want to be rid of it upon the easiest terms. It is as if men fancied themselves drowning whenever they dare trust to the current of reason. They seem hurrying away—they know not whither—and are ready to catch at the first twig. There they choose afterwards to hang, though ever so insecurely, rather than trust their strength to bear them above water. He who has got hold of an hypothesis, how slight soever, is satisfied. He can presently answer every objection and, with a few terms of art, give an account of everything without trouble.

What is perhaps most striking about Philocles's description of the dialogic mode is his metaphor of the "moral painting." First conceived of as a "theatrical display" and next as a "work of art," the subject of dialogic philosophy has already moved us deep into an aesthetic register from the very outset of Shaftesbury's essay. If the overarching theme of *The Moralists* (which is yet to present itself) unfolds as an evaluation and redefinition of the term "enthusiasm," then this topic is already construed as something, which will have more than theological repercussions. By couching his project to reform enthusiasm within a secondary project, i.e. the revival of the philosophical dialogue, Shaftesbury already begins to aestheticize enthusiasm by viewing it through the lens of a generic medium which he immediately defines as aesthetic by nature. If the dialogic mode highlights Shaftesbury's principles of aesthetic judgment by consistently pitting the interlocutor against the orator, then too as "painting" and "performance" the dialogue itself

becomes an aesthetic object. First, it embodies the performance of a rational exchange, and then offered up to the reader's elicited response, it undergoes a process of double judgment.

Shaftesbury's decision to employ a language of the aesthetic in order to describe the dialogue thus reveals his revisionary usage of an aesthetic terminology. Here, the aesthetic reaches beyond the merely empirical; publicized as reason set within the formal framework of a conversation, it comes to represent the rationally pleasing faculties of the mind.

The dialogue as a "portrait" or composition, is constructed, as we will see, of oppositional elements; it is essentially a mixture held together by each party's "questioning." As an "examination," the dialogue thus becomes an exposition of human judgment and thereby embodies Shaftesbury's principle of the rationalist aesthetic. For Philocles, "reason" here, or ratiocination, is linked to the oppositional mode of questioning, for it allows man to examine his varied options without precipitously "taking party." The implication is that something of reason lies in the interstices, in this liminal state of existing in between two viewpoints. The notion of the dialogue as an aesthetic object thus relates first and foremost to its ability to be seen (or heard) and then judged. However, Shaftesbury's aesthetic ideal in *The Moralists* will also harp on this concept of the composition as a kind of conglomeration, as the artistic or authorial coherence of oppositional parts into an harmonic whole.

The general trajectory of Theocles's and Philocles's conversations recorded in *The Moralists* will move from a defense of philosophy to the subject of religion, to the topics of a "plastic nature,"<sup>40</sup> to sociability and government, to miracles, the mind and the self, and finally to a redefinition of enthusiasm, which gets bound up in Shaftesbury's overarching treatment of beauty and form. In fact, all of these topics are fundamentally related to what Shaftesbury sees as the aspects and effects of enthusiasm. Moreover, all of these subtopics, whether social or

theological, are subjected to an aesthetic theory of form that seeks to depict universal design as a series of parts comprised into a larger whole. Here, the whole must always be experienced as greater, and more sublime, than its subsidiary components. This formal philosophy becomes Theocles's overriding argument in the essay and the major vision with which he converts Philocles from his singular skepticism. The "relation of parts," argues Theocles, the "consistency and uniformity of the universe" (273), are united by a "mutual dependency" (275) which produces "order, proportion, and organization." Most importantly, the "order of the moral world," Theocles asserts "equals that of natural" (277).

Theocles's insistence on aligning the social world with the natural one lies at the root of Shaftesbury's moral aesthetics. As though he were holding up a mirror between the realms of society and nature in which their formal resemblances might count for a metaphorical parallel, Theocles allows his enthusiasm to revolve around a principle of form in which part is always sacrificed to whole. Nature, that aesthetic object which mediates our experience of the divine, thus serves as a compositional paradigm for Shaftesbury's ideal society. In the opening section of the essay, when Philocles reiterates and accounts for many of Theocles major teachings to his friend Palemon, he draws this exact parallel:

Nor is the enjoyment of such a single beauty sufficient to satisfy such an aspiring soul. It seeks how to combine more beauties and by what coalition of these to form a beautiful society. It views communities, friendships, relations, duties and considers by what harmony of particular minds the general harmony is composed and the commonweal established... Still ardent in this pursuit (such is the love of order and perfection), it rests not here nor satisfies itself with the beauty of a part but, extending further its communicative bounty, seeks the good of all and affects the interest and prosperity of the whole. True to its native world and higher country, it is here it seeks order and perfection, wishing the best, and hoping still to find a just and wise administration . . . all hope of this were vain and idle if no universal mind presided... Thus Palemon, is the labour of your soul, and this its melancholy when, unsuccessfully pursuing the supreme beauty, it meets with darkening clouds which intercept its sight...(243-244).

As Michael Prince has argued, this is an aesthetic vision of a “plastic nature” here applied to a social paradigm.<sup>41</sup> A nearly ideal citizen, Palemon contemplates beauty as does the designing artist, fusing part into whole in order to construct the ideal body politic. Of course, Palemon is accused here of a melancholy that results from his ambitious pursuit. His error lies in his failure to recall, or recognize, the necessary presidency of a “universal mind.” Politician and artist thus act as mere second makers, a concept which Shaftesbury later discusses through Theocles’s theory of the “forming form,” an object *made* which likewise retains the ability *to make* but which is nonetheless both secondary and subject to the laws of its original maker (323). It is this very crucial presence of the universal mind, that first maker or divine, designing order, which allows Philocles to find fault with Palemon’s aesthetic displeasure. According to Theocles’s philosophy of the aesthetic (now adopted by Philocles), nature cannot err in her productions and reproductions. Error is left entirely up to man and his desiring faculties. Thus nature itself is not a mere composition of parts, but a interweaving of variances, a mixture of the high and the low, which actually affirms, and never disproves, the notion of an harmonic and greater whole. So asserts Philocles in response to Palemon’s melancholic air:

Much is alleged to show why nature errs and how she came thus impotent and erring from an unerring hand. But I deny she errs and, when she seems most ignorant or perverse in her productions, I assert her even then as wise and provident as in her goodliest works. For it is not then that men complain of the world’s order or abhor the face of things, when they see various interests mixed and interfering—natures subordinate or different kinds opposed one to another and in their different operations submitted the higher to the lower. It is on the contrary from this order of inferior and superior things that we admire the world’s beauty, founded thus on contraries, while from such various and disagreeing principles a universal concord is established (244).

This principle of an universal mixture accepts all species of objects, high and low, causing the dialogic form to echo what has come to be known as a major facet of eighteenth-century satire, but it here smacks of Philocles’s early expositions on the nature of dialogue. Thus, as I have

already begun to argue, this overriding aesthetic principle of mixture that guides the conversations of *The Moralists* extends itself not merely to a philosophy of aesthetics or to any ideal for the social, body politic but also to Shaftesbury's generic explorations in revisiting the philosophical dialogue.<sup>42</sup> Here parts and parties, "superior and inferior," are juxtaposed and interwoven so as to arrive at truth and beauty (which for Shaftesbury, we know, are practically one and the same). The end result is what we might call a "plastic dialogue," a production of a whole "founded on contraries," on "various and disagreeing principles" which leads to "universal concord."

Cassirer and others have rightly named the species of aesthetic philosophy that lies at the foundation of Theocles's enthusiasm a theory of "plastic nature," or in other words a relational concept of art and natural imitation that Shaftesbury derives from his predecessor Cudworth, one of the major figures in the school of the Cambridge Platonists. Moreover, it is this theory of a "plastic nature" which shapes Shaftesbury's reform of enthusiasm in *The Moralists* and even undergirds his forays into the practices of philosophical rhapsody and inspiration. Cassirer describes the concept of a plastic universe as that which dictates Shaftesbury's development of a theory of a disinterested aesthetics:

[The] contemplation of the order governing things gives rise to that religious feeling which elevates us far above all mere desire for happiness. This teaches us to desire the whole rather than the part, and to affirm the whole for its own sake, not for ours (186)...[Therefore] form is not merely something appended and external, but the reflection of the soul itself; and all external form can be called beautiful if only in so far as in this wise it reflects and evinces an inward form. Ethics, metaphysics, and religion are now subjected to this law of form. Shaftesbury rejects the religion of all those who have never experienced the beauty of the universe and are incapable of artistic enthusiasm (167).

A plastic theory of form allows Shaftesbury to develop both a secular method of experiencing the naturally divine and a rational method of aesthetic contemplation. The aesthetic here

becomes that which mediates between sense and reason; it is what distinguishes sense from mere sense, or desire. A disinterested aesthetics inhibits the danger of one's falling in love with something beyond the mere form; here we contemplate the form for the form's sake and take care never to mistake the noumenal for the phenomenal.<sup>43</sup> This is ultimately the lesson in aesthetic experience that Philocles must learn from Theocles:

'However,' said I 'all those who are deep in this romantic way are looked upon, you know, as people either plainly out of their wits or overrun with melancholy and enthusiasm. We always endeavor to recall them from these solitary places. And I must own that often, when I have found my fancy run this way, I have checked myself, not knowing what it was possessed me when I was passionately struck with objects of this kind.' 'No wonder,' replied he, 'if we are at a loss when we pursue the shadow for the substance. For, if we may trust to what our reasoning has taught us, whatever in nature is beautiful or charming is only the faint shadow of that first beauty. So that every real love depending on the mind and being only the contemplation of beauty, either as it really is in itself or as it appears imperfectly in the objects which strike the sense, how can the rational mind rest here or be satisfied with the absurd enjoyment which reaches the sense alone? . . . If you are already, replied he, such a proficient in this new love that you are sure never to admire the representative beauty except for the sake of the original nor aim at other enjoyment than of the rational kind, you may then be confident . . . (318).

Shaftesbury's critique and reform of enthusiasm, once again, points to the dangers of imitation when Theocles warns us against "pursuing the shadow for the substance." If Shaftesbury adds anything to Cudworth's theory of a plastic nature, then it is this emphasis on the intervention of judgment, the faculties of the rational mind, which allow man to distinguish between the original and its reproduction. Shaftesbury's borrowed theory of a plastic nature thus transports two seemingly paradoxical principles into a redefinition of the aesthetic experience. First, he describes nature, or a universal aesthetic, as reliant on an impulse towards indistinction. The natural, the artistic, and the literary object are all defined by their mixed natures, by their ability to subsume various, often juxtaposed, parts into a singular and harmonic whole. This is Shaftesbury's formalism, and yet the aesthetic experience must also rely on a principle of

distinction, on the viewer's ability to discern or judge between two apparently like objects. In this case, the audience, in an act of aesthetic spectatorship must never mistake part for whole, the imitation for the original, the second maker for god himself. Both author/orator and reader/interlocutor run this risk of error, this predisposition towards a purely sensory experience, which lacks the rational pleasures so necessary to Shaftesbury's revised definition of the aesthetic.

However, under the guidance of a disinterested, rationalist aesthetic, the "public stage" with all of its enthusiastic demonstrations, may guard itself against the potent dangers of theatrical mimesis. Most importantly, the first portion of the above quotation lays out the structural trajectory of Shaftesbury's overall project in *The Moralists*. Philocles's use of the pronoun "we" here alludes to the role of the skeptic, or the dialogue's main interlocutor, he who serves to check the enthusiast by limiting and restraining him, by interjecting and interrupting his rhapsodic ecstasies. Shaftesbury's revised aesthetics thus re-envision a public sphere in which affective experiences and artistic expressions, even enthusiasm, or inspiration itself, may be safely authored and safely viewed. Literature, theater, philosophy, and the arts, even the muse, once construed through this lens of a disinterested aesthetics, become both socially-realized and socially-effective phenomena.

The overall design of Shaftesbury's dialogue first comes forth in Philocles's metaphor of the "rousing musician." As Theocles slowly guides Philocles into conversation, the work arises as a tapestry of rapture and response, in which the interlocutor (Philocles) periodically interrupts and contradicts the main orator (Theocles). The effect of this dialogic design not only mirrors, as I have suggested, Shaftesbury's formal ideals for a naturally aesthetic object as an harmonious coherence of oppositional counterparts, but it also allows the affective transports of Theocles's

aesthetic enthusiasm to be checked within a social context. Enthusiasm thereby undergoes Shaftesbury's pattern of a double mediation as it first becomes aestheticized and then rationally restrained by the voice of a judging audience:

Here again he broke off, looking on me as if he expected I should speak, which when he found plainly I would not but continued still in a posture of musing thought, 'Why Philocles,' said he, with an air of wonder, 'what can this mean that you should suffer me thus to run on without the least interruption? Have you at once given over your scrupulous philosophy to let me range thus at pleasure through these aerial spaces and imaginary regions where my capricious fancy or easy faith has led me? I would have you to consider better and know, my Philocles, that I had never trusted myself with you in this vein of enthusiasm, had I not relied on you to govern it a little better.' 'I find, then' said I, rousing myself from my musing posture, 'you expect I should serve you in the same capacity as that musician, whom an ancient orator made use of at his elbow, to strike such moving notes as raised him when he was perceived to sink and calmed him again when his impetuous spirit was transported in too high a strain.' 'You imagine right,' replied Theocles, 'and therefore I am resolved not to go on till you have promised to pull me by the sleeve when I grow extravagant. . . . But if, instead of rising in my transports, I should grow flat and tiresome, what lyre or instrument would you employ to raise me? The danger, I told him, could hardly be supposed to lie on this hand. His vein was a plentiful one, and his enthusiasm in no likelihood of failing him. . . . with the advantage of the rural scene around us, his numbered prose, I thought, supplied the room of the best pastoral song (310).

Philocles's metaphor of the governing musician, who flapper-like rouses and lulls his aesthetic object with the singular strikes of a note, situates the aesthetic into an interesting paradigm. Here, the power of the audience member rises to that of the orator as the act of aesthetic contemplation becomes an act of "governance." The simile, however, never disrupts the balance of powers, since the audience member (who is also the dialogical partner or interlocutor) never entirely dictates nor dominates the spectacle. At first, Shaftesbury's metaphor of the governing musician may seem to liken Philocles's actions to those of a puppeteer who controls the bodily motions and effusions of his aesthetic object with the mere tug of a string. However, the spectacle here retains equal sway and power over his spectator. Before Theocles grants Philocles this "governing" role, the aesthetic situation remains lawless, recalling the dangers of a theatrical

scenario that predates Shaftesbury's redefinition of aesthetic experience. Twice, in contemplating his "muse" is Philocles described as inactively "musing." This is not the kind of musing inspiration, however, which Shaftesbury seeks to encourage. Rather, lulled and "prostrate" in his "musing posture," Philocles falls a prey to a class of mental inertia. Lost in a sensual wash, fixed as an unmoving object, he inactively contemplates the spectacle only to become one. Here, the aesthetic is momentarily relegated to an infectious viewership, which like that of Shaftesbury's panic renders aesthetic object and aesthetic onlooker one and the same through a merely visual exchange. As Theocles turns to Philocles with an air, or expression, of "wonder," we see a momentary mirroring between the rapturous and the enraptured.

Yet the similarity between the two subjects is a silent one; they only *appear* alike even though Theocles still maintains a kind of hierarchical power over his spectator. In order to remedy the situation, the orator must thus dispose his own gift of eloquence onto his viewer. With the metaphor of the musician, Philocles therefore attains the voicing powers of his equally musical companion who fills the room with "pastoral song." The dialogue thereby develops into a kind of aesthetic exchange in which subject and viewer, orator and interlocutor, maintain the power of language and judgment throughout their affective experiences of a sublime and philosophical rapture. In this manner, Shaftesbury activates aesthetic experience by depriving it of its passive associations. As Philocles is freed from his "musing posture," so too is Theocles, the enthusiast, liberated from his "easy faith." By rationally invigorating the aesthetic, Shaftesbury arrives at a social enthusiasm subject to the laws of the philosophical dialogue.<sup>44</sup>

In redefining the nature of aesthetic experience in *The Moralists*, so too does Shaftesbury thereby redefine enthusiasm through the process of its aestheticization. Philocles's "conversion" experience, alongside the dialogue's careful mediation between (and final merger of) the schools

of skepticism and enthusiasm, ultimately culminates in Shaftesbury's redefinition of the term "enthusiasm":

I should have done with good success had I been able in my poetic ecstasies or by any other efforts to have led you into some deep view of nature and the sovereign genius. We had then proved the force of divine beauty and formed in ourselves and object capable and worthy of real enjoyment. . . I must comfort myself the best I can and consider that all sound love and admiration is 'enthusiasm.' The transports of poets, the sublime of orators, the rapture of musicians, the high strains of the virtuosi-all mere enthusiasm! Even learning itself, the love of arts and curiosities, the spirit of travelers and adventurers, gallantry, war heroism-all, all enthusiasm! It is enough; I am content to be this new enthusiast in a way unknown to me before.' 'And I,' replied Theocles, 'am content you should call this love of ours enthusiasm, allowing it the privilege of its fellow passions. For is there a fair and plausible enthusiasm, a reasonable ecstasy and transport allowed to other subjects, such as architecture, painting, music, and shall it be exploded here? Are there senses by which those other graces and perfections are perceived and none by which this higher perfection and grace is comprehended? Is it so preposterous to bring that enthusiasm hither and transfer it from those secondary and scanty objects to this original comprehensive one? . . . What difficulty to be in any degree knowing! How long before a true taste is gained! For it is not instantly we acquire the sense by which these beauties are discoverable. Labour and pains are required and time to cultivate a natural genius ever so apt or forward (320).

If Theocles is a "natural"-philosophical enthusiast, who experiences the divine through the mediating mechanism of nature itself, then enthusiasm in *The Moralists* sheds its purely religious connotation. Anyone, suggests Philocles, who is a lover of art or nature can be this new kind of enthusiast. Yet Theocles takes care to refine Philocles's definition in another moment of what might be considered the interlocutor's attempt at restraining enthusiasm. However, here the roles are reversed, for Philocles's hasty redefinition becomes an act of unrestrained enthusiasm just as Theocles's response arises as an act of aesthetic judgment. All "sound love and admiration" Theocles has suggested is not enthusiasm; only that love, which belongs to the principles of Shaftesbury's disinterested aesthetics and to a revised vision of a plastic nature, counts as enthusiasm. Nevertheless, Theocles here affirms the possibility of an enthusiasm in which man experiences the divine original through its secondary forms with one other caveat. What, he asks,

allows us to arrive at such a vision of the universe and its objects? The answer lies in the principles of “taste”<sup>45</sup> whose “standards” for Shaftesbury are both pre-Humean and pre-Kantian in their association with “genius.”<sup>46</sup> Here, genius is acquired not naturally (i.e. by birth), or spontaneously, not, for example, in the manner of what Philocles has called the “vulgar enthusiast.” Rather, genius as a development of true taste arises from careful study, from experiential learning. “Cultivated” as an acute form of vision that allows us to contemplate beauty in its truest forms, taste here becomes a kind of creative art and practice in which the aesthete, whether he be author or viewer, through persistent “labor and pains” finally “discovers” the world with his new, discerning sight. Hence, Shaftesbury’s concept of “enlightenment” dovetails with his notion of “enthusiasm.” Only through the merger of these two world visions can artistic production, vision, and contemplation be preserved in the public world of religion, politics, and society that has come to define Shaftesbury’s era of “modernity.”

### *Prometheus, Muse*

In Shaftesbury’s *Letter*, his critique and reform of the cult of enthusiasm relies heavily on an examination of classical inspiration, on the poetic tradition of invoking a muse. Here, the figure of the muse must in some manner, or spirit, be preserved despite the fact that Shaftesbury reads classical invocation as anachronistic. Shaftesbury sees the importance of inspiration to the act of artful literary production, and, therefore, he sets about revising classical enthusiasm so as to create a type of “invocation” fit for the modern poet. Nor does Shaftesbury abandon this project in his later work, *The Moralists*. Even, and perhaps especially, in the socially-constructed, public atmosphere of the dialogue, Shaftesbury finds a place for his modern muse.

Twice in *The Moralists* Shaftesbury invokes a muse. However, here the presence of the muse takes on a seemingly more complex connotation than it does in Shaftesbury's *Letter*. In her two juxtaposed appearances in *The Moralists*, the muse arises dressed in both her ancient and modern forms. Therefore, it may seem difficult to unearth Shaftesbury's intentions concerning the role of the muse in *The Moralists* and how the figure of the muse fits into his newly-redefined cult of enthusiasm. In both of these instances of invocation, however, the muse retains her inspiring impact. Whether ancient or modern in form, whether sidelined, replaced, or central in her role, she serves as the source from which the dialogue flows and facilitates Philocles's ability to "record" his conversations even in moments when our narrator is reluctant to do so. Despite the presence of the ancient muses in this text, who are often associated with Theocles's enthusiasm (before it undergoes its skeptical revisions), I want to argue that Shaftesbury ultimately modernizes the muse in *The Moralists*, carving out a newly-socialized and secularly-aestheticized place for invocation within the context of modernity.

In *The Moralists*, Shaftesbury subtly privileges his modern versions of the muse over his ancient ones, expanding upon his earlier revisions of the muse in *The Characteristics* as he transports his notion of a plastic nature and a disinterested aesthetics into his use of invocation.<sup>47</sup> By revising the muse in this manner through an association with a theory of plastics, Shaftesbury lays out his expectations of the artist, or poet, in detail. This newly-modernized invocation places increased emphasis on the abilities of the author within the act of artistic production, undercutting the passivity, which Shaftesbury associates with an ancient paradigm of inspiration. Moreover, Shaftesbury couches his invocation in a secularized scenario, as the literary tropes of apostrophe and address, borrowed from ancient patterns of invocation, get transported into the framework of a social exchange. Here, of course, the socially-constructed invocations of *The*

*Moralists* take on an explicitly dialogical air in their attempts to elicit a response from the auditor. In *The Moralists*, this inspiring exchange moves beyond the realm of the imagination into a reified public that always situates invocation and inspiration, rant and rhapsody, oration and overture into the framework of the dialogue itself.

The first occasion in which Shaftesbury alludes to the muse in *The Moralists* is actually constructed as a mock invocation. This satirical impulse is a self-conscious one on Philocles's part as his intentions are to ridicule his friend Palemon's melancholic temper. Thus Philocles uses his satiric object as an opportunity to underline what he views as a mistaken assumption in Palemon's aesthetic philosophy. In Philocles's mock invocation, he rejects the assistance of the muses, invoking them only so as to toss them aside. Yet this explicit rejection of the muse only gives way to a rhapsodic interlude, which in every way formally resembles the aspects of a classical invocation:

...leaving you to answer for the success, I begin this inauspicious work, which my ill stars and you have assigned me and in which I hardly dare ask succour of the Muses, as poetical as I am obliged to show myself in this enterprise. [Section break] 'O wretched state of mankind! Hapless nature, thus to have erred in thy chief workmanship! Whence sprang this fatal weakness? What character or destiny shall we accuse? Or shall we mind the poets when they sing thy tragedy, Prometheus, who with thy stolen fire, mixed with vile clay, dost mock heaven's countenance and, in abusive likeness of the immortals, madest the compound, man, that wretched mortal, ill to himself and cause of ill to all? What say you, Palemon, to this rant, now upon second thoughts? Or have you forgot it was just in such a romantic strain that you broke out against humankind upon a day when everything looked pleasing...? (236).

If Philocles presents us with any reason for his rejection of the muse, it lies in the fact that he sees his own project as "ill-fated." He writes, he says, out of a sense of duty, in response to his "assignment." In fact, his "inspiration" stems from a social prompting as he "records" in response to his friend's solicitation. The nature of the work points to the fact that it is a dialogue constructed as a dialogic response, or rather it takes on the form of an epistolary dialogue whose

intentions are to instruct and demonstrate so as to repair the mistaken notions of Palemon's aesthetic assumptions. Philocles's work is, in and of itself, an act judgment, a rational reaction to the aesthetic and to one type of aesthetic philosophy. Palemon, in fact, becomes the real inspiration for *The Moralists*. If Philocles rejects the muses here out of a sentiment of reluctance, then he still continues in a rhapsodic, or "romantic," strain ("O wretched state of mankind..."), imitating the apostrophic gestures of an invocation only to ridicule his friend, Palemon. In a manner, therefore, Palemon serves as the mock muse here. Philocles's mock invocation, absent of a real, traditional, muse, thus adopts the voice of Palemon in its apostrophic rant. The dialogic moment which interrupts, and contains, Philocles's own mock enthusiasm ("What say you, Palemon, to this rant, now upon second thoughts?") elicits Palemon's response only to give way to a second question designed to divulge the author's satiric tone: "Or have you forgot it was just in such a romantic strain that you broke out against humankind upon a day when everything looked pleasing...?" The final remark is a rhetorical one, never actually answered within the supposedly dialogical genre of *The Moralists*. In fact, Palemon is forever kept silent throughout the essay, for he represents the work's epistolary frame. In this manner, Palemon becomes a mere figure in the text whose silent response resembles that of Somers's inevitable irresponsiveness in Shaftesbury's *Letter*. The only voice that Palemon can maintain here is always circumscribed by the author, subjected and subordinated to Philocles's own satirical usage. In his final question cited above, Philocles thus reveals his invocational rhapsody as an act of ventriloquy; the "romantic strain" which "breaks out against humankind" emerges as Palemon's voice, if not his true, exact words, in the mouth of Philocles. In the paradigm of the mock-invocation, the author thus maintains a kind of satirical dominance over his satiric object

and a certain agency within his text even as he deploys the literary devices of apostrophe and address.

Yet Shaftesbury's mock-invocation still maintains a marked reverence for the dialogic moment in that it replaces an actual invocation of the divine with the speaker's address to a human subject (Palemon). Even as Philocles rejects the muse, turning the invocation into an occasion for mockery, his satire relies on a more serious act of substitution. Beneath the humorous, judging tone of the text, lies the intended reformatory gesture of the satire,<sup>48</sup> what we might call Shaftesbury's truer revision of the muse. In fact, in rejecting the muse, Philocles reconstructs her in a disjunctive, or mixed, fashion. Although Palemon's voice infiltrates this invocation (passed down through the poet-satirist as the mock-language of a muse), Palemon himself is not directly apostrophized. Rather, Philocles, mocking Palemon through his ventriloquistic rant, addresses his subject head-on: "O wretched state of mankind! Hapless nature...!" As Philocles searches for his apostrophized subject, nature and mankind are not enough. Mocking Palemon's rant, he proclaims that he must find the source, the origin, of this nature, what has brought it to its current state. In searching for his apostrophized "muse," he finds, as it were, a scapegoat. Of course, such usage of the Prometheus myth as an apostrophized excuse for the ills of mankind merely mocks the sentiments of Palemon. However, this movement, also mockingly highlights the problem with an ancient paradigm of inspiration, which places both artistry and blame solely onto an externalized and divine source, rather than ascribing it to the aesthetic responsibilities of the author himself. Shaftesbury thus ridicules a classical paradigm of enthusiasm here in his representation of inspiration as a passive chain of language.<sup>49</sup>

Just as Philocles manipulates and adopts the voice of Palemon in order to enact his mock invocation, he jestingly derives his subject, his substitutive muse, Prometheus, from the words of other poets: “or shall we mind the poets when they sing thy tragedy, Prometheus...?” Yet Philocles never directly borrows the poets’ voice even if he adopts Prometheus as his inspiring subject. Here, Philocles reminds Palemon of an anachronistic tradition, which can only be poetic for those moderns who continue to read pagan poetry. Asking whether or not we should “mind” the poets when “they” sing, Philocles revises the invocation so as to address Prometheus directly. What begins as an invocation, an apostrophe tempted by ventriloquy, actually turns into a moment of direct address. In mocking Palemon, Philocles also mocks the ancient tradition of invocation. His mockingly “strained” search for a subject and a muse thus resolves itself in a parody of the borrowed speech act. The bad poet, or false enthusiast, Shaftesbury suggests must directly borrow the language of others (without molding it into a new order or intention) so as to sing his verse. The inadequate artist thereby abuses the act of inspiration as he never adds or builds upon an original design, never finds a voice of his own, but only passively adopts the words that come before him, entering into a chain of passive communication that highlights the problems of an unrevised, classical enthusiasm. Of course, Philocles himself need not engage in this second act of “borrowing.” His ventriloquistic adoption of Palemon’s voice only facilitates the satire; it is a means to an end, which indeed adds something to the borrowed voice. Nor does Philocles believe that nature is “hapless” or mankind necessarily “wretched.” Just as he adopts the language of Palemon, he rejects it, allowing irony to open up a space for a newer type of inspiration, one founded upon the direct address of Prometheus himself.

Ironically, Philocles’s truer muse is the same as Palemon’s; his paradigmatic figure for inspiration actually lies in his apostrophized subject, Prometheus. Yet Philocles’s real treatment

of Prometheus, once he has thrown off his tone of mockery, will emerge as entirely oppositional to Palemon's though both characters see Prometheus as the inspiring source for nature in her current state. For the next several pages of the dialogue, Philocles will accuse Palemon of ascribing to a misinterpretation of the Prometheus story. Palemon, Philocles argues, wants unjustly to clear the divine of having any hand or responsibility in the resulting scenario of the Prometheus myth (239). Only a true philosopher, argues Philocles, would realize that the gods must have had the ability to prevent Prometheus from achieving his fated goal; otherwise, they could no longer retain their nature of being gods, for in erring they would lose their characteristic omnipotence (240). This assertion constitutes the basis of the accusations that Philocles will form against Palemon's aesthetic philosophy and its failure to acknowledge the presiding presence of what he calls the "universal mind." The entire impetus for the remainder of the dialogue thus revolves around this figure of Prometheus, who for Shaftesbury embodies the theoretical principles of a plastic nature.

Prometheus first appears in *The Characteristics* in Shaftesbury's *Soliloquy*, where he is described as the ideal artist, or "second maker," who carries forth the necessary conceptions of design and artistic reproduction which conform to Cudworth's and Shaftesbury's philosophy of the plastic arts. In referring back to this earlier moment in *The Characteristics*, we thus come to see that beneath the satire of Shaftesbury's mock-invocation, lies a truer, revisionary, invocation, an allusion to the essay's actual source of inspiration. Here, Prometheus as muse serves as a figure for all of the concepts of design implemented and discussed throughout *The Moralists*. Moreover, as Shaftesbury's modern muse, Prometheus embodies the characteristic nature of one who will encompass and enact the necessary steps to Shaftesbury's enthusiastic reform. Through

the figure of a modern Prometheus, enthusiasm will become fit for the artistic productions of the exemplary modern author:

I must confess there is hardly anywhere to be found a more insipid race of mortals than those whom we moderns are contented to call poets for having attained the chiming faculty of a language with an injudicious random use of wit and fancy. But for the man who truly and in a just sense deserves the name of poet, and who as a real master or architect in the kind can describe both men and manners and give to an action its just body and proportions, he will be found, if I mistake not, a very different creature. Such a poet is indeed a second Maker, a just Prometheus under Jove. Like that sovereign artist or universal plastic nature, he forms a whole, coherent and proportioned in itself, with due subjection and subordinary of constituent parts. He notes the boundaries of the passions and knows their exact tones and measures, by which he justly represents them, marks the sublime of sentiments and action and distinguishes the beautiful from the deformed, the amiable from the odious. The moral artist who can thus imitate the Creator and is thus knowing in the inward form and structure of his fellow creature, will hardly, I presume, be found unknowing in himself or at a loss in those numbers which make the harmony of the mind. For knavery is mere dissonance and disproportion (93).

Shaftesbury's raillery here happens upon a truly Augustan subject. His notion of the order-less author, whose undesigning verse conveys that "chiming faculty of a language with an injudicious random use of wit and fancy," resembles the rhetoric of a Popean tirade against the hack-poet. Notably, Shaftesbury's hack, like that of Pope's *Dunciad*, disobeys the laws of order; his language follows the sins of "dissonance and disproportion." Most importantly, the poet who abuses "wit" and "fancy" by applying it in a "random" fashion is accused of an immoral aesthetics. (Here, Shaftesbury seems to equate the imagination with the aesthetic faculties of wit, which unites two distinct objects together).<sup>50</sup> Moreover, the lack of artistry and design, the flaw of "randomness" thus has moral, as well as aesthetic repercussions. This assertion is not surprising once we have come to understand Shaftesbury's application of a moral aesthetics. However, here Shaftesbury adds something to his assertions in *The Moralists*. Like the enthusiast, the artist must adhere to a stringent moral code of rationality. However, Shaftesbury

suggests that to create without design is perhaps worse than an act of contemplating without reason, for the undesigning creator had better not create at all.

Once again, Shaftesbury compares the true poet to the original, divine maker. Moreover, a creation of the divine sort obeys two fundamental laws. The first entails a definition of “proportion” in which the part is always subordinated to the whole. In this manner, Shaftesbury’s metaphor of the poet as an architect presides over his illustration of a plastic art. The second aspect of a “divinely” inspired creation considers the limits of the aesthetic, for here the artist as second maker “notes the boundaries of the passions and knows their exact tones and measures by which he justly represents them, marks the sublime of sentiments and action and distinguishes the beautiful from the deformed, the amiable from the odious.” Notably, Shaftesbury’s illustration of the moral, or just, artist as poet models itself around a principle of judgment. The true poet is able to “distinguish” between the nature of two forms. With this capacity alone can he then “mark” the sublime and recognize the “limits” of the passions. Judgment, the defining factor in Shaftesbury’s moral aesthetics, thus once again becomes the crowning faculty of the designing poet. As he unites part to part in order to construct architecturally the whole of his verse, his design marks those divisions that make the poetic parts cohere along with the greater universal divisions, which always separate man from god, the second maker from his original one. Finally, it is this principle of judgment that endows the great poet with the faculties of sympathy; he knows “the inward form and structure of his fellow creature.” Thus the artist moulds the external form by knowing the inward one; his vision like that of Theocles’s model enthusiast is refined and elite in its nature. The artist’s ability to know, or judge, others indicates his own self-knowledge or judgment. Thus Shaftesbury’s description of the “just Prometheus” reveals his ideals for the artist and a theory of plastic art. As Prometheus takes on this symbolic

status in *The Characteristics*, it is no surprise that Philocles bases his revision of the invocation on a direct address to Prometheus himself, to a figurative emblem for Shaftesbury's ideal artist. Thus the artist/author replaces the classical muse in Shaftesbury's modern invocation.

Philocles's second appeal to the muse in *The Moralists* is, however, much different in nature from his first. Here, Philocles leaves aside the satiric attempt at mock invocation to arrive at a more serious exploration of what he sees as an instance of inspiration comparable to the nature of a classical enthusiasm. The appearance of the muses here transpires from both an act of association and a dreamlike scenario. In this context, Philocles appears restored to a faith in the classical muses; enthusiasm here is neither mocked nor erased in its ancient form. Yet the language that Philocles uses to describe this act of inspiration elicits a certain skepticism on the part of the careful reader. Shaftesbury suggests that Philocles only "fancies" his successful trial at invoking the "historical muse"; thus his moment of inspiration actually derives from aesthetic and social sources. It is the power of the imagination which achieves inspiration for Philocles. Once again, Shaftesbury thereby hints at the possibility of a secular enthusiasm, defined by its associations with the public and aesthetic spheres:

Your conversation, Palemon, which had hitherto supported me was at an end. I was now alone, confined to my closet, obliged to meditate by myself and reduced to the hard circumstances of an author and historian in the most difficult subject. But here, methought, propitious Heaven in some manner assisted me. For if dreams were, as Homer teaches, sent from the throne of Jove, I might conclude I had a favourable one of the true sort towards the morning light, which as I recollected myself, gave me a clear and perfect idea of what I desired so earnestly to bring back to my memory. I found myself transported to a distant country, which presented a pompous rural scene. It was a mountain not far from the sea, its brow adorned with ancient wood and its foot a river and well-inhabited plain, beyond which the sea appearing, closed the prospect. No sooner had I considered the place than I discerned it to be the very same where I had talked with Theocles the second day I was with him in the country. I looked about to see if I could find my friend and, calling 'Theocles,' I awoke. But so powerful was my impression of the dream and so perfect the idea raised in me of the person, words, and manner of my friend that I could now fancy myself philosophically inspired, as

that Roman sage by his Egeria, and invited on this occasion to try my historical muse. For justly might I hope for such assistance in behalf of Theocles, who so loved the Muses, and was, I thought, no less beloved by them (248).

The true source of Philocles's inspiration is filtered here through the ambiguous language of his enthusiasm, which only adds an air of mystery to Philocles's uncertain experience of the "muse." Most important is the atmosphere, or context, that produces this moment of transport: a scenario, which clues us into what may transpire from Philocles's "meditation." "Alone," "confined," "by himself," Philocles initiates his act of writing and reflection. We should already become skeptical of Philocles's enthusiasm here on the grounds that it is deprived of its formerly social context. However, this is a solitude that follows and reflects upon a social scenario.

Philocles's inspiration transpires from an act of dreaming, which from Medieval to early modern literature has been associated with experiences of prophesy. Through the dream, Philocles "recollects" himself. Revivifying his memory thus becomes a process of reconstruction, as though, like the plastic artist, Philocles must reunite the parts of his mental reception in order to assemble them, once again, into the perfectly unified whole of his "idea." Of course, this "idea" is also an imitation of the truest, moral kind, one secondary to its original, for it becomes a mere reflection of a real moment in time when Philocles and Theocles were actually together in the rural scene that Philocles describes. This process of recording as recollection and reflection thus takes on a pre-Romantic connotation. Here, writing stems from those temporal imprints, or "impressions," which fasten to the mind in moments of sublimity "recollected in tranquility." However, Philocles's language always highlights the secondary, subordinate, nature of this occasion in which impression is remembered, thereby dampening the Romantic preeminence of the passage. Notably, the conditions of Philocles's inspiration are always conveyed in relative terms of possibility. "*Methought* propitious heaven in some manner

assisted me,” writes Philocles. Philocles “*might* hope” for the assistance of the muses; he “*might* conclude” he had a prophetic dream. The uncertainty of his assertions seem to label Philocles’s experience a possible enthusiasm. However, I want to argue that Shaftesbury never actually suggests here that the effects of Philocles’s inspiration are unreal. Rather, it is the *source* of Philocles’s inspiration that lacks objective certainty.

Philocles “fancies himself philosophically inspired,” “hoping” to have conjured the assistance of the muses who were “so beloved by Theocles.” What is certain, or absolute, here is not the existence of the muse in her classical form, but rather it is the love of Theocles. Here, inspiration transpires, passes down, from the “perfect idea raised in” Philocles of his “friend.” An “idea” of friendship, the *imagined* presence of another, is what conjures up this feeling and effect of inspiration for Philocles, a situation which echoes the opening of Shaftesbury’s *Letter*. Thus enthusiasm, as a social feeling of comraderie conjured up in solitude, as the desired presence or audience of another, once again, derives from an aesthetic source and from an aestheticized scenario. As Philocles in his dream, “considers” the place of his natural surroundings, now recollected in the remembrances of his subconscious mind, he “imagines” inspiration. Fancy and nature together thus become the aesthetic sources, and the aestheticizing framework, for enthusiasm. Even in the context of his solitude, Philocles creates a social and aesthetic scenario for inspiration (here doubly publicized through the generic medium Shaftesbury’s dialogue). Moreover, this instance of aestheticized enthusiasm, ensconced in the conditional language of Philocles’s skepticism, elicits the judgment of his reader as Philocles never with certainty labels this a definitive act of inspiration.

What emerges from Shaftesbury’s citation of the muse on these two occasions in *The Moralists*, is a new kind of enthusiasm, which carries forth the creative sentiments of a classical

inspiration without ever exactly mirroring it in its original nature and structure. Here, enthusiasm is both secularized and subjected to Shaftesbury's philosophy of a critical, rational, and moral aesthetics. Thereby, it is deprived of its formerly passive nature by restoring the author to the power of his aesthetic agency and grounding the occasion for enthusiasm within a necessarily social paradigm. Imagined and actualized, the presence of an audience fuels the author with an increased power of rhetoric. At times, this audience is only rhetorically addressed, or musingly apostrophized, leaving the addressee in a state of silent irresponsiveness. In the case of *The Letter*, the result of this semi-dialogical conception of enthusiasm stems from the limitations of the genre itself, and, therefore, Shaftesbury seeks to remedy this aesthetic scenario with the reinstatement of the philosophical dialogue in his later exposition on enthusiasm, *The Moralists*. Here too the principles of judgment, which underlie Shaftesbury's efforts at configuring enthusiasm into the limitations of a critically aesthetic paradigm, extend beyond the governing laws of authorial self-conception and readerly response. In *The Moralists*, judgment is not simply a mere critical faculty of evaluation, but it becomes linked to the principles of design itself. Defined as a property of distinction, judgment allows author and reader, orator and interlocutor, to set and see affective limitations. Moreover, it comes to redefine this act of marking limits as a creative faculty of design and order, which effectively relies on the artist's capacity to bind disparate objects together. Thus the importance of judgment to aesthetics for Shaftesbury becomes doubly significant as it creates unity in division both within a social context and an artistically creative paradigm. As Shaftesbury considers enthusiasm in theoretical light of a plastic art and a critical aesthetics, he happens upon a newer muse. Like Shaftesbury's just Prometheus, this modern muse, subjected to the dialogue's laws of aesthetic judgment, will bring

about an era of enlightenment, an awakening of social reform governed by the laws of artistic genius.

“Eyes that Must Eclipse”: Vain Enthusiasm in Pope’s *The Rape of the Lock*

Men Would be Angels, Angels would be Gods.  
Aspiring to be Gods, if Angels fell,  
Aspiring to be Angels, Men rebel;  
And who but wishes to invert the laws  
Of ORDER, sins against the’ Eternal Cause

-*Essay on Man*, ll. 126-130

Pope’s main predicament with the problem of enthusiasm as it met with the social, political, and religious unrest of the Restoration era had to do with its potential to disrupt what he saw as a delicate and universal *order*. The “order of things,” natural or artificial, would give design to everything that mattered within Pope’s moral repertoire: the hierarchy of the great chain of being (*The Essay on Man*), the composition of the natural world, and the fragile balance of opposition necessary to poetic language. If as Foucault argues, the very fabric of classical thought lies in its assumption of an implicit order, a belief which is already subverted by its own “presentiment” of a complicit disorder that cannot be mastered, then we might regard Pope as one such classical modern, who shared in the Foucauldian project of “reconstituting the lost unity of language.”<sup>51</sup> It might come as no surprise, therefore, that Pope like his contemporaries, Swift and Shaftesbury, had a moral investment in the issue of enthusiasm although the topic of enthusiasm has been discussed but rarely within the context of Pope criticism. Yet Pope’s literary involvement with the issue of enthusiasm was different from that of his contemporaries—and not simply because of his marginal status as a Roman Catholic. Pope saw the problem of

enthusiasm as one which needed reform in that it was crucial to the survival of a sublime aesthetics and the rhetorical power of poetic verse. Inspiration, after all, had classically been linked to the very inception of language itself. Where then would poetry be without inspiration?

Perhaps for this very reason, Pope never discarded the muse from his poetics. She remained a necessary, and yet admittedly dangerous, tool for early eighteenth-century poetic composition. As Pope writes in his *Essay on Man*, the “Muse now stoops, now ascends / To Man’s low passions, or their glorious ends” (ll. 375-376). In modern poetry, the muse was subject to the laws of man, to his whims, his potentials, his successes and failures. Thus the modern muse needed revision in order to preserve universal order along with the moral and aesthetic potential of poetry itself. In the wake of Milton, in the precarious atmosphere of an emergent modernity, Pope, like his predecessor, prophesied of a momentous chaos,<sup>52</sup> of a world that could only arise “if Angels fell.”

For Pope, the problem of enthusiasm was an issue of indistinction, a dull misconception that confused aspiration for inspiration.<sup>53</sup> Thus Pope’s attempt at constructing a new, modern muse became a kind of poetic Restoration, a revision of enthusiasm that would actually bring order back into the poetic form. Language and poetry, subject to the laws of Pope’s newly modern inspiration would derive their power from an aesthetic source, which was no longer divine as it had been in classical poetics. Moreover, Pope’s poetics, following the rules of Augustan satire that arose under the influence of thinkers such as Locke, Milton, and Longinus (recently translated by Boileau) would rely on reason’s faculties of judgment alongside the sublime power of poetic rhetoric in order to restore order to poetic verse. In Pope’s delicate language of parts and counterparts, everything held together in dialogic exchange; words cohered

in an order of opposition just as author and reader, orator and auditor, maintained a similarly fragile correspondence necessary to literary reception and social wellbeing.

The following two chapters will examine four moments in Pope's poetic oeuvre, which collectively synthesize his modernization of inspiration. In each of these modern redactions of enthusiasm, taken from Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, his *Essay on Man*, and his two mock epics, *The Rape of the Lock* and *The Dunciad*, Pope remodels invocation along the lines of poetic apostrophe and address. Pope's modern invocations reveal an attempt to revise the sources of poetic composition, to envision a secular poetics dependent upon the constraints of a critical aesthetics. What Pope borrows from the invocations of the classical epic is a need for a muse, for some kind of inspiration, which can constitute the poetic center of his work. The difference between the invocation of the mock epic and the epic, of course, lies in the fact that Pope's muse is a secular one. Moreover, this movement toward a modern muse raises issues of poetic authority and begins to redefine enthusiasm's relationship to the formal dimensions of poetry. The poet, no longer a conduit for divine communication, gains agency over his poem and "inspires" a new kind of enthusiastic readership steeped in the work of critical contemplation.

In this chapter, I will begin by exploring Pope's employment of the muse in his poem, *The Rape of the Lock*, in order to argue that Pope's mock epic exposes the dangers of divine inspiration while still allowing a space for invocation and inspiration within the context of his modern poetry. Moreover, this chapter will argue for the implications of enthusiastic expressiveness in Pope's poem, claiming that Pope's *Rape* should be seen as a satire on enthusiasm. In reading *The Rape* as a critique of enthusiasm, this chapter will begin to show how Pope's attention to genre and form throughout his poetic oeuvre was shaped in part by his concerns about the enthusiasms of his day. My reading of *The Rape* will engage with the poem's

mock-epic format in order to show how Pope both warns his readers of the dangers of enthusiasm and demonstrates its potential reform. Part of Pope's poetic critique relies on an implicit attempt to reform enthusiasm's relationship to the social sphere, an argument which arises throughout Pope's earlier and later attempts at the mock epic in his constant critiques of spectacle, panic, and vain forms of priestcraft and worship. Thus *The Rape* argues against the dangers of asocial forms of socialization by satirizing enthusiasm as it remodels invocation along the lines of poetic address, calling for a new, modern body of critical readership.

In his letter to Arabella Fermor, printed as a preface to *The Rape of the Lock*, Pope promises that his poem will begin in vision and end in transformation: "As to the following Canto's, all of the passages are as Fabulous, as the Vision at the Beginning, or the Transformation at the End."<sup>54</sup> On the simplest level, Pope's *Rape of the Lock* tells the story of a physical violation. Most literally, the "rape" in the poem is an act of severance; Belinda's lock in a moment of feminine castration is split in twain when her admirer the Baron steels the lady's hair in lieu of Belinda herself. *The Rape of the Lock* appears to emphasize the physical, in the snipping of the lock, but it also moves beyond the object world into a transcendent space unseen by the average eye. From the opening promise of a fabulous vision to the questionable transformation of the lock into a star that can only be seen "by none but quick Poetic eyes," Pope's poem is framed by bookend allusions to visionary transformation. The *Rape of the Lock*, Pope suggests, displays a "fabulous," false, or illusory composition; it is an object of awe, a spectacle to be seen or read, but not to be trusted. Moreover, Pope's vision and transformation, which frame the poem, share something in common; both arise out of a questionable invocation of the muse, and both take place in the sphere of heavenly bodies. Throughout the poem, Belinda

herself can be seen as “marking” the dangers of heavenly ambition, of poetic and prophetic frenzy, and of imagined inspiration. In contrast to the figure of the poet, Belinda enters the poem as a symbol for the false enthusiast whom Pope associates with obscured perception: “Sol thro’ white Curtains shot a tim’rous Ray, / And op’d those Eyes that must eclipse the Day” (Canto I, ll. 1-14). The poem begins with an eclipse, the rising sun circumscribed by Belinda’s darkening eyes.<sup>55</sup> Belinda’s “eyes that must eclipse,” unlike the “poetic eyes” at the poem’s close, mark the dangers of a vain enthusiasm, a phenomenon that promotes false perceptions.

For decades, critics have read *The Rape of the Lock* along feminist-ideological lines, exploring the poem’s depictions of women, its engagements with a colonial discourse and commodity fetishism.<sup>56</sup> Recent criticism of *The Rape* has departed from these readings and has begun to engage with some of the religious implications of the poem.<sup>57</sup> Pope’s Catholicism, the irenic nature of his mock epic, continuing discussions of Pope’s epic machinery, the status of the bible as a commodity fetish are all issues that have suddenly moved to the critical foreground. My argument extends these perspectives to the wider context of enthusiasm; I will claim that the poem should be seen as a satire on enthusiasm while arguing that the poem’s treatment of enthusiasm enables us to understand *The Rape of the Lock* as a key text in a vital contemporary debate about the nature and implications of enthusiastic inspiration.

As I have illustrated in my introductory chapter, “enthusiasm” has a complex significance and set of definitions in Pope’s time. The first pointed to a classical paradigm of enthusiasm as an act of divine possession in which the poet would become a passive vessel for inspiration. Enthusiasm in its ancient context, as Frederick Beiser notes, was a real phenomenon, or at least regarded as such.<sup>58</sup> Derived from the Greek *enthusiasmos*, it implied “divine inspiration,” which Plato would place in the aesthetic sphere of poetry. In this context, enthusiasm had religious

connotations in its association with the Dionysian rites; the enthusiast in drinking the Dionysian wine would have an ecstatic experience and become divinely *inspired*.

However, the predominant usage of the term “enthusiasm” in the modern period carried with it decidedly negative connotations. To return to Johnson’s definition of enthusiasm in his *Dictionary*, enthusiasm implied: “a vain belief of private revelation; a vain confidence of divine favour or communication.” Enthusiasm for Johnson was implicitly linked to vanity, which takes on a double meaning here as both “false or deluded” and (in the Ecclesiastical sense of the word) “empty, immaterial, or insubstantial.” Johnson thus puns on enthusiasm’s literal association with the spiritual in also characterizing it as “vain,” or untrue. His evocation of vanity is thus directly connected with the predominant usage of the term “enthusiasm” in Pope’s Augustan circle.

Many critics have emphasized Pope’s engagement with the issue of vanity, a term which of course takes on a host of meanings within Pope’s poetic oeuvre. For one, vanity links to Pope’s moral and philosophical musings on self-love, which he sees as both detrimental and necessary to psychological and social wellbeing.<sup>59</sup> On another level, of course, vanity becomes a part of the Popean aesthetic; it is related to Pope’s biblical rhetoric of apocalypse (as in *The Dunciad*) and to his persistent poetic tirade against the advent of credit. Vanity, as it pertains to Pope’s usage of imagery and symbolism, thus serves as another term for insubstantiality. This definition of vanity recalls the Ecclesiastical associations of the term in which vanity signifies nothingness, airiness, or insubstantiality, marking a biblical return to formlessness. In this manner, Pope persistently represents pride, a form of vanity, as insubstantiality:

Of all the Causes which conspire to blind  
Man’s erring Judgment, and misguide the Mind,  
What the weak Head with strongest Byass rules,  
Is Pride, the never-failing Vice of Fools ...  
For as in Bodies, thus in Souls, we find  
What wants in Blood and Spirits, swell’d with Wind;

Pride, where Wit fails, steps in to our Defence  
And fills up all the mighty Void of Sense (Essay on Criticism, ll. 201-210).

Pride for Pope thus becomes an agent of blindness and formlessness. The corrupt destroyer of reason, perspective, and sense, it perverts the socially amenable potentials of self-love through its misguided perception of the self, leaving the reasoning faculties of the mind subject to the “void,” a vessel of air.

Yet another aspect of Johnson’s definition points to enthusiasm’s negative associations in Augustan satire. As I have argued in my introduction, modern enthusiasm is distinguished from its ancient derivative through its association with *private*, concealed revelation or worship. Johnson’s use of the word “communication” in this context thus carries a somewhat ironic implication, for the unsociable enthusiast in believing he was communicating with God, would fail to communicate with his fellow beings. He would arise as a case of exception, an outlier in the social sphere whose disease would prevent him from functioning within society. The problem with classical enthusiasm for the modern writer thus pointed to a passive form of communication that both deprived literary language of its authorial agency and corrupted the necessarily social potentials of the public sphere, which writers such as Swift and Pope would link to our critical capacities of judgment.

Another definition of enthusiasm, however, had begun to operate within Pope’s time, this one seeking to remedy the social problems that Johnson and others had begun to recognize within classical patterns of inspiration. Following upon the influential contributions of aesthetic philosophers like the Third Earl of Shaftesbury,<sup>60</sup> enthusiasm, I have argued, came to be understood as a secular phenomenon, linked to the rise of a critical aesthetics that depended equally upon the author’s rhetorical powers and the critic’s faculties of judgment. This new

enthusiasm is especially relevant to Pope, whose satiric project, different from Swift's in *The Tale of a Tub*, is bound up with this very attempt to imagine what I call a "modern muse."

Following Alvin Kernan's notion of the reparative nature of satire, I want to show that Pope's treatment of enthusiasm in his use of the mock epic does not merely entail a one-dimensional critique.<sup>61</sup> Although Pope satirizes the idea of "vain enthusiasm" in *The Rape*, his mock-epic format creates a window of opportunity in which he may warn his readers of the dangers of one kind of enthusiasm and at the same time demonstrate its potential for reform. In the end, the poem advocates a new, secular version of "enthusiasm" that redistributes the power of poetic inspiration, from the divine to the aesthetic abilities and the rhetorical powers of the poet himself. In this sense, the new enthusiasm paves the way for the invention of the modern author.

Critics have consistently described Pope's invocation of the muse at the outset of the poem as an intentionally constructed failure:

What dire Offence from am'rous Causes springs  
What mighty Contests rise from trivial Things,  
I sing—This verse to Caryll, Muse! Is due;  
This ev'n Belinda may vouchsafe to view:  
Slight is the Subject, but not so the Praise,  
If She inspire, and He approve my Lays (Canto I, ll. 1-6).

Pope's use of the word "muse," Ellen Pollak argues, only highlights the mock-invocation as an act of substitution in which Belinda replaces the prototypical figure for poetic inspiration.<sup>62</sup> It is important to note, however, that Belinda as a substitutive muse depends equally on the figure of John Caryll, Pope's friend to whom this verse "is due." Critics have long attributed the revisionary opening of Pope's *Rape* to a sermon of Caryll's. As Howard Weinbrot demonstrates, Pope's intentions, prompted by Caryll, are irenic ones, designed to breach the gap that had arisen

between two noble, Catholic families.<sup>63</sup> However, most readers of Pope's poem have read these lines to Caryll as a mere act of dedication. Instead, I would like to argue that Pope's gesture here implicitly asserts the need for a new kind of revised muse, with a revised relationship to the reading subject. Pope's allusion to Caryll at the start of the poem can be seen in light of the poet's philosophies on the crucial role that judgment plays in modern acts of invocation and inspiration. If Belinda serves as mock muse here, who inspires the poet's verse, then the figure of Caryll provides Pope's satire with a serious undertone, since he must morally approve it. More broadly, if Belinda is mocked as a vain substitute for the divine, then Pope mocks the figure of the divine muse itself. Yet Caryll implicitly succeeds Belinda in offering the possibility for a reformed version of poetic inspiration. In this modern invocation, Caryll, as the admirable, secular, human subject, stands for the reader's faculty of judgment, which will create a safer space for inspiration and become necessary to its proper public reception. Once the poem revises the gesture towards a metaphysical muse, invoking not divinity but friend, it loses its status as divine object and as such becomes secularized, appropriate even for vain Belinda's consumption. On another level, of course, the poet's words, "I sing," confirm his own role of poetic inspiration and agency, even in this mock-epic revision. Thus the work in its opening appeal to the muse sets up a triangular relationship between mock muse, critic, and poet, a relationship that structures the approach to enthusiasm embodied throughout the poem.

Moreover, as Pope grounds *The Rape of the Lock* in a rhetoric of enthusiasm and vanity, its inspiration and its satiric object become one and the same. The purpose of the poem, though its subject is not divine but only "slight," is a vain one: to acquire "praise." Thus *The Rape*, in its connection to vanity, both refutes enthusiasm as it elevates and employs it. Inspiration and aspiration are no longer divine here; they are strictly poetic. Poet, poem, and coquette alike all

share the same vice. To the extent that Pope's mock epic seeks to defend and repair Catholicism, as critics such as Weinbrot and Hernandez have suggested, then it also seeks to reform poetry by preserving it from the dangers of a "vain enthusiasm." Indeed, these dangers might arise in poetry as well as in religion, since, as Patricia Bruckmann has suggested, the Roman church was thought to have naturally suffered from enthusiasm in its subjection to religious isolationism. Enthusiasm in the context of the mock epic must, therefore, become for Pope a real, not an imagined, poetic device, which in its secular form promotes social exchange as opposed to divine distortion or impassioned, religious frenzy.

Following this complex, mock invocation is the dream with which Ariel inspires Belinda (Canto I, ll. 19-120). On one level, we might read this passage as the representation of an act of vain enthusiasm. The presence of the sylph, introduced as part of the unseen epic machinery of Pope's poem, only ultimately emphasizes the fact that the divine forces of the mock epic, unlike those of the traditional epic, no longer have the power to rule the work with their inspiring sublimity. Despite their poetic import, the sylphs are impotent. In the end, their powers fail to serve their intentions. Here, Ariel whispers a dream into Belinda's passive, slumbering ear. As the sun rises, Belinda fails to awake at the usual hour: "Belinda still her downy Pillow prest/ Her guardian Sylph prolong'd the balmy rest. / Twas he had summon'd to her silent Bed/ The Morning Dream that hover'd o'er her Head/ ...Seem'd to her Ear his winning Lips to lay, / And thus in whispers said, or seem'd to say" (Canto 1, ll. 19-22)." We might read the dream passage that follows as the representation of an act of vain enthusiasm. The dream is a vision, albeit an insubstantial one, which seeks to inform Belinda of the existence and nature of her sylphic guardians. Yet the dream fails to work its power. As Belinda awakes to see her Billet-doux, the "vision vanishes" from her "head" (Canto I, l. 120); divine inspiration no longer serves, and thus

the sylphs, like Belinda as muse, indicate the impotency of an older, divine enthusiasm in the modern context of Pope's poem.

Belinda's dream vision is closely related to Pope's critique of prophesy. The visionary dimensions of *The Rape* claim to represent the unseen,<sup>64</sup> and thus Pope's reference to prophesy in these contexts purportedly allows one to see what others cannot see. But by showing Belinda's failure to hear the words of prophecy, Pope endows the poet alone with prophetic vision. By way of the poet, the reader is exposed to Belinda's forgotten dream, and thus we come to know the role that the sylphs play in the poem, one which hints at the powers of enthusiasm. Ariel's intentions in bestowing the dream are to nourish Belinda's vanity by suggesting that her ability to access the knowledge of the sylphs is rarified<sup>65</sup>:

...thy own Importance know,  
Nor bound thy narrow Views to Things below.  
Some secret Truths from Learned Pride conceal'd,  
To Maids alone and Children are reveal'd:  
What tho' no Credit doubting Wits may give?  
The Fair and Innocent shall still believe (Canto I, ll. 35-40).

Ironically, those who are let into this secret knowledge of the otherworldly are also the ones who do not "know." Thus Pope satirically labels Belinda as "vain and erudite" in distinguishing her from the "prideful learned" whose vanity blinds them to the secret "truth" of Ariel's race. Belinda's "fantastick and fabulous" vision depends on an "innocent" belief, on a lack of skepticism, which suggests that she is a kind of enthusiast whose lack of necessary doubt allows her to believe implicitly without reason or judgment. The line "What tho' no Credit doubting Wits may give" asserts that the "doubting wits" give no credit to the existence of a world of unseen beings; their skepticism, according to Ariel, blinds them to a divine reality that might otherwise be seen. Of course, Pope's irony emerges in his strategic pairing of the words "pride" and "credit." It is not, in fact, the wits who exhibit "pride" here, but rather the innocent who in

failing to confine “their views to things below” acquire the false assumption of an otherworldly presence. This assumption is only qualified by an “elite vision,” which in actuality may be attributed to a lack of reason, to an absence of “wit,” or judgment. Pope’s supposed attack on the learned wit thus reveals itself as a disguised attack on the naïve believer. In exposing the undiscerning groups of society (Maids and Children, the Fair and Innocent) as “enthusiasts” (as per Johnson’s definition of the term), Pope highlights their propensity to vanity, to an unqualified sense of pride. In coupling the word “pride” here with “credit,” Pope suggests another meaning of “credit” (taking us back to the figure of Lady Credit) as something insubstantial and, therefore, unreal, something which perverts an economic balance and a civic harmony in its deceptive ability to stand in for the substantive. Pope thus offers a nuanced critique of Belinda’s potential as false prophet, as one with the ability to see what is not there, as the blind enthusiast who gives “credit” to her own fanciful delusions. Ariel’s warning to Belinda both reveals Belinda as a paradigm for the vain enthusiast while simultaneously unearthing the sylph’s own motives to inspire Belinda with a false enthusiasm, for it is he who urges and persuades Belinda not to “bound [her] narrow views to things below.” Thus Ariel subliminally seduces and inspires Belinda with a false enthusiasm, literally breathing or whispering a desire towards divine vision into her passive, slumbering ear.

But why inspire Belinda with this enthusiastic desire to transcend her mortal self? How do we account for Ariel’s motives here and for his enthusiastic rhetoric? As Ariel’s speech continues, he hints at the possibility of a kind of transcendence, a moment in time when Belinda might shed her mortal, earthly body and become *spiritual* essence:

Think not, when Woman’s transient Breath is fled,  
That all her Vanities at once are dead

...  
The light Coquettes in Sylphs aloft repair,

And sport and flutter in the Field of Air.  
Know farther yet; Whoever fair and chaste  
Rejects Mankind, is by some Sylph embrac'd:  
For Spirits, freed from mortal Laws, with ease  
Assume what Sexes and what Shapes they please (Canto I, ll. 51-70).

The promise of transcendence entices and seduces Belinda by playing on her vanity; although her “transient breath” will pass, a more lasting, though equally insubstantial “vanity” will prevail, and Belinda will become eternal as she metamorphically transitions from coquette into sylph. But why this emphasis on Belinda as coquette? Ariel implies that only those who “reject mankind,” and the sensual enticements of the flesh, will transubstantiate. Ariel’s speech may smack of religious enthusiasm here in which the restraints and sufferings of the body only lead to divine transcendence. However, another motive underlies Ariel’s rhetoric of divine inspiration.

If we look at the following selection from *The Count of Gabalis*, Pope’s referential basis for his mock-epic machinery in *The Rape of the Lock*, we begin to understand Ariel’s intentions and the important role that enthusiasm plays throughout Pope’s *Rape*:

’Twas the sylphs who had a Desire to be immortal. Their innocent Pursuits, far from scandalizing the Philosophers, appear’d in our Eyes so just, that we all, with one Accord, resolv’d never, in the least, to have to do with Women; but to make it our sole Business to immortalize the *Nymphs* and *Sylphids* (265).

As *Gabalis* describes a classification system of salamanders, gnomes, nymphs, and sylphs, it reveals something perplexing about this fairy world of unseen beings; those who occupy it may be more than mortal, but they are not *immortal*. The nymphs and sylphs aspire to eternal life though they do not yet possess it; like the mythic-heroic, they live a liminal existence, bordering between the worlds of the divine and human. According to Rosicrucian mythology, it is, therefore, the sylphs’ main objective to obtain immortality by coupling with mankind. Through earthly love, they may arrive at divine existence: hence the need for Ariel’s race to “protect” the coquette, a woman who by denying sex with men only makes room for the sylphs to couple with

mankind. Like all of the characters of the poem, the sylphs are motivated by divine aspiration, by an enthusiastic objective.

It is only once we understand Ariel's intentions that the true, albeit submerged, action of the poem unfolds: "Sudden he view'd, in spite of all her Art, / An Earthly Lover lurking at her Heart. / Amaz'd, confus'd, he found his Pow'r expir'd, / Resign'd to Fate, and with a Sigh retir'd" (Canto III, ll.143-146). In this crucial moment, Ariel fails to accomplish his task as Belinda's protector. Of course, this failure is a willful one; Ariel has no reason to guard Belinda from one earthly love if she aspires to another. He thus abandons Belinda to her fate as Belinda's art here, her artifice, becomes an attempt to hide or conceal. What is interesting about Belinda's "art" in this one, unveiling moment, however, is that it is not a cosmetic one. Rather, her attempts at concealment reveal a need to hide the passions. The vulnerable center of the iconic "goddess" is decidedly human; it is the *heart* that must remain hidden. This brief glimpse into Ariel's psyche and Belinda's heart thus reveals something essential about the nature of the unseen in the poem. In Pope's world of vanities, the role the sylphs play might be described as follows: "With varying Vanities, from ev'ry Part, / They shift the moving Toyshop of the Heart" (Canto I, ll. 99-100). The unseen sylphs, Pope's mock-epic machinery, possess the power to manipulate the passions. Ironically, the sylphs feel these passions too, for Ariel "sighs" as he becomes overpowered by his own affect, by feelings of "confusion and amazement." Of course, Pope attributes the sylphs' ability to manipulate the heart and will to vanity. It is vanity, the small, the insubstantial, the spiritual, the narcissistic, which insidiously emerges from every "part" of Pope's world to move his "man of parts."<sup>66</sup>

Pope's poem accepts the operations of enthusiasm as a poetic device but replaces the divine with the poet's own rhetoric and agency. In this sense, Pope's regard for enthusiasm is

based in its aesthetic power. Whether enthusiasm is divine in its origins as in the classical epic, or purely aesthetic as in the context of the mock-epic, it derives its power from the ability to motivate and guide the passions. The treatment of the passions in the poem thus becomes central to its critique and reform (i.e. its aestheticization) of enthusiasm. Whereas the force of the passions proves problematic in a religious context (in which it too often leads to vain enthusiasm), within the context of a secular-aesthetic poetry the passions simply serve the poet in his satiric project. However, the poet's reliance on the passions only becomes safe within a critically aesthetic paradigm. In other words, Pope's rhetoric both persuades his audience and calls upon their judgment. As such, it exhibits a kind of poetic enthusiasm which both affirms the powers of the poet to move his audience affectively and the need for that affect to be contained by the critical, discerning response of the reader.

Pope, therefore, not only figures enthusiasm as rooted in the extremes of excess affect, but he grounds his critique of worship in a simultaneous discussion of the passions. However, in the context of religious or amatory worship, the passions only assist in distorting our perceptions of the idolized object. Whereas Pope permits a space for poetic enthusiasm, he does not do so for religious enthusiasm. We note, for example, a striking similarity between the two altars in the poem, between Belinda's altar of "pride" and the Baron's altar "to *Love*," two amatory constructs which act as parodies of a pseudo-religious, enthusiastic worship:

And now unveiled the Toilet stands display'd,  
Each Silver Vase in mystic Order laid.  
First, rob'd in White, the Nymph intent adores  
With Head uncover'd, the Cosmetic Pow'rs.  
A heav'nly Image in the Glass appears,  
To that she bends, to that her Eyes she rears;  
Th'inferior Priestess, at her Altar's side,  
Trembling, begins the sacred Rites of Pride (Canto I, ll.121-128).

For this, ere Phoebus rose, he had implor'd

Propitious Heav'n, and ev'ry Pow'r ador'd  
 But chiefly Love—to Love an Altar built,  
 Of twelve vast French Romances, neatly gilt.  
 There lay three Garters, half a pair of Gloves;  
 And all the Trophies of his former Loves.  
 With tender Billet-doux he lights the Pyre,  
 And breathes three am'rous Sighs to raise the Fire.  
 Then prostrate falls, and begs with ardent Eyes  
 Soon to obtain, and long possess the Prize:  
 The Pow'rs gave Ear, and granted half his Pray'r  
 The rest, the Winds dispers'd in empty Air (Canto II, ll. 35-46).

Here, Pope exposes the dangers of idolatry as it relates to enthusiasm. Just as Belinda's altar reveals a method of self-adoration in which the narcissistic onlooker sees herself as adored idol, mimicking God, so does the Baron's altar attempt to replace the divine through a metonymic process in which fetish objects, things which have touched his objectified idol, substitute for the adored "goddess" herself. What these two altars share in common is an absence of any truly divine presence. To return to Johnson's definition of enthusiasm, they exemplify "a vain belief of private revelation; a vain confidence of divine favour or communication." Belinda and the Baron -as exemplars of this vain enthusiasm- attempt to see what they cannot, to get closer to their object of worship (or desire) either through a process of mimesis or metonymy. Most importantly, passion plays a major role in both of these scenes of enthusiastic worship. Belinda's deluded vision, of course, is connected with her vanity, a vanity represented here as enthusiasm, when in seeing her reflection as divine image, Belinda views herself as more than human. She becomes nymph, goddess, and priestess (indicated by the fact that there is an "inferior priestess at her Altar's side"), transforming through a process of mirror-reflection as distortion into anything but what she actually is. Like Ovid's Narcissus or Milton's Eve, Belinda bends to the "heaven'ly image" in the glass in an enchanted moment of passionate self-desire.

Here, Belinda's vain enthusiasm causes her to perceive herself as "like God" in a moment of enthusiastic reflection as distortion. However, this likeness amounts only to a self-delusion, a fanciful vision of transformation. The "priestess" here, *feeling* close to god when seated at her cosmetic altar, fancies herself *as* God. A similar instance occurs at the Baron's altar when he attempts to control occurrences in the natural world through the act of prayer and worship. In "summoning" the divine, in creating his idol through a messy amassing of parts, the Baron attempts Godly creation only to gain his will, his desired object, through divine inspiration. As though divinely inspired, the Baron breathes his "amorous sighs" to ignite his altar, a step which results in a conflagration of passion that leaves the worshipper "prostrate," begging with ardent eyes. The Baron, Pope suggests, has not actually invoked God and is not actually divinely led or inspired. Rather, his excess passion has left him in an ecstatic fit, helplessly out of himself and submissively debased at the altar's side. Subject to a type of enthusiastic disorder, the Baron's apparent divine inspiration amounts to a mere fit of the passions. The final lines of the above passage along with Pope's mock-epic tone confirm the possibility that the Baron suffers from a false enthusiasm; the heavenly powers only grant his prayer so that the "winds" may later "disperse" it through "empty air." The latter image employs Pope's illustration, once again, of a vain enthusiasm, an empty, contagious, and insubstantial image of divine inspiration.

Belinda's dressing table is perhaps the most analyzed image from *The Rape of the Lock* within a long-standing tradition of Pope criticism. Cleanth Brooks has argued that this is an altar scene of worship, which figures Belinda as both goddess and warrior.<sup>67</sup> Only recently, however, has Pope criticism attempted to flesh out some of the religious implications behind this passage. In his recent article "Commodity and Religion in Pope's *Rape of the Lock*," Alex Hernandez, expanding upon Laura Brown's argument, calls attention to the placement of the bible on

Belinda's toilette table as indicative of the British conflation of religion with consumerism.<sup>68</sup> The bible, of course, Hernandez argues, acts as a figure for the Protestant faith, which sought to emphasize the importance of the word as god. "Inevitably, the identification of the Bible [with] powder," Hernandez writes, "can only result in stripping the Christian narrative of its prophetic critique" (579). Thrown in with "Puffs, Powders, Patches, ...[and] Billet-doux," the bible, just another vanity of the dressing table, loses all credibility as a symbol for the word of god brought to humankind by way of prophesy. As in Pope's varying mock-epic plays on *fiat lux*, the divine word here becomes mockingly minimized atop Belinda's altar of artifice. One reading would suggest that this placement of the bible serves as a critique of religion and its use of biblical prophesy. Another would claim that the divine word in the context of Pope's mock epic serves little purpose. No longer does the muse sing here, but the poet does; inspiration is stripped of its divine origins. Moreover, Belinda's bible is curiously thrown in with her billet-doux, the last object to be listed on the dressing table, which recalls the instance of Belinda's forgotten dream and Pope's satire on prophesy. The language of the billet-doux, one of "Wounds Charms, and Ardors," thus replaces both the biblical and divine word. Bible and billet-doux now occupy the same sphere. We might read this equation as a critique of one kind of religious practice, which has supplanted divine or religious language with the language of love. On another level, however, Pope accepts the fact in his mock epic that "Wounds, Charms, and Ardors," words of the passions, are those which inevitably motivate the modern world. In this case, the divine word no longer retains its place in the modern poet's repertoire. Following the constructs of Augustan satire, the poet must speak to his audience in his own language, simultaneously mocking and manipulating the passions in his aims at enthusiastic reform.

The passions are the igniting force behind the enthusiastic chaos of the poem. Just as the “vaporious fumes” of the coffee in Canto III (ll. 115-120) rekindle the Baron’s desire for Belinda’s lock, the “vapours” of melancholy that engulf Belinda’s “cave of spleen” only serve to further Belinda’s passionate vengeance and the warring chaos that soon initiates the poem’s dramatic action. Here, once again, Pope’s epic machinery works to manipulate the passions. Like Ariel, whose function in Pope’s satire on enthusiasm is to inspire, Umbriel serves to initiate the process of contagion, spreading Belinda’s melancholy throughout the social landscape of the poem and beyond,<sup>69</sup> extending the enthusiastic pandemic of the poem to the reader herself, exposing her to the sights and smells of Belinda’s melancholic spleen. As Umbriel attempts to collect Belinda’s bag of winds, he engages in an act of linguistic coercion; the melancholy sprite must make Belinda speak and her mute visage signify:

Like where once Ulysses held the Winds;  
There she collects the Force of Female Lungs,  
Sighs, Sobs, and Passions, and the War of Tongues.  
A vial next she fills with fainting Fears,  
Soft Sorrows, melting Grievs, and flowing Tears.  
The Gnome rejoicing bears her Gifts away,  
Spreads his black Wings, and slowly mounts the Day (Canto IV, ll. 82-88).

Christa Knellwolf claims that what is primarily disturbing about Umbriel’s collection of Belinda’s “bag of winds” is that Belinda’s speech itself, characterized by female anger and hysteria, is devoid of substance, rooted in a language of “sighs and sobs,” a scrambled “war of tongues,” that ceases to mean. In Peter Fenves’s definition of the enthusiastic community, the public is ordered only by its ability to communicate *only* the ability to communicate.<sup>70</sup> In light of this passive chain of meaningless and mimetic communication, we might identify Belinda’s speech as enthusiastic; it represents sound without meaning. The wind-like words recall the airiness of a Swiftian enthusiasm, of an Aeolian priestcraft. It is important also to note that these

sighs and sobs are themselves figures for speech, which like the collected “soft sorrows,” “melting griefs,” “fainting fears,” and “flowing tears” in turn become signifiers for the passions themselves. Belinda’s melancholy is thus aestheticized, reduced to a figurative language that means only through its visual symbolism. Just as Belinda’s words express a mute rage, the content of her sorrow lies in formless forms, in visual symbols dissipated and liquefied. These figures for the passions become the seeds of contagion that originate from Belinda’s body only to flow into the social body that exists outside of Belinda and her “cave of spleen.”

However, it is not the actual content of the vial drawn from Belinda’s underworld that ultimately spreads her melancholic disorder. Rather the vial’s vapors only reignite Belinda’s own lamentations. Since the language that highlights Belinda’s enthusiasm signifies nothing but the ability or desire to speak, it is the spectacle of Belinda herself, charged with signs of the passions, that will spread that “language” of enthusiasm to Belinda’s public:

Then see! The Nymph in beauteous Grief appears,  
Her Eyes half-languishing, half-drown’d in Tears;  
On her heav’d Bosom hung her dropping Head,  
Which, with a Sigh, she rais’d and thus she said (Canto IV, ll. 143-146).

Like the other characters of the cave of spleen, Belinda is “chang’d [in] Form” through the metamorphic powers of melancholia into a figure for melancholy itself. Though Belinda fails as rhetorician, as spectacle she retains the affective power to *move* her audience into an act of sympathetic identification. In this way, Belinda imparts the insubstantial language of a dangerous enthusiasm. Symbolically, Belinda moves through the imagery of the poem, first entering as the worn-out muse, then as the failed prophet, and finally emerging as the vain vision of the passions whose powers only lead to the chaos of enthusiasm.

Despite its social and visual power, Belinda’s melancholic transformation is illusory and “fabulous,” because it arises out of a vision “eclipsed” by the effects of a vain enthusiasm.

Belinda as apparent but false god, as icon of divine imitation, fuels and embodies false inspiration; as mock-muse she marks the past errors of a dangerous enthusiasm and the trappings of excess affect. At the end of the poem, when Pope presents us with an act of transformation as transubstantiation, which he has promised will be as “fabulous as...[his] vision at the beginning,” we are meant as readers warned against the dangers of enthusiasm to question this visionary vision:

The Lock, obtain'd with Guilt, and kept with Pain,  
In ev'ry place is sought, but sought in vain:  
With such a Prize no Mortal must be blest,  
So Heav'n decrees! with Heav'n who can contest?  
Some thought it mounted to the lunar Sphere,  
Since all things lost on Earth, are treasured there (Canto V, ll.109-114)

Here, the action of the poem deflates when the lock, the symbolic locus of all excess passion in the poem, suddenly disappears. Not surprisingly, in enthusiastic fashion, Belinda's followers must account for the lock's miraculous disappearance by attributing the occurrence to supernatural causes. The lock, Christ-like, has arisen; disembodied, it becomes eternally embodied through a supposed act of celestial transformation. However, the question remains: how should we assess the spectacle of the starry lock?

Pope answers the reader with a question of his own: “So heav'n decrees! with Heav'n who can contest?” (Canto V, l. 112). Of course, it is Pope here who himself is vain enough to “contest with heaven” by questioning divine inspiration through his poem's exposure of the dangers of a misguided poetic and religious enthusiasm. Though “Heaven's decree,” cannot be accurately interpreted by human eyes, Pope provides an alternative, inspirational account:

But trust the Muse—she saw it upward rise,  
Tho mark'd by none but quick Poetic Eyes:  
(So Rome's great Founder to the Heav'ns withdrew,  
To *Proculus* alone confess'd in view.)  
A sudden Star it shot thro' liquid Air,

And drew behind a radiant *Trail of Hair*.  
 Nor *Bernice's* Lock first rose so bright,  
 The Heav'ns bespangling with dishevel'd Light.  
 The *Sylphs* behold it kindling as it flies,  
 And pleas'd pursue its Progress thro' the Skies.  
 This the *Beau-monde* shall from the Mall survey,  
 And hail with Musick its propitious Ray.  
 This the blest Lover shall for Venus take,  
 And send up Vows from *Rosamonda's* Lake.  
 This *Partridge* soon shall view in cloudless Skies,  
 When next he looks thro' *Galileo's* Eyes (Canto V, ll. 123-138).

Pope's re-invocation of the muse renders this vision questionable, as it recalls the poet's revision of the muse at the outset of the poem. We cannot trust the muse at this point, any more than we can trust the spectacle of Belinda herself, for Belinda *is* Pope's muse, defined here and throughout the poem by vain insubstantiality and heavenly ambition. Pope alone, as poet, prophet, or modern muse, can see his invisible spectacle with "quick poetic eyes," and thus he can indicate, through its identification with "*Belinda's* name," its connection with the dangers of enthusiastic excess (Canto V, l. 150). Of course, there are others who claim to see the fleeting, "sudden star" whose insubstantial image moves like a false vision through "liquid air." However, these are all false prophets (Proculus and Partridge), fabulous creatures (the sylphs), blessed lovers, and fashionable followers (Belinda's Beau-monde)—evidently false, or vain, enthusiasts, who like Belinda herself, have become famous for their unsubstantiated claims to *see* the *unseen*.

As Pope enumerates these "seers," his final critique is directed to Belinda, whose name inscribed at the end of the poem becomes a signal of Pope's satire on enthusiasm: "*This* Lock, the Muse shall consecrate to Fame, / And mid'st the Stars inscribe *Belinda's* Name!" (Canto V, ll. 149-150). Here, Belinda as name becomes the final one in a long list of enthusiasts. Consecrated by the poetic muse, whom we might read here as Caryll, Belinda, and Pope alike, the lock as apotheosis becomes an iconic symbol of a vain enthusiasm. Pope's untrustworthy

spectacle thus ends in a fireworks gesture towards the invisible, forcing us to see the unseen, while all the while mocking our tendency, our innocent desire to believe in the “fabulous.” The lockean comet thus “upward rises” in a trailing attempt to call forth our skepticism.<sup>71</sup>

What is left in the wake of Belinda’s dissipating disappearance is the figure of the poet himself. As fallen muse, Belinda becomes a vision of language reduced to its iconic or visual meaning; she is an example of the poet’s faculties, his capacities to make language mean or cease to mean as it takes on the power of the aesthetic. Perhaps this final apotheosis is the true story of *The Rape of the Lock*. With Belinda consistently becoming a figure of displacement, we might read Pope’s poem not merely as a critique of enthusiasm, but as a satire on enthusiasm, which replaces the divine with the aesthetic and thereby emphasizes the poet’s own mastery of the means to incite the passions. This replacement points to a new kind of enthusiasm, which joins the poet’s rhetorical powers with the reader’s skeptical judgment. We can thus see Pope’s aesthetic reform of enthusiasm as a means to empower poetic agency so as to prompt sociability and a kind of literary communication which might reinforce the need for meaningful language and critical responsiveness. As such, Pope’s mock epic creates a new type of secular inspiration, a modern muse that will come to define the modern author, highlighting his aesthetic faculties of judgment and genius.

Murray Cohen has read the spectacle of the lock as Pope’s commentary on different types of failed readership or interpretation.<sup>72</sup> My analysis here differs from Cohen’s in that I read all of the viewers of the lock, lumped in with the sylphs, as Pope’s mocked enthusiasts. Here, the poet thus emerges as the only true prophet or seer in the poem. Yet Pope’s rhetorical triumph over his parodic enthusiasts might be read in light of Cohen’s argument as a demand for a new kind of critical reception that will extend this clearer sight, this once secret or personal knowledge of the

lock's true nature, to Pope's reading public. Of course, this shared wit, this communication between poet and reader, only becomes possible within Pope's critically aesthetic paradigm. In order to read correctly, we must read skeptically; catching Pope's satire, we read with and against the poet, with our discerning faculties of judgment. As such, the implied dialogic exchange between poet and reader comes to establish the powers of rhetoric and the aesthetic along with their critical reception as the newly reformed, modern version of Pope's poetic muse.

### Curtain, Muse!: Invention and Poetic Example in Pope's Invocations

Although sometimes alluded to in Pope criticism, the figure of the muse has been largely neglected, particularly as she relates to Pope's poetic revisions in genre and form. Some critics, such as Allan Gedolf, have acknowledged Pope's invocations of a "conspicuously human muse" in his mock epics and his *Essay on Man* (194).<sup>73</sup> However, even those critics who have briefly explored the nature of Popean inspiration equate Pope's "human muse" with his "mock muse." Perhaps for this reason Gedolf makes the mistake of reading Bolingbroke as a mock-poetic figure, just as others before him have read Belinda as Pope's only "muse" in *The Rape of the Lock*. Likewise, recent criticism, that of Katherine Quinsey for example, has identified poetic inspiration in *The Dunciad* with "Dulness itself" (143). Although these allusions to Pope's mock muses are partially true to Pope's satiric aims, as we have seen in *The Rape of the Lock*, the figure of the muse occupies a much less transparent and more complex status throughout Pope's oeuvre. Most particularly, in his attempts to revise invocation, Pope always provides us with an alternate muse, a revisionary figure who represents the "inspiring" and limiting faculties of judgment, a friend, a critic, or secular subject who will accompany the poet in his work. Revising invocation by expressing it in terms of address, Pope modernizes both the concept and the formal manifestation of inspiration in his work.

Of course, this gesture towards a secular muse does not stop at the evocation of the critic. Rather, Pope extends modern inspiration to the poet himself. Reclaiming his poetic voice so as to activate a traditionally passive paradigm of ancient enthusiasm, Pope employs a pattern of self-invocation in his verse, which emphasizes the aesthetic powers of the author. As in *The Rape of*

*the Lock*, Pope's other attempts at modernizing inspiration doubly revise the figure of the muse to invoke both the powers of critical judgment and the aesthetic capacities of the poet, his ability to move the heart of his audience, to reify image through sound, to discover truth by affectively charming his reader. The force of the aesthetic in Pope's modern invocations thus imports the fervor of an ancient enthusiasm into its modern instantiations.

Critics have often commented on a combined reverence in Pope's poetry for reason and the passions.<sup>74</sup> This attitude takes its shape, critics have demonstrated, in Pope's formal employments of "wit" and "judgment." Edward Hooker, William Empson and Aubrey Williams have all emphasized Pope's refusal, as Williams says, "to separate wit and judgment...cleanly" (212).<sup>75</sup> Frederic Bogel's work on *The Dunciad* illustrates this phenomenon in Pope's employment of rhetoric.<sup>76</sup> William Empson, Patricia Meyer Spacks,<sup>77</sup> and Edward Hooker all describe this relationship as a tension that unites the critical, constraining faculties of judgment with the image-producing faculties of wit as fancy. That latter position has caused many critics to identify Pope as a proto-Romantic whose work anticipates that of Coleridge. Wit, associated with the "fresh vision of 'what oft was Thought,'"<sup>78</sup> thereby has been identified in Pope criticism with the aesthetic powers of his poetry.

Somewhat less attention has been given to Pope's reliance on the doctrine of "genius," which I argue underlies his notion of the "aesthetic" in poetry. Spacks and Ronald Bogue have discussed genius as an aesthetic faculty in Pope's work, which they relate respectively to the poetic devices of "imagery" and "grace."<sup>79</sup> However, in his *Preface to Homer's Iliad*, Pope associates "genius" not with "wit," "imagery," or unity, but rather with the poetic faculty of "invention." If Homer is the poet of "invention" and Virgil the poet of "judgment," then the force of Homer's "invention," argues Pope, adds more to his "Genius." Invention, thereby, more than

judgment (though Pope admits that both poets exhibit varying degrees of each), contributes to what Pope calls “genius.” Here, it is important to acknowledge “invention” within its eighteenth-century context as a process of “discovery” rather than a purely creative faculty (like the combinatory, image-producing function of wit).<sup>80</sup> Through invention, the author reveals something to his audience; his genius is an act of unveiling, contained by judgment. The poet moves by revelation, inspiring through a didactic notion of the aesthetic, which comes to inform Pope’s modern modulations of enthusiasm.

In both his poetic essays and his mock epics, this concept of “genius” as the combined effect of “invention” and “judgment” operates within Pope’s secular invocations. Genius, argues Bogue “is innate and unteachable” (439).<sup>81</sup> However, Pope exerts this natural faculty in his didactic poetry. Turning to his contemporaries and predecessors as paradigmatic examples, Pope finds inspiration in what cannot be learned. With a conscientious attention to genre and form, Pope thus gestures towards a secular phenomenon already present in a sacred genre of poetry. Borrowing what cannot be borrowed, imitating so as to revise, Pope modernizes inspiration paradoxically by critiquing the modern and praising the ancient. Finding the secular in the sacred, and something sacred in the secular, Pope thus “invents” the modern author through his didactic, revelatory verse. This chapter will track Pope’s rhetorical device of invocation alongside the figure of the muse in his *Essays on Criticism* and *Man*, and the final version of his mock epic, *The Dunciad*,<sup>82</sup> revealing a continual effort to modernize inspiration along the lines of poetic genius.

*Elegy and Example: The Essay*

When Pope uses the word “muse” in the *Essay on Criticism*, he most often refers to poetry itself (ll. 84, 102, 127, 219, 339). As “poetry,” the muse not only signifies the source for poetic inspiration and composition, but by line 339 she is equated with the poetic text: “In the bright Muse tho’ thousand Charms conspire, / Her voice is all these tuneful Fools admire.” In a figurative manner, the “muse” of the *Essay on Criticism* comes to represent what is ideally communicated between poet and critic through the mirrored acts of authorship and readership. This mutual activity for Pope arises only from a poetry based on judgment, on the unification of distinct parts into a textual whole<sup>83</sup>:

A perfect Judge will read each Work of Wit  
With the same Spirit as its Author writ,  
Survey the Whole, nor seek slight Faults to find,  
Where Nature moves, and Rapture warms the Mind; (ll. 233-236)

...  
No single Parts unequally surprize;  
All comes united to th’ admiring Eyes; (ll. 249-250)

...  
But most by Numbers judge a Poet’s Song,  
And *smooth* or *rough*, with them, is *right* or *wrong*;  
In the bright *Muse* tho’ thousand *Charms* conspire;  
Her voice is all these tuneful Fools admire; (ll. 337-340)

As the poet constructs his “muse” into a composition of “conspiring” parts, his art is appreciated by the insightful, judging critic alone who can discern the “muse’s charms” by appreciating the verse as a whole. Thus poetic inspiration becomes an act of “conspiracy” in which poet and reader share in the work of composing, communicating and appreciating the aesthetic object. In arguing that the reader must judge a work “with the same *Spirit* [that] its Author” possessed in writing it, Pope illustrates the act of readership as informed by one kind of contagious

inspiration. According to Pope, however, this is no false, or vain “enthusiasm,” as evident in Johnson’s definition of the term. Rather the “spirit” of poetic composition and judgment “moves” and “warms” the reader into “rapture” only when he exercises his own faculties of wit and judgment, his own ability to see how the distinct parts of the verse unite into a sublimely interwoven “whole.”

By the end of the *Essay*, however, the figure of the muse serves as more than a mere metaphor for the poetic text. Pope’s work concludes with an historical account of the “muse,” in which he tells a tale of criticism’s corruption and its ultimate restoration from ancient to modern times (ll. 643-744). As Pope uses a catalogue of exemplary ancient critics to illustrate the rise and fall of literary criticism, he concludes his history with the restoration of the ancient critic in the modern period:

But see! Each Muse, in Leo’s Golden Days,  
Starts from her Trance, and trims he wither’d Bays!  
Rome’s ancient Genius, o’er its Ruins spread,  
Shakes off the Dust, and rears his rev’rend Head!” (ll. 697-700)

Suddenly, Pope’s figurative use of the muse equates her with the critic or poet himself,<sup>84</sup> and thus inspiration is attributed to an embodied and active version of authorial composition or critique. Here, the “Muses” of “Leo’s Golden Days” are resurrected from the “dust” to salvage the state of modern criticism. Pope’s metaphor of the ancient critic rising from his grave notably relies upon the re-invocation of “Genius,” which has long been buried in “ruin” and now is restored to the modern critic and poet whom we might read as Pope himself. By “discovering” and literally unearthing or uncovering what has been buried from our modern, critical view, Pope’s “Genius” becomes an act of resurrection, which attempts to activate the work of the poet and critic by “startling” the muse “from her trance.” Once again, inspiration in its alignment with genius becomes an act of awakening, an active pursuit of discovery and recovery. Thus even as

she is derived from ancient times, Pope's muse in the *Essay on Criticism* is a secular one; she becomes a metaphor whose rhetorical function restores the powers of poetic agency to the author himself.

As in so many of his poems, Pope ends *The Essay on Criticism* with a figure of exemplarity, who as part of the fabric of the satiric design, serves to repair the poem's forgoing attacks<sup>85</sup>:

Thee, bold Longinus! All the Nine inspire,  
And bless their Critick with the Poet's Fire.  
An ardent Judge, who Zealous in his Trust,  
With Warmth gives Sentence, yet is always Just;  
Whose own Example strengthens all his Laws,  
And is himself that great Sublime he draws (ll. 675-680).

In this instance, Pope seeks to salvage the reputation and nature of the critic. The address to Longinus effaces and replaces satiric language with an ideal, paradigmatic type: a "just" "Example" to "all the Nine." In fact, Pope's conclusion to *The Essay on Criticism* provides us with a variety of examples, both ancient and modern, of the ideal critic:<sup>86</sup>

*Horace* still charms with graceful Negligence  
. . . *judg'd* with Coolness tho' he sung with *Fire*;  
His *Precepts* teach but what his *Works* inspire (ll. 653-660)  
. . .  
In grave *Quintilian's* copious Work we find  
The justest *Rules*, and clearest *Method* join'd; (ll. 669-670)  
. . .  
Such was *Roscomon*-not more *learn'd* than *good*,  
With Manners gen'rous as his Noble Blood; (ll. 725-726)

In all of these examples, Pope admires the conjoined faculties of the writer, his ability to bring together two often dichotomous, or distinct, features in his work. In Aubrey Williams's edition of the *Essay*, these faculties all appear in the coupled italics of the Pope's lines as the capacity to join "judgment" with "fire," "precepts" with "works," "rules" with "method," and "learning"

with moral “goodness.” Notably, many of these pairs can be traced to Longinus’s definition of the faculties of rhetoric and true sublimity in his work on the sublime:

Sublimity is a kind of eminence or excellence of discourse. It is the source of the distinction of the very greatest poets and prose writers and the means by which they have given eternal life to their own fame. For grandeur produces ecstasy rather than persuasion in the hearer; and the combination of wonder and astonishment always proves superior to the merely persuasive and pleasant. This is because persuasion is on the whole something we can control, whereas amazement and wonder exert invincible power and force and get the better of the hearer. Experience in invention and ability to order and arrange material cannot be detected in single passages; we begin to appreciate them only when we see the whole context. Sublimity, on the other hand, produced at the right moment, tears everything up like a whirlwind, and exhibits the orator’s powers at a single blow (pp.1-2).

Longinus implies that the power of sublimity is highlighted by its juxtaposition with the poet’s rhetorical faculties, his linguistic capacities of persuasion and design. Of all of Pope’s examples, it is Horace who best exhibits such “eminence and excellence of discourse” in his ability to combine “judgment” with “fire,” a kind of “ordered” “arrangement” with the “grandeur” of “sublimity.” Moreover, we see in the crucial distinction between Horace’s didactic “precepts” (his rhetoric or “persuasion”) and the “inspiration” inherent in his “work” (his “sublimity”), the very Longinian quality of embodied exemplarity, of becoming, as Pope writes, that example which “strengthens” the author’s own “laws.”

Perhaps for this very reason, the address to Longinus is the most significant amongst Pope’s examples,<sup>87</sup> for it informs many of Pope’s selections in his catalogue of exemplary critics; these authors often exhibit the poetic faculties of rhetoric or sublimity, and in the best scenarios a combination of the two. Most importantly, the address to Longinus anticipates Pope’s modern gesture towards the “muse” at the end of his poem. Longinus differs from Pope’s other paradigmatic examples (Horace, Quintilian, Roscommon etc . . . ) in the manner in which he enters Pope’s verse. Pope never merely refers to Longinus by reviewing his work in the voice of

the poet-critic, as he does with Horace and Quintilian. Rather, Pope apostrophizes Longinus much in the same manner in which he later invokes Caryll in *The Rape of the Lock*. Longinus is Pope's critic-as-muse. Thus the address to Longinus enters the poem through the rhetorical frame of a modern invocation: with the apostrophe, "Thee, bold Longinus!"

Instead of invoking a divine muse in the custom of the classical poets, Pope apostrophizes a man, a secular subject, who most particularly embodies his own values for the powers of the author/writer. Longinus becomes the example who will symbolize the Popean ideal of modern inspiration by drawing a muse-like sublimity from his ability to "judge." Essentially, the *Essay on Criticism* draws its inspiration from the man whose work, as far as Pope was concerned, brought the sublime to the eighteenth-century aesthetic. The implication behind Pope's address to Longinus is twofold. For one, Longinus is figured here as "judge," or in other words as he who employs his faculties of judgment and in doing so renders his criticism an art. More importantly, Pope implies that the critic derives his powers from the poet, while both critic and poet are alike in their mutual reliance on inspiration: "...All the Nine inspire, / And bless their Critick with the Poet's Fire." The nine muses thus become a conduit that serves to pass the "fire" of the poet onto the critic. Thus, in the opening lines of his invocation, Pope implicitly inverts a pattern of ancient inspiration that traditionally employed the poet as a vessel for the muse's "fire."

A second implication reveals Longinus, Pope's poetic and critical paradigm, as tied to the critical trend of exemplarity.<sup>88</sup> Just as Longinus governs and argues his work through the use of good examples, so does Pope. Yet here the poet mirrors the critic and not the other way around. The figure of the critic himself becomes Pope's inspiration, his muse. As critic inspires poet and poet inspires critic, both enter into an interlocking pact of communicative exchange, a conspiring

inspiration in which the reader draws enthusiasm from the poet and vice versa. Yet Pope does more with his modern invocation of Longinus than simply illustrate the communicative potential of modern inspiration. Marked by exemplarity, Longinus is the example “whose own example strengthens all his laws.” In this manner, Pope models the rhetorical efforts of his *Essay on Criticism* upon those of Longinus’s *On Sublimity*. The essay itself will demonstrate the laws it expounds. Moreover, the author of the poem, and not just the work itself, acting not simply as poet but as critic, will embody the example he sets forth for his readers. Just as Longinus “is himself that great Sublime he draws,” so will Pope become the inspiring “critic” of his poetic critique. This subtle promise, which enters the poem through the implications of Pope’s address to Longinus, thus comes to its fruition in the final lines of the *Essay*.

Pope employs the figure of the muse five times in the final verse paragraph of his *Essay on Criticism*. Here, he finds ancient equivalents in the modern exemplars of his three English “muses”: the Duke of Buckingham, the Earl of Roscommon, and his recently-deceased predecessor, Walsh. The last of these becomes the avenue through which Pope may enter his own poem, listing himself amongst his English exemplars, as the “muse” of his *Essay*. Thus Pope’s reliance on ancient examples only leads him to a gesture, which actually modernizes an ancient paradigm of inspiration:

Such was the Muse, whose Rules and Practice tell,  
*Nature’s chief Master-piece is writing well.*  
Such was Roscommon—not more learn’d than good,  
With Manners gen’rous as his Noble Blood;  
To him the Wit of Greece and Rome was known,  
And ev’ry Author’s Merit, but his won (ll. 723-728).

Pope alludes in the first couplet to the Duke of Buckingham, whose lines he cites when he writes “*Nature’s Master-piece is writing well,*” and in the second to “Roscommon,”<sup>89</sup> using the same panegyric language of praise that he has employed to cite his ancient predecessors. However, the

final example of Walsh brings an elegiac tone to Pope's poetic closure, a turn that seems fitting in light of the muse's transformation at the end of the *Essay*. As in his gesture to Caryll in *The Rape of the Lock*, Pope's allusion to Walsh as his final critic-as-muse in the *Essay on Criticism* only serves to forward a modern act of replacement in which the author himself becomes "muse" to his own work:

Such later was Walsh,—the Muse's Judge and Friend,  
Who justly knew to blame or to commend;  
To failings mild, but zealous for Desert;  
The clearest Head, and the sincerest Heart.  
This humble Praise, lamented Shade! receive,  
This Praise at least a grateful Muse may give!  
The Muse, whose early Voice you taught to Sing,  
Prescrib'd her Heights, and prun'd her tender Wing,  
(Her Guide now lost) no more attempts to rise,  
But low in Numbers short Excursions tries:  
Content, if hence th' Unlearn'd their Wants may view,  
The Learn'd reflect on what before they knew:  
Careless of Censure, nor too fond of Fame,  
Still pleas'd to praise, yet not afraid to blame,  
Averse alike to Flatter, or Offend,  
Not free from Faults, nor yet too vain to mend (ll. 729-744).

This transaction is, of course, always limited by the double gesture of Pope's invocation to author and critic, for here the critic inspires the authorial muse by checking his enthusiasm through a process of judging restraint. In praising Walsh, Pope thus names himself the "grateful Muse." His elegiac praise becomes an act of thanksgiving. Of course, the commemorative gesture only restores Walsh's past instruction through the revivifying power of the poet's own remembrance. Notably, Walsh's teachings are those of the careful, judging critic, who checks the poet's voice by limiting its scope and aims. Pope, therefore, describes Walsh's instruction in the language of measured restraint; Walsh "prescribes" the proper "heights" to the voice of the young poet, "pruning" his "tender Wing" so that he may not soar too high in the enthusiastic

flights of his poetics. Walsh thus proves the ideal critic in his capacity to instruct, to set forth an example for the fledgling author in the Longinian manner of criticism.

Moreover, as the young Pope's judge and friend, Walsh illustrates a practice of criticism and poetics equally reliant on the clarity of judgment and the genuine powers of affect as he proves to be the possessor of "the clearest Head, and the sincerest Heart." Yet it is significant that Pope's final example, though his native contemporary, is deceased,<sup>90</sup> for as Pope recollects the past instruction of his lost friend, the cautions of the "lamented shade" become internalized and revived in the present language of the poet himself. Thus the author serves as his own critic, checking his enthusiasm, his pride and ambition, as he becomes the muse of his own work.

Relying on his past learning, the poet's voice merges with his predecessor's in the final lines of the poem. Although the last phrases set forth the intentions of the author-muse himself, the final allusion to Walsh becomes a parenthetical gesture which complicates the subject of the poem's ending action, rendering it ambiguous: "(Her Guide now lost) no more attempts to rise, / But low in Numbers short Excursions tries." Here, the mourning muse refers to his "guide" as one who subtly exerts his past influence through the poet's own, present elegiac remembrance. Walsh may be dead in body but not in spirit, for Pope suggests that he rises again, albeit in "short excursions" from the "low", earthly "numbers"<sup>91</sup> of the verse. An echo of Walsh thereby enters the sentiments of the final lines:

Content, if hence th' Unlearn'd their Wants may view,  
The Learn'd reflect on what before they knew:  
Careless of Censure, nor too fond of Fame,  
Still pleas'd to praise, yet not afraid to blame,  
Averse alike to Flatter, or Offend,  
Not free from Faults, nor yet too vain to mend (ll. 739-744).

This passage uses the model of Walsh to enact the poet's intentions for his own style of criticism. As Pope, the authorial muse, comes to embody his own ideal critic, he promises never simply to

seek fame or to follow censure in his writing, never to base his work on the divisive wrongs of flattery or slander, but always to bestow praise and fault where it is due, and, moreover, always to know his own faults and to amend by improvement. Illustrating the purpose of his work as that which exposes the “unlearned’s” deficiencies, or “wants,” and causes those who already know to reflect upon their wisdom, Pope thus marks his essay as an exemplary paradigm of ideal criticism. As poet and critic, Pope will “reveal” or “discover” the nature of true wit and judgment to his reader. His poetic genius thus brings that which goes unseen into “view.” Nevertheless, the authorship of the concluding couplets is ambiguous, for it is unclear whether or not Pope himself speaks as critic, author, and muse, or whether Walsh, the “lost guide” attempting his own poetic resurrection, becomes the voice of the *Essay*’s final promise: “Content, if hence th’ Unlearn’d their Wants may view/ The Learn’d reflect on what before they knew” (ll. 739-740).

Immediately preceding this promise lies an ambiguous allusion to the subject of Pope’s poetic promise, the author who feels, embodies, and enacts the intentions of the verse:

The Muse, whose early Voice you taught to Sing,  
Prescrib’d her Heights, and prun’d her tender Wing,  
(Her Guide now lost) no more attempts to rise,  
But low in Numbers short Excursions tries:

Is it Pope himself, the “muse” of the *Essay*, or Walsh, his “lost guide” who feels content in asserting the humble, didactic aims of a poem, which seeks to instruct the unlearned and remind the learned of the value of criticism? As Walsh grammatically becomes the immediate antecedent and subject of the poem’s final lines, poet and critic seem to share in the same poetic intentions, the same work of exemplary discovery and instruction. Deriving his power from a past “muse,” the poet draws instructive inspiration from his former critic. Thus the poem’s judge, a friend and a secular subject, through a kind of succession which borders on ventriloquism, allows the poet independently to claim himself as “muse.”

Checked by the exemplary muses of the ancient past and by the learning of his youth, the poet thus assumes the title of “muse,” claiming a voice of his own, only by paying a debt to his predecessors. As examples, the critics of the ancient and recent past thus endow the poet with the necessary faculties of judgment so that he may inspire others and become the example of his own *Essay*. Using the secular paradigms of past critics as his inspiration, Pope thus gives voice to the unremembered just as he borrows their voice through the echoes of his elegiac praise.

Complicating the paradigm of ancient inspiration, however, Pope activates the passive ventriloquism typically associated with enthusiasm by first speaking for his muse and then becoming his muse. As Pope uses the figure of the muse to expound a theory of critical judgment and aesthetics, he also transports the affective fervor of a divine, ancient inspiration into his modern paradigm of authorship. In claiming the title of “muse,” the speaker of the *Essay* invents the modern author by adding his own name to a long list of exemplary critics, of authorial “muses.” Pope’s debt to the past becomes an act of reclamation for the modern author/critic, through which the author rummages through the avenues of ancient literature only to arrive at his own exemplary voice, his own self-restraining judgment, his own crowning self-invocation.

In this regard, the invocation of Longinus serves to foreshadow the final, modern adaptation of the muse at the end of Pope’s poem as Pope becomes “himself that great Sublime he draws.” Pope’s *Essay on Criticism* inhabits the peculiar nature of a double genre; it is both essay and poem and borrows qualities from both. In this manner, Pope’s *Essay* relies on the rhetorical device of the example, a feature that it derives from Longinus’s own employment of rhetoric in *On Sublimity*. Yet as poem, the *Essay on Criticism* turns this rhetorical reliance on exemplarity into an occasion for modern invocation. Pope’s address to Longinus, couched amongst his other examples but dissimilar in form from all of these, opens up a space for his

revision of the muse, foreshadowing the end of the *Essay* in which the poet himself, now muse, will become the exemplary inspiration of his own poem.

Moreover, the *Essay's* portrayal of the ancient versus the modern critic ultimately undermines an apparent dichotomy between the two evident at the beginning of the poem. In his exemplary portraits of the ancient and modern critic, Pope “discovers” a parallel that reveals and re-emphasizes the didactic aims of the *Essay*. From their ancient predecessors, the modern critics learn a principle of design that demands the form’s reflection of its content; Quintilian’s “rules” and “method” are revived in Walsh’s attempts to “prescribe heights to” and “prune the tender wing” of his pupil poet. Moreover, in Walsh’s “tender heart” and “clear head,” we find a mixture of affect and reason that resembles the Horatian coupling of “fire” with “judgment.”

In a similar manner, Pope grounds his modern invocation on an ancient precedent of inspiration, which seeks to derive fervor and spirit from an act of ventriloquism. Nevertheless, Pope’s invocation, which is secular and not divine in nature, relies upon a gesture towards a friend, a dedicatory act of remembrance that adds affective nostalgia to the poem’s final, critical example. If this final example is not written in the style of an apostrophe or address, then it assumes a third-person voice only to add ambiguity to the authorship of the poem’s final lines. As the deceased Walsh struggles to resurrect himself in the poem’s final couplets, he joins the poet in his promise actively and conjunctively to “praise” and “blame,” “flatter” and “offend,” so as to “mend” the art of criticism. Thus the poem’s promise both reveals and accomplishes its satiric aim, which only “offends” in its desire to “mend.” Moreover, Pope redefines the act of poetic ventriloquism as the speaker’s voice ambiguously mixes with that of his predecessor through the elegiac mode. Here, inspiration becomes active once the poet and his inspirational source join in expressing the *Essay's* poetic promise. Thus Pope’s modern redaction of

enthusiasm only borrows the affective fervor and ventriloquistic structure of an ancient practice so as to secularize, modernize, and activate the practice of invocation in Augustan poetry and satire.

*Bolingbroke, My Genius: The Epistle*

The doubleness of Pope's genre in *The Essay on Criticism* only becomes more pronounced in a work like *An Essay on Man*, which consciously combines an epistolary form with a poetic one. Pope states his reason for using the epistolary genre in this manner in a note to the reader at the beginning of the poem: "As the Epistolary Way of Writing hath prevailed much of late, we have ventured to publish this Piece composed some Time since, and whose Author chose this Manner notwithstanding his Subject was high and of dignity, because of its being mixt with Argument, which of its Nature approacheth to Prose." On the one hand, Pope avowedly employs this double genre because of the poem's reliance on "argument," a quality linked more to prose than to verse. But on the other hand, the epistolary mode of *The Essay on Man* ties this work, also, to classical tradition. Of course, Pope in his note to the reader represents himself as an innovator in genre. Although the epistolary form has only recently come into "fashion," Pope proclaims he has long since written this poem in such a style. By his own proclamation, Pope is no author a la mode, but a trendsetter, an innovator in genre and form. The irony, of course, lies in the fact that Pope's form, the poetic epistle, is derived from a much older source. As Reuben Brower has shown, Horace, in fact, becomes the formal trendsetter who inspires Pope's work.<sup>92</sup> Nevertheless, Pope modernizes the style of his ancient derivative in *An Essay on Man* even as he adopts the Horatian mode.

Critics have focused on issues of genre in Pope's *Essay on Man* since the mid twentieth century. Some have strictly highlighted the work's form as a poetical essay. Allan Gedalof, for example, investigates the meaning of the term "essay" in the eighteenth century, citing Johnson's dictionary to discover the genre as an "attempt, or endeavor, a loose sally of the mind, a trial, or an experiment (193)." James Swearingen and Joanne Cutting-Gray confirm and elevate this meaning of "essay" when analyzing Pope's attention to form in his poem: "through a process that presupposes an orderly universe, the poem essays or tests the value or purity of its ideas, an eighteenth-century century meaning of the word essay that lifts mere poetry into the realm of serious thought and grants it an authority denied by the new spirit of enlightenment" (481). Thus Pope combines the essay with the poem in order to elevate the status of poetry in an era framed by enlightenment philosophy.

For critics such as Reuben Brower, Martin Kallich, Simon Varey and William Piper, however, the most important formal aspect of the *Essay on Man* lies in its connection to the conversational poem. In Brower's explanation of the poem's Horatian mode and Kallich's notion of the poem as an "image of conversation" (40), we come to see the *Essay on Man* as a dialogic form of poetry which triangulates the relationship between Bolingbroke, the poet, and "everyman," the poet's ignorant pupil. The role of the interlocutor in the poem, at times attributed to Bolingbroke (Piper), the pupil (Kallich), or even to Pope, the self-referential poet himself (Varey), gives evidence for the work's conversational mode. Nevertheless, the slippery nature of the interlocutor's identity may account for these critical disputes surrounding the subject of voice in the poem. In fact, the *Essay* exhibits a tendency to submerge the very conversational mode that it seeks to employ.<sup>93</sup> Maynard Mack states: the poem has "the effect" of a conversation "though strictly [speaking] it has but one speaker" (lxxiii).<sup>94</sup> This complexly

dialogic genre, I will suggest, stems from the poem's explicitly *epistolary* form. Still it is this conversational subtext in *The Essay on Man* that has caused critics to label it along with *An Essay on Criticism* a "didactic" poem.<sup>95</sup> Even Bernard Fabian, who has argued against Brower's claims about the poem's exclusively Horatian roots, linking it more to the form of the Lucretian epic (528), has emphasized the poem's didactic aims.<sup>96</sup> Despite the fact that Pope's poem shares something in common with the dialogic, or Socratic, essay, I want to argue that the conversational subtext of Pope's poem is always constrained by its epistolary frame. In this section, I will suggest that Pope employs the form of the epistle because of its reliance on apostrophe, on a monologic type of "conversation" which never allows the apostrophized subject to answer the *Essay's* claims. In this manner, Pope uses epistolarity in *The Essay on Man* as a device which aides the poem's project of modernizing inspiration.

Of course, Pope never abandons the *Essay's* poetic form for its epistolary frame. As Pope notes in his argument for the poem's "Design," writing in rhyme instead of in prose only leaves a stronger impression upon his reader: "principles maxims or precepts so written, both strike the reader more strongly at first, and are more easily retained by him afterwards." His second reason for writing in rhyme, he claims, lies in the simple fact that he can express himself more succinctly in poetry than in prose.<sup>97</sup> However, a much more consequential reason seems to underlie Pope's fusion of genres in his *Essay on Man*, a reason which he never expressly addresses in his introductory matter to the reader, and a reason which most critics of Pope's poetry have neglected to explore in studies of the *Essay's* genre. Although in these prefatory notes we come to understand the author's motivations for employing a form that combines verse with prose, Pope never explains his explicit choice of the epistle in the *Essay on Man*.

In fact, the epistolary form in Pope's poetics echoes Shaftesbury's same usage of the form in his philosophic essays on enthusiasm in *The Characteristics*. In an epistle, we encounter a subject who is addressed but who is never allowed to respond within the constraints of the letter itself. Our subject is thereby apostrophized much in the same manner as a muse might be in a classical pattern of invocation. In this respect, the genre of the epistle shares a formal paradigm with the invocation; however, in the letter form, the apostrophized subject is secular, a man or a friend, and not a divinity.

Like Shaftesbury, Pope walks a very fine line between the sacred and the secular in his employment of the epistolary form, using the *Essay's* apostrophic nature as an occasion for reconsidering the figure of the muse. In fact, the overall subject of *An Essay on Man* shares much in common with Shaftesbury's *Characteristics*<sup>98</sup>; it is a work, after all, about the qualities and nature of mankind, which attempts to expose man's errors, and in a Miltonic strain "vindicate the ways of God to Man" (l. 16) by harping on a pattern of universal order. Pope's order of things, his continual emphasis on the whole over its parts, not only carries forward the Augustan theme of design from the *Essay on Criticism*, but is more explicitly derived from a philosophy attributed to Shaftesbury and the Cambridge Platonists.<sup>99</sup> When in lines 7-10 of the third epistle, Pope writes: "Look round our World; behold the chain of Love / Combining all below and all above. / See plastic Nature working to this end, / The single atoms each to other tend," he acknowledges this philosophical debt in his work. The artist or poet becomes a second maker here, whose patterns of design resemble, though they never become, those of God or nature.

This emphasis on order in *An Essay on Man*, of course, is connected with Pope's persistent anxieties about vanity and ambition, which as we have seen in the *Rape of the Lock*,

are connected to his concerns about the enthusiasms of his day. Man, he argues, must occupy his proper place in the universal chain; he is a social being, not a celestial one:

Men would be Angles, Angels would be Gods.  
Aspiring to be Gods, if Angels fell,  
Aspiring to be Angles, Men rebel;  
And who but wishes to invert the laws  
Of ORDER, sins against th'Eternal Cause (ll. 126-130).

Pope's Miltonic gesture towards a universal order thus becomes one of never attempting to be like God, of "vindicating his ways."<sup>100</sup> Yet even if the poem's subject is Miltonic, its form, though related to its subject, departs from that of Pope's epic forbearer. The epistles, we will see, actually provide Pope with a secular occasion in which he may revise the enthusiastic invocations of his classical predecessors, and Pope's address to Bolingbroke<sup>101</sup> thus becomes the critical and secularizing gesture that reforms man's errors.

The poem attempts to separate God and man while preserving a reverence for the divine that is ordained by the laws of universal order. Moreover, the poet and his "inspiration" commune so as to watch over and enforce this subject and intent. In the opening lines of his first epistle, Pope puts this complex treatment of inspiration into play: "Awake, my St. John! leave all meaner things/ To low ambition, and the pride of Kings" (Epistle I, ll. 1-2). This initial address to Bolingbroke invokes his secular influence in a manner that echoes the ancient custom of arousing the muse by way of an address or command. And it does so in the manner of satire;<sup>102</sup> that which is typically thought of as high is here brought low. The flights of ambition and pride are associated with the "meaner," earthly "things" of mankind. Of course, this inversion of order is ironic; it is not so much an inversion but a clarification of the nature of things. What appears high, argues the poet, points in fact only to the low ways of man misconstrued. Bolingbroke, therefore, must "awake" in order to occupy the higher sphere of the inspirational muse. As Pope

solicits the company of his friend and muse, he writes “let us . . . expatiate free o’er all this scene of man” (Epistle I, ll. 3-5).<sup>103</sup> By elevating Bolingbroke over his earthly company, Pope sets up an elitist poetic hierarchy in which poet and inspiration together survey their “meaner,” lesser subjects from above.<sup>104</sup>

This poetic status, however, is never meant to infringe upon the universal order or the laws of God, but rather creates a hierarchy within a poetic order that both secularizes inspiration by invoking man, or friend, as muse and at the same time reconfigures the passive channel of a classical enthusiasm into the hierarchy of a poetic didacticism. Thus the speaker awakens “St. John,” or Bolingbroke, in order to accomplish the didactic aims of the poem itself:

Awake, my St. John! leave all meaner things  
To low ambition, and the pride of Kings  
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.  
Together let us beat this ample field,  
Try what the open, what the covert yield  
The latent tracts, the giddy heights explore  
Of all who blindly creep, or sightless soar  
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.  
.  
Laugh where we must, be candid where we can;  
But vindicate the ways of God to Man (ll. 1-16).

Pope’s modern muse awakens to join him, once again, in an act of discovery. As poet and muse “together . . . beat [the] ample field,” they not only taste the “yields” of a public, open nature, but they uncover the “covert” fruits of that which remains hidden to mankind. What our speaker reveals in this act of exposure is the paradoxical nature of mankind who shares in the sins of Milton’s Satan by either “creeping blindly” on the earth or ambitiously “soaring sightlessly.” Hence, the poem’s didacticism points to its reliance on an eighteenth-century notion of “invention,” bringing to light that which is obscured through willful blindness or secrecy and unveiling those things which remain out of human “sight” due to their illusoriness, to a deceptiveness derived from ambition, which always mistakes human overreaching for the

sublimity of divine flight. The communicative channel of Pope's modern invocation thus activates inspiration by connecting it to an act of learning or instruction.

We never fully experience this modernization of the invocation, however, until the closing lines of the poem. After slipping into the background of the poetic action throughout *The Essay on Man*, Bolingbroke is reawakened at the end of the poem as a means of delivering Pope's final, moral message to his reader. Much in the manner of the *Essay on Criticism*, *An Essay on Man* uses modern invocation to enact the satire's reformatory gesture. Invocation here becomes a device that serves to communicate the author's message and voice to his reader while using the author's inspiration, his apostrophized secular subject, to check his own "enthusiasm":

Come then, my Friend, my Genius, come along,  
Oh master of the poet, and the song!  
And while the Muse now stoops, or now ascends,  
To man's low passions, or their glorious ends, (Epistle IV, ll. 373-376).

The secular power that elevates Bolingbroke as muse over mankind and allows him to inspire the poet is "Genius."<sup>105</sup> Thus Pope's modern muse, as "Friend" and "Genius," is like man (not divinity) in nature; however, he remains above him in his role as teacher and guide. As "master" of the poet and the song, Bolingbroke does not give voice to the poet or the poem as in a model of a passive or classical inspiration, but rather he is the song's "maestro," its instructor and conductor. Thus Pope likens the variations, the ups and downs, of his verse as a musical score to the muse who "now stoops, or now ascends, / To man's low passions, or their glorious ends." Nevertheless, the analogy of Bolingbroke as muse both likens him to the inspiring divinity and distinguishes him from the enthusiastic subject of a classical inspiration. Pope ironically suggests that the figure of the classical muse here is, in fact, abused in modern authorship; she is the "guide" who is "guided," a guise for the poet's own base desires (his "low passions") or his

ambitious means (his “glorious ends”). Such an enthusiast uses the muse falsely, pretending to borrow her voice, whereas he is in fact guided only by his own passion and ambition.

The formal quality of a more controlled variation of inspiration, which the figure of Bolingbroke contributes to Pope’s verse,<sup>106</sup> however, reveals the addressee as Pope’s *muse*-ical guide and instructor. Moreover, the subsequent lines suggest that the rise and fall of Pope’s poetic strain, though it follows the course of man’s rise and fall in order to formally reflect its subject, never stems from the poet’s “low passions” or his desire for “glorious ends.” Rather, these fluctuations reveal the limitations of a judging mind, “tempered” and “dignified” by the author’s knowledge of his own scope.<sup>107</sup> Describing himself as the ideal authorial subject, Pope thus employs a language of control and restraint to illustrate the motivations behind his verse:

Teach me, like thee, in various nature wise,  
To fall with dignity, with temper rise;  
Form’d by thy converse, happily to steer  
From grave to gay, from lively to severe;  
Correct with spirit, eloquent with ease,  
Intent to reason, or polite to please (Epistle IV, ll. 377-382).

Moreover, this language is couched in a rhetoric of didactic instruction; our ideal poet “steers” from lively to “severe.”<sup>108</sup> Figured as the great orator, “eloquent with ease,” he instructs his public by “correcting” with “spirit.” Such poetic, oratorical, inspiration thus fuses the passionate fervor of the “spirit” with the judgment of “correctness.” Its didacticism employs the “intent to reason,” a critical aim, while using the force of the aesthetic to awaken its audience as the author reaches his public through the “pleasing” entertainments of “politeness.”<sup>109</sup>

As this paradigm of inspiration expresses an ideal relationship between author and reader, it also arises from the poet’s admittedly secular source of inspiration. Bolingbroke, Pope’s “friend” and the exemplary source of his “genius,” his modern man-as-muse, serves as the teacher of the poet, as the true origin of the poem’s own medium of instruction. Thus, Pope

commands his muse to “Teach me,” to be “like thee, in various nature wise.”<sup>110</sup> The poem’s didactic inspiration turns an ancient paradigm of enthusiasm into an active form of imitation, based on communicative learning and instruction. The poet does not simply ape his muse, nor does he become a ventriloquistic vessel for the borrowed language of a divine enthusiasm. Rather the poet is “form’d” by his “converse” (his conversation) with the muse, Bolingbroke. The poet’s natural quality of “genius” is thereby shaped and restrained by the “muse,” or rather by the “muse’s” exemplary instruction. The imitative nature of enthusiasm thus becomes modernized as it is subjected to the poet’s reliance on a model of public conversation and communication. Thus Pope refers to the poetic form with an implied gesture towards the dialogic, critical exchange that occurs between the muse and the inspired author.

Repetitively rousing his muse yet again in another apostrophe to Bolingbroke, Pope rushes his invocation onwards towards his poetic message. However, here the invocation changes its course in a second moment of apostrophe that begins to question the implied, didactic hierarchy between the poet and his muse:

Oh! while along the stream of Time thy name  
Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame,  
Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,  
Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale?  
When statesmen, heroes, kings, in dust repose,  
Whose sons shall blush their fathers were thy foes,  
Shall then this verse to future age pretend  
Thou wert my guide, philosopher, and friend?  
That urg’d by thee, I turn’d the tuneful art  
From sounds to things from fancy to the heart; (Epistle IV, ll. 383-392)

As Pope presents the “name” of Bolingbroke, hurrying through time to “gather...its fame,” he asks his inspiration to predict a future moment that will determine the author’s reputation. Will I, the poet asks his muse, “partake” of your fame as I catch the wind of your inspiration? Pope thus

figures himself in an act of pursuit, chasing his muse in an ambition for fame, as he momentarily slips into an impassioned enthusiasm.

Yet this gesture towards enthusiasm is reformed in the manner of the invocation's continued allusion towards inspiration as instruction: "Shall then this verse to future age pretend / Thou wert my guide, philosopher, and friend" (ll. 389-390). The poet's inspiration is reliant on the instruction, or "guidance," of a "friend." Thus his enthusiasm is of a secular nature; restrained by guidance, this reformed inspiration reveals no enthusiastic error, or false step, on the part of the poet/orator. Nevertheless, the suggestion of an implied hierarchical inversion in this model of inspiration as poetic didacticism lurks beneath the allusion to Bolingbroke's fame-gathering name. Just as Pope figures himself as the small poet embarking on a journey<sup>111</sup> of pursuing his ever-greater muse, he gestures towards the fact that it is he, the poet, who in naming the name of "Bolingbroke" assures his friend, his muse's future fame. Thus when the poet asks a rhetorical question, which remains unanswered at the end of the poem, "Shall then this verse to future age pretend / Thou wert my guide, philosopher, and friend?,"<sup>112</sup> the uncertain frame of the question along with the ambiguous verb "pretend," which might here not only signify to "reach forward" or "lay claim to" but also "to aver" or more skeptically, "to allege,"<sup>113</sup> asks us to rethink the relationship between the poet and his muse. Certainly, Bolingbroke is Pope's "guide," his "philosopher, and friend." Yet in invoking Bolingbroke's philosophical, critical instruction, does Pope's secular muse bring him fame? Is this an abusive, or divisive, act of naming which, as in a paradigm of ancient invocation, uses the title of some greater source to mark the poet's poem and assure the reader of its greatness? Or does poetic invocation in a modern context work differently? We might just as easily argue that in naming Bolingbroke his "muse" Pope does not

derive fame from his subject, here placed with him on the equal footing or status as his “friend,” but rather Pope assures Bolingbroke’s future fame through this current act of naming.

“Consecrated to fame,” like Belinda’s lock, though not mockingly, the address to Bolingbroke exemplifies an important aspect of modern invocation: no explicit, or rigid, hierarchy presides here between the poet and his muse. Rather, Pope’s muse as friend, apostrophized as his partner in “converse,” joins him in a mutual act of elevation. This dialogical space, emphasized by *The Essay on Man*’s genre of poetic epistolarity, reconfigures invocation for the poet’s purposes of inventing the modern author. “Urged,” restrained, and “corrected” by his muse, the poet signals a type of didactic invocation that allows the author to reclaim agency over his own work. It is “I,” Pope claims, (not “thou”) who “turn’d the tuneful art/ from sounds to things, from fancy to the heart.” If the work of the muse is to teach the poet control, then the work of the poet is to add aesthetic power to that critically restraining impulse, now internalized. Thus the poet “turns” the “tuneful art,” which he learns from his muse (as friend, contemporary, instructor, and audience/addressee), into something greater by transforming “sound” into “things” and redirecting “fancy” to the “heart”; in short, he exercises the aesthetic powers of the poet. According to Pope, it is the work of the poet both to reify and to move affectively. Here, the work of the imagination is made easy as sound brings things, inert concepts, to life. Thus the poem’s reader, or listener, never needs to imagine but only to feel, as the poet/orator affectively guides him into a kind of emotional transport checked by the poem’s own reverence for the critical turn, its call for didacticism and judgment. Pope’s persistent turn towards the musical metaphor of poetry thus reveals the relationship between the poet and his modern muse; if the poet uses his aesthetic faculties to reify through sound, to activate an affective response in the reader, then the muse as “maestro” of the “song” (l. 374), as its didactic source, becomes the

poem's musical guide, its conductor or director, who steers the poetic powers of the fancy with his mediating judgment, his critical restraint.

Hence, the final message of the poem, the poet's own words, which transpire from his inspiration and are strengthened by the implications of his modern invocation, now mingles reason with passion as enthusiasm is subjected to a critically aesthetic paradigm fit for the modern epistle:

For Wit's false mirror held up Nature's light;  
Shew'd erring Pride, WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT;  
That REASON, PASSION, answer one great aim;  
That true SELF-LOVE and SOCIAL are the same;  
That VIRTUE only makes our Bliss below;  
And all our Knowledge is, OURSELVES TO KNOW (Epistle IV, ll. 393-398).

By describing Nature as a means of revealing the artifice of wit, Pope critiques one kind of imitation. The metaphor of the "false mirror" as an analogy for wit (or poetry) guided by an errant "pride" exposes the transgressions of one type of art. The implication of this "false" artifice, which introduces Pope's moral message, brings us back to the poem's opening invocation in which the poet and his muse, Bolingbroke, promise in Miltonic fashion to "vindicate the ways of God to Man." The "false mirror" of wit, as a type of perverse imitation, subverts the order of things by trying to imitate that which is not subject to imitation. In terms of ancient invocation, that attempt to ventriloquize a muse as god, or to borrow divine language from a higher source when the author lacks faith in his own voice, amounts to a transgression, a usurpation of divine imitation. Hence, the message of the poem coincides with that of Pope's modern invocation, "whatever is, is right," and "all our knowledge is, ourselves to know." From this perspective, the modern author never "sins against" order, universal or poetic, in his art but only "mirrors nature" in the "light of nature."

This latter notion of imitation as proper reflection, in which the man and artist keeps to his assigned place (a philosophy derived from Shaftesbury's and the Platonists theory of a plastic art) underlines Pope's ideal for the modern poet. The artist's work here is one of revealing, discovering, or "shew'ing" to mankind his true nature by holding up a mirror to "Nature" in the open "light" of day: this activity is fundamental to Pope's notion of the poem's invention, its inspiration, "[its] Genius." Pope's vision of enlightenment suits reason (or judgment) and passion (or affect) to one same and singular purpose. That aim, as Pope himself here states, is a "social" one. If "self love and social are the same,"<sup>114</sup> then Pope's ideal public preserves the individual within the context of a community. Combining the efforts of reason and the passions, the truly modern literary work points to an artistic ideal which promotes this social vision.<sup>115</sup> As such, the modern invocation turns an act of divine borrowing or imitation into one of dialogic communication and instruction. Using Bolingbroke as the didactic and secular source for his poetic inspiration, Pope modernizes, and thereby socializes, the ancient model of classical invocation. In this paradigm of a new enthusiasm, the author assumes his own individual voice and power, critically contained by the learned judgment of his muse as friend and powerfully enforced by the aesthetic powers of the author's "Genius." Such genius, derived from the teachings and conversations of his muse, transpires through a public or conversational scenario as the poet learns, employs, and transmits his oratorical capacities of poetic control and elocution through the lesson of the verse. Transforming sound into image and guiding the heart, Pope's didactic invocation, like the poem itself, thus participates in a modern project of socializing and secularizing the triangular relationship that exists between the poet, his reader, and his muse so as to deliver a new picture of an enlightened enthusiasm. Beckoning his "friend," his "Genius," his "muse," Pope asks both reader and muse to "come along" and follow the lead, to participate

in the order of a modern inspiration that both communicates and obeys the laws of the poetic epistle's modern, critical aesthetics.

*Swift's Satiric Masks: The Mock Epic*

Although written more than twenty years apart, *The Essay on Criticism* and *The Essay on Man* share a similar didactic method common to Pope's genre of the poetic essay. Pope's mock epics, of course, differ from the *Essays* in their more pronounced use of fantastic imagery, in their aesthetic affinity for the objects of the fancy. However, even in his mock epics, Pope's satire fundamentally relies upon what he previously has called poetic genius and invention. *The Rape of the Lock* and *The Dunciad* do in fact instruct by revealing to the reader, via a method of mockery, the wrongs of society and its social members, Pope's primary satiric objects. This imagistic and revelatory quality is much more pronounced in Pope's later mock epic, *The Dunciad*. The *Four-Book Dunciad*, in particular, relies heavily on the theatrical metaphor and theatrical gestures, which lend it its nightmarish qualities. Such dark images, derived from poetic prophesy and fancy, harbor the dangers of the aesthetic, as they, we might argue, instruct by bad example. Yet even in *The Dunciad*, in his opening invocation, Pope gestures towards a revisionary moment, a moment that preserves his notion of satire as a reformatory genre. In this case, it is the satirist himself who will become Pope's inspiration by embodying the work of poetic judgment and invention and by symbolizing the qualities of poetic genius.

John Sitter has called Pope's *Dunciad* an example of the anti-epic, as opposed to the mock epic.<sup>116</sup> However, *The Dunciad* contains many of the same mock-epic qualities as *The Rape of the Lock*, especially in the poem's opening invocation, revised in Pope's *Four-Book Dunciad* to include Cibber, the poem's mock-epic hero. In *Ricardus Aristarchus of the Hero of*

*the Poem*, Pope states that the purpose of the muse in the classical, or “greater epic,” is to “exalt Heroic Virtue, in order to propogate the love of it among the children of men.” Thus the poet’s job of finding a hero for his work who will become the subject of its praise is necessary to any poem associated with the epic form. Yet, Pope warns us in this essay of the fickle nature of the muse, of her “various moods,” which he suggests causes some epics to include heroes who lack, or even oppose, virtue: “But the Muse ceases not here her Eagle-flight. Sometimes satiated with the contemplation of the Suns of glory, she turneth downward on her wing, and darts like lightening on the Goose and Serpent kind.”<sup>117</sup> No doubt this is a reference to *Paradise Lost* and the role of the satanic hero in Milton’s new style of epic. It is no surprise then that when Pope labels the genre of his own poem a “satyric epic,” he places himself immediately after Milton in a long, historical line of epic writers: “...for the future we consider the Epics of Homer, Virgil, and Milton, together with this our poem, as a complete Tetralogy, in which the last worthily holdeth the place or station of the satyric piece.” If the role of the muse as Pope describes it in the classical epic is to laud or “exalt” the hero of the poem, then her role in the “satiric epic” is, as Sitter would say, anti-epical.

In Pope’s *Dunciad*, his most serious satire on enthusiasm, the epic order is inverted. Here, the muse does not exalt the hero, but the hero, as it were, exalts the muse. This inversion, however, will come as no surprise to the reader who has tracked Pope’s literary usage of the muse throughout his oeuvre. The problem with modern enthusiasm for writers of the Augustan period lay, as Johnson put it, in the false nature of inspiration, or as Shaftesbury asserted, in the anachronistic practice of invoking a divinity whom the author does not believe in. Hence, Pope accuses such wayward moderns of manipulating the muse for their own purposes of self-exaltation. Thus Cibber, as one such modern and as the fitting hero of Pope’s *Four-Book*

*Dunciad*, exalts the muse in the poem's opening invocation: "The Mighty Mother and her Son, who brings / The Smithfield Muses to the ear of kings" (ll.1-2, see below). This is a satire of a modern practice of ancient invocation. Nevertheless, Pope's mock invocation also consciously reverses the poetic agency of the classical epic in its satiric, anti-epic structure. Like *The Rape*, *The Dunciad* mocks classical invocation so as to open up a space for its poetic reform.

Critics have historically focused on what happens to epic action in Pope's mock-epic, or anti-epic, *Dunciad*, thereby ignoring the issue of poetic agency in the poem and how this relates to classical epic invocation.<sup>118</sup> By this means, we have come to read Pope's *Four-Book Dunciad* as lacking any reparative gesture typical of Popean satire and of the poet's previous exercises in the mock-epic style. But if Pope's opening invocation is read in light of the remainder of his poem, we can see this passage as a revision of invocation even as it mocks its classical instantiation. As in *The Rape*, so in *The Dunciad* does this type of modern invocation hinge upon a revisionary gesture, which sets up a triangular relation between mock muse, poet, and critic:

The Mighty Mother, and her Son who brings  
The Smithfield Muses to the ear of Kings  
I sing. Say you, her instruments the Great!  
Call'd to this work by Dulness, Jove, and Fate;  
You by whose care, in vain decry'd and curst,  
Still Duncce the second reigns like Duncce the first;  
Say how the Goddess bade Britannia sleep,  
And pour'd her Spirit o'er the land and deep.  
In eldest time, e'er mortals write or read,  
E'er Pallas issu'd from the Thund'rer's head,  
Dulness o'er all possess'd her ancient right,  
Daughter of chaos and eternal Night:  
Fate in their dotage this fair Ideot gave,  
Gross as her sire, and as her mother grave,  
Laborious, heavy, busy, bold, and blind,  
She rul'd, in native Anarchy, the mind  
Still her old Empire to restore she tries.  
For, born a Goddess, Dulness never dies.  
O Thou! Whatever title please thine ear,

Dean, Drapier, Bickerstaff, or Gulliver!  
Whether thou chuse Cervantes's serious air,  
Or laugh and shake in Rab'lais' easy chair,  
Or praise the Court, or magnify Mankind,  
Or thy griev'd Country's copper chains unbind;  
From thy Boetia tho her Pow'r retires,  
Mourn not, my SWIFT, at ought our Realm acquires,  
Here pleas'd behold her mighty wings out-spread  
To hatch a new Saturnian age of Lead (Book I, ll. 1-28).

Notably, the opening invocation never apostrophizes the muse but only alludes to her as a metaphorical figure, debased and passed along like an open secret through the bawdy entertainments of the London public. As in the mock-epic invocation of *The Rape*, this passage also first introduces the muse only to enact her poetic replacement. And as in Miltonic invocation, here the topic of the verse and the grammatical object of the opening phrase precedes the introduction of the "muse," or agent, who will perform the action of "singing."<sup>119</sup> Yet the epic syntax of Pope's opening phrase, which delays the introduction of the verse's true poetic agent, only ultimately emphasizes how he will later revise the muse of Miltonic invocation.

The subjects of the verse and the objects of Pope's satire come first: Dulness, the Mighty Mother, and her son, the laureate Cibber, who will become Pope's satiric-epic hero. It is the anti-hero, not the poet, of Pope's mock epic who exalts the "muse" by "bringing" her to the "ear of Kings."<sup>120</sup> Not only is the figure of the muse brought low in Pope's reference to "The Smithfield Muses" (an allusion to the base forms of entertainment seen at Bartholomew Fair)<sup>121</sup>, but her role becomes a passive one. In a reversal, which alludes to the static classical paradigm of inspiration, inspiration is communicated to the public as the muse herself (once the only agent in epic enthusiasm) is bestowed upon the listener through the act of "bringing." The public listener in his royal seat thus hears the message of a base enthusiasm brought down through a channel of succession whose linguistic origins remain unknown to him. After all, Cibber comes to represent

the role of the modern poet as false enthusiast, who never exerting a voice of his own assumes the work of the ventriloquist, the bringer, the vessel for the language of enthusiasm whose sources are supposedly divine. “Bring” here thus expresses a kind of passive gift-giving, a sequential chain of inspiration connected with the perversions of a royal succession that only emphasizes sameness, tautology, and incest: “Still Dunces the second reigns like Dunces the first.” In the manner of satire, what is high is here brought low, and what is low is thereby exalted. The muse brought down to her basest form is elevated through the passive, formal handiwork of an ancient epic practice of invocation.

In the first two lines, the poet introduces us to his mock-epic machinery, Dulness, to his mock-epic hero, Cibber, and to his mock muses, the dunces of Smithfield. Yet by the start of the third line, when Pope introduces the agent of the song through his prolonged, Miltonic syntax, we already encounter the first gesture of revision in his modern invocation. It is not the muses who are commanded to sing here (Milton, *PL*, Book I l. 6), but rather the poet himself sings. The poet thus performs the true actions of the epic muse and thereby acts as the muse’s actual, modern replacement. Nevertheless, the subject of his song is the material of the mock epic, whose aim in part is to satirize the model of an ancient paradigm of enthusiasm. As soon as Pope reveals himself as the poet who both enacts and becomes the true modern replacement for the muse, he thus returns to his mocking mode to divert the attention away from the nuance of his epic revision to the baseness of his satiric object.

In the same line, therefore, Pope addresses his mock muses, “the great,” or the dunces (whom we might read as the Smithfield muses in their embodied form) in the commanding manner of a classical epic invocation: “Say you, her instruments the Great!...Say how the Goddess bade Britannia sleep!” (ll. 3-7). An interesting satiric move occurs here as Pope invokes

his mock muses, for he mimics his epic forbearers just as he departs from them. By commanding his “muses” to speak for him, Pope mockingly deprives himself of any authorial responsibility just after he has avowed himself the author of his own work. In this manner, the poet seemingly, and mockingly, removes himself from the tragic action of the poem. Claiming the story of England’s demise to be another’s, he thus allows his mock muses to bear the brunt of the blame. Of course, the irony lies in the fact that this removal never actually occurs throughout the poem’s action; the poet is sacrificed with his song (“Then take at once the Poet and the Song,” Book IV, l. 6) and thereby becomes inevitably included in the subject and the fate of his verse.

Hence, Pope highlights the problematic nature of the mock-epic form, implying that by performing the work of satiric mimicry, he must become complicit in the work’s debased actions and its tragic implications. As he departs from the epic form, he thus places himself amongst his epic forefathers in a literary history of inspiration. In order to set himself apart from the poets of the ancient epic, he assumes his own voice “I sing” and claims in his modern modulation of inspiration never to invoke an actual muse; even as he commands his dunces to speak, he disavows all responsibility for “calling them” to his work. Rather, they are invoked, “Call’d to this work by Dulness, Jove, and Fate.” Thus Pope includes Dulness, the perverse Goddess of a wayward, modern-day Britain, amongst the pagan Gods of his ancient, poetic predecessors. Simultaneously, the poet performs the work of a modern “muse,” a self-sufficient author, and displaces the ancient practice of invocation onto his historical ancestors and his hack contemporaries. This paradox thereby suggests that the author of the mock epic, through an act of imitation, becomes tainted by association. After all, the mimicry of the mock epic differs from Pope’s ideal mimesis set forth in *An Essay on Man* as the imitation of “Nature’s light” alone. Mock-epic imitation must mimic art; thereby as an imitation of an imitation, it becomes doubly

artificial. Still, such satiric imitation performs this work only to arrive at a reformatory gesture, and even if Pope fails to right the wrongs of England in his *Dunciad*, he formally revises the problem of enthusiasm and authorial agency in his modern, mock-epic invocation.

The subtle complications that the mock-epic genre contributes to Pope's attempt at modernizing inspiration also become significant in his crowning exchange of epic muse for friend. After satirically invoking his mock muses, the dunces, Pope then concludes his invocation with another secular address to a friend and critic. Notably, this new muse truly remains outside of the poem's tragic action just as he remains physically outside of the boundaries of England proper. Swift thus becomes Pope's modern replacement for the epic muse in *The Dunciad*; he is the ideal critic and audience who, as per Pope's foregoing attempts at modernizing invocation, we might expect to preserve the poet's verse by limiting him, judging him, and checking him, by never allowing him to stray too far beyond the limitations of a modern, reformed enthusiasm. Nevertheless, we might argue that Swift fails in this attempt, for once we arrive at the poem's tragic conclusion, its apocalyptic vision, we encounter a moment in which the poet sacrifices both himself and his language to England's demise.

However, Pope suggests in his opening invocation that England is perhaps not worth preserving. When he asks Swift not to "mourn" what "ought our Realm acquires," he ironically highlights the distinction between his realm, England, and Swift's realm, Ireland. The word "ought" literally translates to "anything that" or "whatever." Of course, in Pope's time "ought" in its noun form also signifies "nothing."<sup>122</sup> Hence, we might argue that Pope refers here to the ambitions of Britain's colonial expansion, its terrible enthusiasm, as a vain desire for gain that will, in fact, lead to the attainment of "nothing." The results of such a vain enthusiasm foreshadow Britain's deserved tragic fall in the imagined prophesies of the fourth book. Here,

“ought our realm acquires” dissipates in an act of undoing, solemnized by the “uncreating word”; we are then left with no-thing but the absencing atmosphere of chaos itself. Thus Pope urges Swift never to mourn the tragic scene set before him, and Britain gives birth to a new “Saturnian age of Lead.” “Saturn” and “lead,” in early modern theories of the humors, are, of course, associated with melancholy, an ailment which Shaftesbury pathologically links in his *Letter* to the maladies of enthusiasm. In what might be read as a prefatory moment in Pope’s modern invocation, the author thus promises to satirize England’s atmospheric panic, its false enthusiasms in this modern era, throughout the imaginative landscape of *The Dunciad*.

At a first glance, the address to Swift, therefore, in no way seems to repair the errors, which Pope finds in an ancient paradigm of inspiration. Rather, it seems only to further Pope’s satire on the problems of enthusiasm in his day. Judgment, for example, never explicitly becomes the subject of Pope’s mock-epic invocation in *The Dunciad*. Unlike the figure of Caryl in *The Rape of the Lock*, Swift is never directly invoked in *The Dunciad* as Pope’s judging mediator, his ideal critic. As such, Pope’s modern invocation seems to differ from those discussed in this chapter, since Swift never explicitly serves the same critical function as does Longinus, Walsh, or Bolingbroke. Nevertheless, a more nuanced reading ultimately reveals that Pope does in fact obliquely highlight Swift’s capacities of judgment. Pope alludes to this quality alongside Swift’s other, more powerful authorial characteristics when he invokes Swift, not simply as critic, but as the ideal and paradigmatic, modern satirist.

Like his other invocations, the opening invocation of Pope’s *Dunciad* thereby becomes a modern modulation of inspiration in which Pope first claims poetic agency over his own verse and finally invokes the figure of Swift so as to perform a transaction of exchange in which friend (and not just poet) replaces muse. Moreover, the language that Pope uses to address Swift in the

opening lines of the poem reveal the manner in which enthusiasm will become modernized in *The Dunciad*. Here, inspiration is secularized and subjected to the language of the aesthetic. Thus Swift enters the scene as the poem's theatrical spectator whose identity as satirist mirrors that of the poet himself.

Assuming masks of many kinds, Swift appears as the man of an ever-shifting identity, who like the player on a stage, takes what "title" he pleases and employs whatever tone is necessary to his particular role.<sup>123</sup> Pope thus highlights the shiftiness of the satirist when he describes Swift's transformations into the figures of Dean, Drapier, Bickerstaff, or Gulliver.<sup>124</sup> Taking on these many names and guises, Swift is described as a talented rhetorician who has the capacity to assume what language or tone he pleases in his work. Here, the great satirist is figured as a kind of ventriloquist who can "chuse" the "serious air" of Cervantes or the comedic equivalent of Rabelais. As I have previously stated, this mimetic and performative nature of the satirist in some manner aligns him with the imitative practices of an ancient paradigm of invocation. Nevertheless, the nature of satiric artifice differs from the ventriloquisms of an ancient model of enthusiasm and certainly from the hack imitations of Pope's satirized contemporaries. Satiric imitation always adds something to the original, changing it through its intentions of satiric reform. Therefore, when Pope invokes Swift as satirist, he also cites the many aims and accomplishments of his friend and muse when he describes Swift in the act of "praising," "magnifying," and liberating. Underneath the transformative masks of the satirist's performance, lie three crucial, accompanying qualities, which define his work. Swift, therefore, retains the ability to judge or critique (evident in his "praise" of the "court"), the capacity to discover and reveal (evident in his "magnification of Mankind" in his work, *Gulliver's Travels*), and to free his country from bondage and oppression ("thy griev'd Country's copper chains

unbind”). The satirist, therefore, exercises the aesthetic powers of imitation, implies Pope, so as to judge, discover (invent, or reveal), and thereby to reform. Swift’s is a liberating genius.

Thereby, Pope reveals satiric performance as the external frame, the ever-shifting form, which dresses up without ever truly altering or inhibiting the author’s genius, his discovering powers of invention. By invoking Swift as his modern muse, Pope derives the complexly conjoined powers of the satirist from a secular source, from his exemplary ideal, his critic, friend, and contemporary.

Moreover, Pope carries the theatrical associations of satire even further in his invocation.<sup>125</sup> In invoking the aesthetic powers of the satirist, Pope also places his modern muse and friend in the role of the aesthetic spectator: “Here pleas’d behold [England’s] might wings out-spread.” When Pope commands Swift to “behold” the images, which he will now set before him, he braces us for the darkly tragic entertainment of this hardly comic satire. Here, he also emphasizes the aesthetic powers of invocation and satire by imagining an audience for his poem.<sup>126</sup> Asking Swift to take a perverse pleasure in England’s demise, Pope figures him as the anti-sympathetic spectator while implying the kind of readership he wishes to promote in *The Dunciad*. The *Four-Book Dunciad* performs the spectacle of the darkest and harshest type of judgment, which Pope issues against his own time. Yet even in Pope’s satire, he reforms the ancient epic in his modernization of inspiration and invocation, restoring the powers of language to the poet, and enacting a secular replacement for the muse with an address to his judging friend and critic. If Pope’s version of the modern muse highlights the voice of the poet himself and acknowledges the necessity of the critical response in literary reception, then the opening invocation of *The Dunciad*, once again, revises enthusiasm by subjecting it to a critically aesthetic paradigm.

In fact, Pope's seemingly non-reformative conclusion to *The Dunciad* also subtly highlights the aesthetic powers of the poet himself alongside the potentially reformative capacities of the satirist. As we have seen in the address to Swift, Pope locates the powers of satire and its potential to reform in the author's ability to judge, to transform, and to discover, or reveal. It is no surprise then, that in both his second invocation, which commences Book IV, and in the poem's closing lines, Pope returns to the theatrical metaphor as an aesthetic framework for his mock epic.

The entire action of Book IV exists in the space of a moment; "yet, yet" the poet hangs on to "one ray of light," which is albeit, a "dim" one:

Yet, yet a moment, one dim Ray of Light  
Indulge, dread Chaos, and eternal Night!  
Of darkness visible so much be lent,  
As half to shew, half veil the deep Intent (Book IV, ll. 1-4).

It is, therefore, in partial obscurity that the poet must assert his final attempts at language in *The Dunciad*. In hellish darkness visible, Book IV, both emerges from and produces a language of "mystery," (Ye Pow'rs! Whose Mysteries restor'd I sing, Book IV, l. 5), a satire, hidden behind the "veil" of dullness, which in semi-darkness can only half "shew" the poet's, and the poem's, "deep intent." Yet the emphasis on the satirist's effort to show, reveal, or discover something before the poem's final apocalypse is telling. It is this effort, this invention, this "Genius," which defines the work of the satirist for Pope along with the powers of the modern author. Invocation in its modern Augustan context thus becomes for Pope a poetic project of unveiling.

Even as Pope describes the failure of his poetic language to survive the chaos of his final mock-epic lines, he never fails to reassert his modern role as author and muse to his own work: "In vain, in vain, --the all-composing Hour / Resistless falls: The Muse obey's the Pow'r (Book

IV, l. 628).” As the hour of composition gives way to those demonic powers, purportedly greater than the poet’s own, order dissolves and the poet seems recklessly to abandon his project. Pope still identifies himself as muse here even as he proclaims to “obey the power” of his mock-epic machinery Dulness, implicitly anticipating a moment in time when inspiration will fail in the face of false idol worship. However, Pope’s satire ends in a performative gesture, which disturbs the certainty of his final lines and disrupts the cynicism behind the poet’s questionable prophesy. If the great Anarch appears to control the poem’s anti-epic conclusion, then her hand only gestures towards the poem’s real maker: “Thy hand, great Anarch! lets the curtain fall; / And universal Darkness buries all” (Book IV, ll. 655-656). As she lets the “curtain” of chaos fall, swallowing at once the poet and his song, Dulness marks Book IV as a mere theatrical display,<sup>127</sup> as the authorial work of illusion and delusion, in which prophesy proves to be a mere dream of apocalypse, a show, staged in a moment, contained in time by the decisive rise and fall of the curtain’s command. Yet as the opening argument of Book IV tells us, these are the poet’s, or speaker’s own prophesies: “The poet being, in this Book, to declare the Completion of the Prophesies mention’d at the end of the former, makes a new Invocation.” Here, the speaker takes over the work of poetic prophesy from the false prophets of the previous book, revealing *The Dunciad* as his own visionary work of fancy. If the poet himself is the creator of these visions, then Dulness as the mock muse of Pope’s “new Invocation” takes on a role similar to that of Pope’s truer muse, Bolingbroke, in *The Essay on Man*; she is the maestro who guides the poet’s vision, who contains his concluding song in the “momentary” space of “one dim ray of light” that spans the length between Book IV’s opening invocation and its closing curtain. In order to become inspired to write of Dulness, Pope has imagined here, as Shaftesbury says, “an audience of his own making.” The reader and viewer are then left, after the work’s close, to lift the curtain

(“\*\*\*\*\*”), the poem’s real dividing line, and unveil “the poem’s deep intent.” As Pope returns to the theatrical metaphor in the final lines of his poem, echoing his allusion to Swift in the opening invocation, he employs the image of the veil as a reminder of the poet’s revelatory genius. Although in darkness, as the show has reached its end, we retain the hint that *The Dunciad* is a mere performance, evidence of the author’s aesthetic powers and his satiric intentions. In this final act of unveiling, this revelatory gesture, the poet thus discovers his own prophesies,<sup>128</sup> which in Book IV replace those of Cibber and Settle in Book III, suggesting that the poet alone, the modern muse himself, will have the last word.

Whether they derive their force from the power of the example or the imagery of the theatrical, Pope’s aesthetic revisions of invocation thus always emphasize the poet’s capacities of invention alongside the inspiring effects of his judgment, two qualities which work in concert so that the author’s genius may inspire his audience, making his readers complicit in a modern paradigm of inspiration. Pope’s modern modulations of enthusiasm in their reliance on invention, judgment, and genius thus become didactic in nature. These modern invocations thereby serve to socialize an ancient paradigm of enthusiasm as the author, reclaiming his own voice, activates inspiration. Becoming the agent of his own work, who derives his inspiring judgment from his exemplary instructors, the poet then teaches, rather than possesses his reader, by discovering to him the true nature and order of things. Redefining revelation as an active and didactic practice, Pope thereby reforms a passive model of enthusiasm. Deriving the powers of genius and didacticism from his predecessors and contemporaries, Pope’s modern muses allow the author to reinvent himself as muse, to inspire, check, compose, order and give voice to his work. Moreover, Pope’s detailed attention to the use of genre and to innovations in form only serve

him on his path to modernizing inspiration. Adopting the ancient forms of the epistle, the essay, and the epic, Pope revises and modernizes these genres as he fits them to the aims and ideal structures of his satire. Just as Pope borrows something of the “fire” of ancient inspiration in his modern redactions of enthusiasm, he adopts something of the order of ancient form in his modern developments of the satiric genre. Paradoxically, Pope thus draws the power of the aesthetic along with the ordering properties of form and judgment, the tenets of his secular, poetic Genius, from a sacred source.

## Chapter Five

### Genius, Muse: Inspiration and Invocation in Fielding's *Tom Jones*

In one of the earliest chapters of *Tom Jones*, Fielding's narrator reaches out to his audience in a moment that seems to require authorial assistance. The manner in which the narrator addresses his audience will soon become familiar to the inexperienced reader of Fielding's work. Eventually, she will feel accustomed to the author's many solicitations and will become comfortable in this community between author and reader, this publically announced, private space of secret sharing, which at this early point in the novel is just newly established. Yet the occasion for this particular instance of camaraderie is significant:

Reader, take care, I have unadvisedly led thee to the Top of as high a Hill as Mr. Allworthy's, and how to get thee down without breaking thy Neck, I do not well know. However, let us e'en venture to slide down together, for Miss Bridget rings her Bell, and Mr. Allworthy is summoned to Breakfast, where I must attend, and, if you please shall be glad of your Company (43-44).

In the nick of time, the reader is saved from a physically precarious situation. More accurately, it is a situation, which arises through the imaginative transports of the text and is only suddenly reified once it is authorized by the narrator's hasty intervention, his charitable desire to lend a helping hand. The event that provides the occasion for this companionship between author and reader, and which in this singular instance extends that companionship even to the characters of the novel, is a near transgression. The author has led his reader to the top of a precipice, to the top of a hill as "high" as Mr. "Allworthy's," and the only method in which he may successfully bring him back down again lies in accompanying him on the journey, in inviting him in.<sup>129</sup> In this moment in the narrative, the author, the reader, and the characters, all occupy the same imagined space, but they only get to that place of shared community by accidentally climbing too

far up the hill, by ascending to a height, which the narrator suggests, they may not yet be “worthy” of:

[Mr. Allworthy’s house] . . . stood to the South-east Side of a Hill . . . high enough to enjoy a most charming Prospect of the Valley Beneath . . . It was now the Middle of May, and the Morning was remarkably serene, when Mr. Allworthy walked forth on the Terrace, where the Dawn opened every Minute that lovely Prospect . . . And now having sent forth Streams of Light, which ascended the blue Firmament before him as Harbingers preceding his Pomp, in the full Blaze of his Majesty, up rose the Sun; than which one object alone in this lower Creation could be more glorious, and that Mr. Allworthy himself presented (42-43).<sup>130</sup>

After a long description of the scenic grounds of Mr. Allworthy’s estate, set “high enough” on a hill, Fielding’s narrative depiction culminates in a sublime image of the sun emerging from the heavens in its celestial triumph; only one object on earth is “*more* glorious” than the sun, writes Fielding, and that is “Mr. Allworthy himself.” Thus the narrator elevates Allworthy to the transcendent-and perhaps dangerously transgressive -heights of a natural supernaturalism. By the end of the novel, Fielding will reveal, or “discover” his idol Allworthy for what he truly is: yet another fallible, human subject in Fielding’s study of eighteenth-century society. Of course, at this point in the novel, Fielding’s narrator addresses a more immediate concern; in observing the ascendancy of the idol-Allworthy, the reader, blinded perhaps by the luminous rays of the Sun, may have transgressed his own bounds by getting lost in the narrator’s idol-making description.

If the reader has in fact reached the summit of this metaphoric mountain, then he has done so by following the narrator’s lead. Lost in the enticing transports of the landscape, he has read himself into the inspiring sublimity of “Allworthy’s” scenic observations, his descriptive transports, brought to the reader’s access by way of the omniscient, omnipresent narrator alone. Suspiciously, the climb to the summit here looks something like an ancient paradigm of inspiration, which transpires through a chain of communication and is reified by the imagination alone. The occasion that gives way to the narrator’s helpful gesture of community, and which

comes to inform the dialogic openness of his style of narration, lies in a moment of dangerous sublimity, a brief transgression into the supernatural. It is an incident, essentially, which does not belong, a briefly averted tragedy, remedied in the hand-holding gesture that has come to define Fielding's narrative approach.

From R.S. Crane onwards, formalist critics have shown an invested interest in the principles of design that inform Fielding's style. One avenue has explored the mathematical mappings of the novel, its symmetrical architectonics. Another critical window has sought to explain the many voices that enter the novel through Fielding's semi-omniscient narration, a peculiarity of Fielding's work that, although it may seem nothing new to the reader of Jane Austen, who retrospectively returns to *Tom Jones*, would have shocked the readers of Fielding's time into believing that this indeed was the "new species of writing" which Fielding had promised to the reader of *Joseph Andrews*.<sup>131</sup> (Notably, this promise may not perhaps have come to its full fruition until Fielding's later novel). This noteworthy feature of Fielding's style has led his twentieth-century readers, however, to see him as a forerunner of Austen's free and indirect discourse and even to consider Fielding's work in light of Bakhtin's theory of "heteroglossia."<sup>132</sup><sup>133</sup> Moreover, for some critics, Fielding's multi-vocal species of narrative is related more specifically to his use of irony. In a recent article on Fielding's style, Jill Campbell writes:

Fielding's mode of evoking ironized perspectives through effects of style . . . focuses far less on the nuanced evocation of a particular character's psychology and much more on the fluid and often fleeting suggestion of a variety of points of view . . . its tendency is to suggest simultaneously that it can imaginatively encompass two perspectives and that it fully claims neither. . . sometimes evoking more than one person's point of view, within a single sentence's capacious span (421-423).<sup>134</sup>

Campbell's eloquent description of Fielding's complex use of voice in the context of irony points to an ever-shifting hierarchy of character, narrative, generic, and socio-political speech acts. These, over the course of Fielding's *Tom Jones*, become subjected to an act of authorial leveling, in which the almost chorus-like fabric of the text establishes all voices on an equal playing field. (For even the narrator's sovereign speech proves flawed at times, tipping the political metaphor of Fielding's fictional voices towards a sometimes democratic model). Henry Knight Miller has made similar claims for Fielding's style regarding the mimetic nature of Fielding's satire in his varied use of generic voice: "[Fielding] could draw upon an associated theory of genres for established tones appropriate to various moods and modes [including: the poetic elevation of the pastoral epic, the moral elevation of the sermon essay, amongst others]" (268). Both Campbell's and Miller's insights into the function of voice in Fielding's style raise issues about the role of judgment in the text. For Miller, the task of the reader becomes that of locating the author's normative voice so as to unlock his true perspective, the true meaning of the satire.<sup>135</sup> For Campbell, however, the narrative tendency of Fielding's work is to lay before us a variety of options, which either overlap or coexist side by side, often without privileging one voice over another. From this pattern, our readerly "judgment" consequently arises as an act of indecision, or rather a careful process of weighing and considering the facts, which forces us never to elect or condemn. In this manner, the reader of irony exercises judgment in the Lockean sense of the word as a faculty of distinction, for he is forced to parse out one voice from another amidst Fielding's textual multiplicity.

Of course, the topic of judgment in *Tom Jones* is no new territory for Fielding criticism<sup>136</sup>; it is, in fact, an issue, which along with the concept of design has inundated formalist readings of the text for more than half of a century. The very impulse that critics have

shown in pairing these two aspects of Fielding's writing (his philosophy of judgment alongside his designing constructions of voice and tone) is telling. It points to the basis that underlies Fielding's artful employment of dialogue, design, and style as one both related to an Augustan sense of order (Pope) and a reverence for the philosophical method of the Socratic dialogue (Shaftesbury). Essentially, Fielding incorporates these two methods into his novelistic genre when he interweaves opposing voices, or elements of contrast, into a dialogic design that emphasizes whole over parts, urging the reader to suspend his judgment until he has digested the larger picture of the artistic work.

As Martin Battestin has argued, this aspect of Fielding's style derives from the principles of Cudworth's aesthetics, which urges the artist to imitate nature: "since nature is herself the supreme artefact-harmonious, symmetrical, skillfully contrived and designed to express the divine idea –the artist who imitates her will reflect and embody this comely order..." (297). Such a system of aesthetics "references the inherent order of creation" (297) Battestin argues. Thus this belief in the order of things, along with the impulse of the artist to mimic that order, becomes a secular act of natural imitation, which nonetheless, by several degrees of separation, still derives its aesthetic powers from a divine source. In other words, as David Paxman puts it: "The artist like God is responsible for creating an harmonious order" (114).<sup>137</sup> Moreover, as Battestin states, this principle of design, rooted in a theory of plastic art, which takes us back to Shaftesbury (although Battestin never makes this connection to Shaftesbury in his use of the Cambridge Platonists here) is what comes to inform an Augustan ideal of order; Fielding's is a "view of art conditioned by neo-Aristotelian aesthetics." This association of Fielding with the Augustans has caused critics such as Battestin and Rawson<sup>138</sup> to compare Fielding's style in *Tom Jones* (a work that Battestin terms the "last of the Augustan age") to the tensions of the Popean

couplet (289). These principles of designing contrast as derived from a natural order, extend themselves, as critics such as Ian Watt have argued, to the level of Fielding's plot constructions: "Such a plot reflects the general strategy of neo-classicism; just as the creation of a field of force makes visible the universal laws of magnetism, so the supreme task of the writer was to make visible in the human scene the operations of universal order" (21).<sup>139</sup>

The purpose behind this Augustan order of design, I have argued, is related to a revisionist moment in literature when the artist, anxious over the problems of enthusiasm in his time, reconsiders the author's relationship to the public sphere. Thus for Fielding, as for Shaftesbury, these ideals of order and design become blueprints for a dialogic mode of writing that brings opposing voices onto an equal footing, obeying a Socratic method of exchange. A continually emerging trend in Fielding criticism has sought to place Fielding in the philosophical tradition of Shaftesbury, either by way of his theories of moral sense,<sup>140</sup> or as an attempt to account for Fielding's theological beliefs.<sup>141</sup> However, little has been done in terms of exploring Fielding's concerns about the cult of enthusiasm,<sup>142</sup> and no one has yet considered the importance of Shaftesbury's style as it may have informed the dialogic design of *Tom Jones*.

I would like to expand upon the many astute observations that critics have made about Fielding's novelistic style and design, along with his persistent emphasis upon the connections between readership and judgment, by arguing that Fielding's style in *Tom Jones* is deeply related to his concerns about enthusiasm and its role in eighteenth-century society. I want to suggest that the dialogic moment in *Tom Jones*, the innovative, genre-establishing gesture in which Fielding's narrator reaches his hand out to the reader, is tied to his project of reforming enthusiasm by way of generic innovation. Certainly, this gesture emphasizes the role that judgment plays in the novel. This moment of address, which establishes a community between author and reader,

reaches back to a tradition of the Socratic method (and as Robert Alter has stated, the “epic”) thus recycling older forms of dialogue in order to establish a new generic medium for Fielding’s “public” fictions.<sup>143</sup> What is at stake in the novel for Fielding is the manner of its public reception,<sup>144</sup> and the genre itself must thereby always engage in a solicitation of the reader’s judgment. This employment of the dialogic form, which both echoes and expands upon the contrasting harmonies of Shaftesbury’s dialogic essays and Pope’s carefully crafted couplets, serves as an occasion for the author to rethink the role that inspiration will play in modern writing. These gestures towards the public domain both temper the author’s potential “enthusiasm” (or rather prevent him from being associated with this marked slur of the period) and deprive an older form of enthusiasm of its passive nature as the responsive engagement of the audience is applied to and activated.

Yet equally important is the author’s capacity to interweave contrasting elements into a unified whole, a process of design that establishes the author/artist as the predominant sovereign over his now secular work. This invention of the author in the modern novel, connected to a secularizing impulse, for Fielding, thus excuses those moments when the author must ventriloquize his reading subject. The narrator must impose upon his reader so as to bring a texture of varied contrast to his work, so as to turn the novel into a Socratic balancing act of vocalized perspectives. Fielding’s art thus arises, I will argue, as a consequence of his anxieties about the enthusiasms of his day. His project to craft a realist-modern form of writing, an effort which begins in the *Preface to Joseph Andrews* and extends itself deep into the consciously-stylized prose of *Tom Jones*, thus spirals out of an accompanying attempt to revise the modern author’s relationship to inspiration. This latter concern reaches as far back in Fielding’s oeuvre to his essays in *The Champion* and even to his shorter, fictional works such as *The Female*

*Husband*<sup>145</sup>; it is a constant anxiety for Fielding which periodically surfaces throughout his earlier writing only to find its culmination in *Tom Jones*.<sup>146</sup>

In his “Chapter on the Marvellous” (395-407), Fielding famously refuses any role for supernatural elements in his new species of a modern-realist<sup>147</sup> writing. It is this moment in *Tom Jones*, when Fielding’s narrator invokes Shaftesbury’s observation “that nothing is more cold than the Invocation of a Muse by a Modern,” (398-99) that prompts us to consider the role of the muse in Fielding’s novel,<sup>148</sup> compelling us to look back and observe the nuanced ways in which Fielding modernizes inspiration in his work, subjecting it to the satirist’s revisionary style, as he applies his version of the mock-epic/mock-heroic genre to his “comic-epic poem in prose.” It is the intent of this chapter, therefore, first to expose Fielding’s satire on enthusiasm in *Tom Jones* and then to exhibit how Fielding revises this species of enthusiasm on the level of his stylized narrative, his innovatively crafted attempt at modernization. In doing so, I shall invoke a number of the associations that operated in Fielding’s time concerning the term “enthusiasm” in order to later emphasize how he definitively revises enthusiasm by way of its more particular connection to “inspiration.” By examining the narrator’s modern redactions of invocation along with Fielding’s narrative employment of metaphor, I will argue that Fielding aestheticizes enthusiasm in *Tom Jones* by subjecting inspiration both to the author’s faculties of genius and to the reader’s critical judgment. In this manner, I will argue that Fielding reinvents enthusiasm, by discovering a type of “inspiration” fit for modern authorship. Like the other authors addressed in this work, Fielding’s revision of enthusiasm arises from his secular approach to invocation and inspiration. As Fielding’s invocations of the muse in *Tom Jones* begin to depart from an ancient conception of inspiration, he moves from the mock-heroic register of his prose, from a satirical approach to enthusiasm, only to arrive at a solution for reforming inspiration. In the end, Fielding’s modern,

modulation of enthusiasm replaces an apostrophe to the divine with a self-affirming address to the author's own genius. Genius, in its relationship to invention and discovery, thus becomes the aesthetic force behind Fielding's rationalist-empiricism that will replace an older, passive model of enthusiastic expression so as to reinvent inspiration for the purposes of the modern author.

*Enthusiastic Subjects: The Cast of Tom Jones*

As many critics have emphasized, Fielding's particular species of realism, which he outlines in his principles for a new province of writing both in his *Preface to Joseph Andrews*<sup>149</sup> and again in the introductory chapters of *Tom Jones*, eliminates any romantic turn to the supernatural by confining itself to the subject of human nature.<sup>150</sup> Yet Fielding's study of the human subject, which expounds the philosophy of a rational empiricism ala Shaftesbury, locates a very natural propensity in the human psyche and constitution towards enthusiasm. For Fielding, this enthusiastic turn, this desire to transgress the limits of the human, becomes a natural threat to both his characters and his narrator alike; it is threat, moreover, which often problematizes the relationship of these subjects to the social sphere. Fielding's persistent attempts at satirizing enthusiasm would take on many aspects of the term's various implications in the first half of the eighteenth century. As I shall demonstrate throughout this chapter, enthusiasm for Fielding was tied equally to the perversions of religious doctrine and the socio-political sphere. Hence, Fielding poses constant attacks in *Tom Jones* as in his other fictional writings and essays on the revolutionary spirit of Jacobitism<sup>151</sup> and the dangers of Methodism.<sup>152</sup>

In fact, almost all of the main characters in *Tom Jones* suffer from some kind of enthusiasm. The enthusiastic malady proves, of course, to be the worst amongst our hero's adversaries. For example, the introduction of Thwackum and Square into the novel (122-125)

exposes two types of enthusiasm,<sup>153</sup> which might arguably stem from Shaftesbury's attempts at enthusiastic reform in *The Characteristics*. Thwackum's birchen methodologies, like those of the wrongful magistrates in Shaftesbury's *Letter*, reveal a type of theological enthusiasm that for Fielding had come to pervert the "all-worthiness" of a Christian doctrine through the sadistic rites of an immoral type of religious practice. Notably, other characters in the novel, who serve to hinder or thwart Tom's progress, employ the same birchen doctrine as Thwackum. Not only Blifil, but even Black George, who ambiguously is and is not an antagonist of Tom's, reflects Thwackum's species of enthusiasm when his passionate disposition manifests itself as a form of domestic violence: "Arguments [were] but wind...which served rather to increase [the Storm] than to abate it," Fielding writes in his description of George on page 186. "For the Virtue of this Medicine, like that of Electricity, is often communicated through one Person to many others, who are not touched by the instrument." Fielding thus likens the nature (or as he writes, the "virtue," in his ironic punning on the term) of physical abuse to the contagious qualities of an enthusiastic malady. Like Shaftesbury's "panic," Black George's passionate turn is conveyed by the force of the spectacle. Safe from any actual physical contact, those who catch the disorder are never "touched by the instrument." Thus the medicine for the enthusiastic ailment only increases the affective disorder as George's impassioned malady gets "communicated" by "aspect," or physical demonstration.

Just as Thwackum serves as a warning to the reader of the dangers of a theological enthusiasm, Square comes to embody those of the more philosophical enthusiast. Martin Battestin has argued that Square can be read as a parody of the real-life Lord Shaftesbury himself, since Square's philosophies often echo those of the Cambridge Platonists.<sup>154</sup> Despite the fact that so many of Fielding's views on aesthetics seem to derive as much from Augustan

principles of design as they do from the Platonist's theories of a plastic art, Square's philosophical principles never perfectly mirror those of Shaftesbury's *Characteristics*.<sup>155</sup> For example, on page 125, Fielding writes that Square thought virtue a "Matter of Theory" only, an assertion, which is certainly not the case for Lord Shaftesbury. Battestin's comparison may be complicated by the fact that Shaftesbury's essayistic style in *The Characteristics* attempted to mirror the dialogic mode of the Socratic method, taking on a multiplicity of voices, which at times seemed to raise philosophic contradictions (many of which get worked out in the *Miscellanies*) throughout the essays.<sup>156</sup> We might, however, read Square rather as a parody of Shaftesbury's own figure of self-parody in *The Characteristics*: the character of Philocles, whose periodic, philosophic skepticism in *The Moralists* becomes an object of satire as Theocles's natural enthusiasm comes to triumph over Philocles's more extreme rationalism. Like Philocles, Square also undergoes a conversion experience<sup>157</sup> at the end of *Tom Jones* in which he admits to Allworthy that: "The Pride of Philosophy had intoxicated my Reason, and the sublimest of all Wisdom appeared to me, as it did to the Greeks of old, to be Foolishness" (927). Square's idolatry of reason ironically deprives him of reason, and thus he falls short of what I have argued is the Augustan attempt at reforming enthusiasm, a phenomenon which is here presented in the language of a Christian sublimity. In other words, by too much privileging the cult of reason, Square fails to expound the values of an aesthetic mediation between the rational and the empirical.<sup>158</sup> If Thwackum's theological enthusiasm results from an excess of the passions, then Square's rational enthusiasm poses an antithetical opposition to Thwackum's, which, nevertheless, results in similar outward consequences.

Of course, in his opposing pictures of enthusiasm, Fielding always subscribes to a theory of the mind-body continuum. Even though Square's enthusiasm proves to be a disorder of the

mind, which is not merely grounded in the sensual workings of the passions, it has bodily repercussions. In Square's letter to Allworthy at the end of *Tom Jones*, which marks his final words in the novel that both serve to announce his conversion to Christianity and to exculpate Tom from his past wrongs, he begins: "My Worthy Friend, I informed you in my last that I was forbidden the Use of the Waters, as they were found by Experience rather to encrease than lessen the Symptoms of my Distemper" (924). In a footnote to these lines, Battestin argues that this is "perhaps a clue to the nature of Square's illness." Citing Dr. Cheyne, Battestin writes:

'only three sorts of distempers could not be beneficially treated by bathing in the Bath waters, chief among these being 'The Distempers which impair the rational Faculties, or affect the Head with pain, or Giddiness. Because Hot-bathing might send Fumes, or Vapours upwards, and so increase these Distempers' (924).

If we accept Battestin's medical hypothesis, then we might conclude that Square seems to suffer from an enthusiastic ailment or disorder. As Shaftesbury illustrates in his *Letter*, the medical or biophysical assumptions surrounding the pathologization of enthusiasm still appropriated the language of humoral theories to the "disorder." Square's inability to vent the more melancholic, or blacker, humours, leaves him unguarded against the infectious "fumes and vapours" often thought to carry the contagious seeds of an enthusiastic distemper.<sup>159</sup>

As a devout student of both Thwackum and Square, Blifil, Tom's greatest adversary in Fielding's "history," serves as Fielding's most urgent warning against the immoral repercussions of a "learned" enthusiasm. We may not immediately read Blifil as an enthusiast—in part due to the fact that his calculating nature distinguishes him from Fielding's other representations of enthusiasm amongst the characters of *Tom Jones*. Blifil's persistent employment of rhetoric as a means of attaining his goals,<sup>160</sup> is a gift that, as critics such as Nicolas Hudson have argued, the character quite explicitly shares with Milton's Satan. Yet the Satanic ambition that also accompanies Blifil's use of rhetoric makes it easy for the reader to typecast him as a Miltonic

derivative whose function amidst all of Fielding's mock-epic employments is to satirize the dangers of an older epic, or ancient, paradigm of enthusiasm. In this manner, Blifil serves as the enthusiastic over-reacher of Fielding's comic-epic poem in prose. However, as Thwackum's most prized pupil, Blifil also promotes his mentor's doctrine of an infectious enthusiasm. Blifil's religious followings thereby subtly key the reader into the type of threat that Thwackum's enthusiastic religion and inspiration poses to language itself. Whether or not Blifil's religious zeal is read as genuine or feigned (though I will argue that it is certainly suspect and may intentionally imply the kind of falseness attributed to enthusiasm in Johnson's eighteenth-century definition of the term), it is revealed as a product of a passive type of mimetic learning and religious worship:

To say the Truth, Blifil had greatly gained his Master's Affections; partly by the profound Respect he always shewed his Person, but much more by the decent Reverence with which he received his Doctrine; for he had got by Heart, and frequently repeated his Phrases, and maintained all his Master's religious Principles with a Zeal which was surprising in one so young, and which greatly endeared him to the worthy Preceptor (133).

Blifil's zeal reminds us of Fenves's paradigm for enthusiasm as a model of inspiration or religious fervor, which is passive in nature; it transpires from divinity to author/priest to the learning/reading subject by way of mimetic repetition. Blifil practices religious worship or "reverence" through the doctrinal model of reception. Receiving words like the passively swallowed gift of the eucharist, Blifil exercises religious "principles," through mimesis. Repeating phrases by "heart," Blifil's religious "affect" boils down to a mere formal repetition of a linguistic reduction. Thus Thwackum's model for priestcraft and religious worship reduces the individual, religious subject to the undifferentiated mass of a uniform, communal religious body. Like a member of Fenves's schwärmerei, the religious subject is here relegated to the status of

the sovereign slave, as his religion deprives him of the thinking, judging faculties of the rational mind.

Of course, this depiction of enthusiasm is more a commentary on Thwackum than it is on Blifil, for although Thwackum's teachings may be of an enthusiastic nature, our tendency is to read Blifil as a false follower who calculatingly affects his faith as a means of achieving his ambitious aims. Nonetheless, just as Fielding suggests that Blifil's "enthusiasm" is experiential, or learned, he also comically hints at the possibility of its being a "genetically inherited" trait. Both of Blifil's parents are described as being somewhat deficient in their moral-religious sentiments. Miss Bridget Allworthy, who is introduced into the narrative as a "saintly" figure, well-read in "English divinity" (62) also shares her "saintly" appellation with the institution of "Bridewell," the site of punishment for loose women.<sup>161</sup> Yet Bridget's promiscuity, though it may expose her hypocrisy and false exterior when it comes to her purported moral beliefs, never quite identifies her as an enthusiast. Rather, Blifil seems to "inherit" his religious enthusiasm from his father whom the narrator early on describes as having "studied the scriptures" to the extent that he "was suspected of Methodism" (63). Ironically, these hints of Methodism in the Captain seem to make a miraculous, "genetic" reappearance when they resurface at the end of the narrative in Blifil's conversion experience (one which notably appears to be less glamorous and genuine than Square's). In exile, as Blifil uses all of his money to buy a seat in Parliament, he decides to convert to Methodism: "He is also lately turned Methodist, in hopes of marrying a very rich Widow of that Sect, whose Estate lies in that Part of the Kingdom" (979-980). Of course, Blifil's Methodism, grounded less in true religious sentiment than in his avaricious ambitions, shares something in common with the characteristics of Blifil's father. The Captain, also a Methodist, too affects affection in order to marry in a "fit of passion," which is derived

largely from his monetary aspirations. Fielding's attacks on Methodist enthusiasm, here as in his other writings, seem to connect to the moral flaws of ambition and are often grounded in disingenuous sentiments; his Methodist conversions, at least, serve as mere stepping stones to the prospects of marital union.<sup>162</sup> Hence, Fielding characterizes Blifil, whose ambitious aims lead him to feign enthusiasm and Methodism, as the quintessential false enthusiast.

Many of Fielding's non-adversarial characters, of course, exhibit a seemingly more benign type of enthusiasm. However, even the more loveable, satiric objects of Fielding's history have the capacity to affect the social order and the literary design of the narrative, as they often disrupt and upset the artistic and worldly balance of Fielding's realist novel. Characters such as Partridge, for example, simply serve as comedic staples in Fielding's mock-epic romance. In playing the fool, Partridge often embodies many of the characteristic facets of the ancient enthusiast. Just as he fails to import properly the language of the ancients into a modern usage, either by misusing or misapplying his Latinate jargon, he also anachronistically transports the rites of an ancient enthusiasm into a modern context. As a figure who pays stock in dreams (425), who ascribes to the laws of superstition (444, 451), and who imbibes inspiration through the Dionysian tradition of constant drink (466),<sup>163</sup> Partridge comes to resemble the paradigmatic enthusiast of old who no longer fits into the modern world of Fielding's social-realist novel.

For this very reason, as Fielding comes to revise an older, ancient concept of enthusiasm by both aestheticizing and secularizing it in order to tailor it to the purposes of the modern author, Partridge never conforms to the new, critically-aesthetic paradigm which underlies Fielding's art.<sup>164</sup> In Fielding's most famous employment of the theatrical metaphor in *Tom Jones*, in which he imports the narrator's earlier assertions about the connection between the world and the stage into an actual theatrical scenario, Partridge fails to rise to Fielding's ideal of

the aesthetic viewer. Mistaking the imitation for the original, Partridge assumes the actor, Garrick, to be a real-life Hamlet, and thereby exposes his own error in judgment, his own crucial inability to distinguish (857). However, even if Partridge lacks the judging faculties of Fielding's ideal, critical audience, like Tom, he exhibits the potentially moral affects of the sympathetic spectator<sup>165</sup>: "And during the whole Speech of the Ghost, he sat with his Eyes fixed partly on the Ghost, and partly on Hamlet, and with his Mouth open; the same Passions which succeeded each other in Hamlet, succeeding likewise in him" (854). In a literal act of sympathy,<sup>166</sup> Partridge unconsciously mimics the outward expressions and gestures of the acting subject as he quite actually comes to feel what the aesthetic object also "feels." Nevertheless, the danger of this mimetic response lies in the fact that the original feeling (that of the actor) is not genuine but a mere performance. Thus Partridge, unlike Tom or Sophia,<sup>167</sup> falls short of Fielding's critically aesthetic paradigm of spectatorship and readership as he lacks the "wisdom" to know the difference. Although the sentiment behind Partridge's mimetic response may be innocent, and certainly lacking in the evil nature of Blifil's mimetic model of a learned enthusiasm, Partridge's lack of aesthetic judgment often causes him to upset the natural, or desired, order of things as his enthusiasm often thwarts Tom's attainment of his desired object, Sophia. As Partridge's drunken outbursts create obstacles for Tom on his path, so do his superstitious tendencies and fears have literary repercussions as they become the agents of digression in the story of the Man of the Hill (466).

Of course, in the case of the Man of the Hill, Partridge's digressions, his superstitious tales of interruption, have no lasting consequences as one type of enthusiasm only detracts from, and derails, another. The Man of the Hill concludes his story with a long discourse that exposes him as a kind of natural enthusiast whose rhetoric resembles that of Shaftesbury's Theocles from

*The Moralists* (484).<sup>168</sup> However, the Man of the Hill's insistence that "...Philosophy and Religion may be called the Exercises of the Mind, and when this is disordered they are as wholesome as Exercise can be to a distempered Body" (471) immediately proves suspect in light of Fielding's tendencies to articulate the effects of the passions as part of a mind-body continuum. Here, we might recall Shaftesbury's warnings concerning the distempered mind in acts of contemplation (*Letter*); in reflecting upon religion and philosophy, the disillusioned enthusiast will only misconstrue or pervert the object of contemplation. Moreover, unlike Theocles, the Man of the Hill is a self-avowed misanthrope who defies Shaftesbury's ideals of the sociable enthusiast. As Jones points out (484), the Man of the Hill's enthusiasm stems from a perverse abhorrence of humankind, from an excess of skepticism reminiscent more of Palemon at the start of *The Moralists* than of Theocles. In fact, Fielding warns us early on in his narrative against the kind of enthusiasm practiced by the Man of the Hill when Allworthy states: "Nothing less than a Persuasion of universal Depravity can lock up the charity of a good Man; and this Persuasion must lead him, I think, either into Atheism, or Enthusiasm; but surely it is unfair to argue such universal Depravity from a few vicious Individuals... (96-97)." Such fervor against humankind, therefore, contradicts Fielding's ideal Christian doctrine, which always emphasizes the human potential for charity and sociability.

Fielding's critiques of enthusiasm that arise on the level of his explorations into human nature and character thus all attack an older paradigm of enthusiasm as a passive phenomenon, which deprives the human subject of critical judgment, sociability and charitability, which subjects him to the mimetic patterns of learning and aesthetic contemplation, which deifies the balance between empiricism and rationalism necessary to any philosophy of a critical aesthetics, and which ultimately poses a threat to community by reducing it to mob mentalities.<sup>169</sup>

Fielding's ultimate model for both society and literary form will encompass the ideals of a Platonic design and an Augustan aesthetics by emphasizing a pattern of differentiated unity, which like to the contrasting couplets of a Popean poetics, combines the faculties of wit and judgment in its aesthetic ideals. Yet despite the threat that enthusiasm poses to Fielding's modern concepts of art, form, and the social sphere, its pervasive presence throughout all of his character studies seems to suggest that, like Shaftesbury, Fielding sees enthusiasm as a natural phenomenon and as an inescapable truth in any exploration into the human condition.

The inevitability of the enthusiastic moment, even in the context of the modern human subject, becomes clearer as Fielding's two protagonists, his paragons of the modern hero, also exhibit tendencies towards an enthusiastic turn. Certainly, Tom's periodic ecstasies, brought on by his adoration of Sophia, reveal him as the enthusiastic lover, for so often does the narrator describe Tom as "beside himself" or "out of his senses" (207). Nor does Fielding seem to attribute these foibles to a complete absence of reason, or even to a mere excess of the animal spirits, on Tom's part. Even Sophia, the beloved "Wisdom" herself, finds it hard to resist the temptations of the enthusiastic moment. Yet her strength in resisting enthusiasm often does not result from any presiding sense of reason. Rather it arises from the fortunate and haphazard consequence of one kind of passion triumphing over another:

Sophia was charmed with the Contemplation of so heroic an Action [as becoming a "martyr" to the will of her father], and began to compliment herself with much premature Flattery, when Cupid, who lay hid in her Muff, suddenly crept out, and, like Punchinello in a Puppet-shew, kicked all out before him. In Truth (for we scorn to deceive our Reader, or to vindicate the Character of our Heroine, by ascribing her Actions to supernatural Impulse) the Thoughts of her Beloved Jones, and some Hopes (however distant) in which he was very particularly concerned, immediately destroyed all which filial Love, Piety and Pride had, with their joint Endeavors, been labouring to bring about (360-61).

Here, Sophia's dangerous contemplation of self-sacrifice to her father's will, an act which Fielding couches in the rhetoric of religious martyrdom, luckily subsides as romantic love proves stronger than filial love. Of course, as Fielding suggests in his suspended, tonal irony,<sup>170</sup> this inclination towards playing the martyr results less from mere "love" or "piety" than it does from the sins of "pride." As Sophia narrowly escapes the consequences of a dangerous enthusiasm (for the language of martyrdom certainly exhibits the inspired passivity that Fielding associates with an ancient model of enthusiastic rhetoric), Fielding doubly sacrifices the ancient for the modern by invoking the supernatural only to dispose of it mockingly. Ironically, the triumph of Sophia as a modern, thinking subject who refuses to sacrifice herself to the tyrannical will of a patriarchal figure never reveals her as anything but a creature of the passions. (Notably, Squire Western, of course, also exhibits the markings of an enthusiast in his Jacobite principles and his drunken riots). Moreover, as Sophia battles against the mob desires of the upper-classes (Squire Western, Aunt Western, Lady Bellaston etc...) who inevitably wish to force her into one marriage or another, her individualist nature seems always curiously to suit the realist-modern project of the authorial subject (i.e. the narrator) himself.

It is, of course, largely Fielding's project to establish a basis for realism within the novel that serves to reform this issue of enthusiasm, which he finds so prevalent amidst his explorations of the individual, human subject within the social sphere. However, the very fact that Fielding reads a propensity towards enthusiasm as being naturally related to the passions (something which is never maligned in the world of Fielding's serio-comic sentimentalism) should clue us into his desire to preserve some of this enthusiastic sentiment in his establishment of a new, modern form of writing. As in Pope's mock-epic poetry, Fielding's use of the mock-heroic mode in *Tom Jones* reveals a certain attachment to enthusiasm (as inspiration), which he

finds so instrumental to the process of writing and artistic production that he opts never wholly to dispose of this ancient practice through his process of modernization. Fielding's resolution for the enthusiasm he finds both in the individual, human subject and the larger, social body, his version of a modern inspiration, which will come to replace an ancient, more passive model of enthusiasm, thus entails a dual process of secularization and socialization. Like Shaftesbury, Fielding seeks first to aestheticize enthusiasm and then to place it within a critical paradigm that employs the reader's faculties of judgment. This latter part of Fielding's process (as in Shaftesbury's later philosophies on enthusiasm) arises in *Tom Jones* as Fielding begins to subject inspiration to his particular species of the dialogic mode.

### *Metaphor takes Muse*

Fielding's satiric attack on enthusiasm appears most strikingly in his character studies, as we have seen, and his attempt to reform this natural propensity begins in the prefatory chapters of *Tom Jones*. Here, Fielding lays out an artistic philosophy of enthusiastic reform in his essayistic style, which he will then put to practice in his subsequent employments of the mock-heroic mode, finding a solution to the problem of enthusiasm in the production of a new, literary form. Fielding begins by announcing his project to dispose of an ancient paradigm of writing by stripping his narrative of any supernatural presences. Avowing to dispose of any antiquated invocations to a muse, his narrator discourses on "the marvelous" in his famous introduction to Book VIII:

First, I think, it may very reasonably be required of every Writer, that he keeps within the Bounds of Possibility; and still remembers that what is not possible for Man to perform, it is scarce possible for Man to believe he did perform. This conviction, perhaps, gave Birth to many Stories of the antient Heathen Deities . .

.The Poet, being desirous to indulge a wanton and extravagant Imagination, took Refuge in that Power, of the Extent of which his Readers were no Judges, or rather which they imagined to be infinite, and consequently they could not be shocked at any Prodigies related of it . . . I wish . . . with all my Heart, that Homer could have known the Rule prescribed by Horace, to introduce supernatural Agents as seldom as possible. We should not then have seen his Gods coming on trivial Errands, and often behaving themselves so as not only to forfeit all Title to Respect, but to become the Objects of Scorn and Derision. A Conduct, which must have shocked the Credulity of a pious and sagacious Heathen; and which could never have been defended, unless by agreeing with a Supposition to which I have been sometimes almost inclined, that this most glorious Poet, as he certainly was, had an Intent to burlesque the superstitious Faith of his own Age and Country. But I have rested too long on a Doctrine which can be of no Use to a Christian Writer: For as he cannot introduce into his Works any of that heavenly Host which make a Part of his Creed [see footnote]; so is it horrid Puerility to search the Heathen Theology for any of those Deities who have been long since dethroned from their Immortality. Lord Shaftesbury observes, that nothing is more cold than the Invocation of a Muse by a Modern; he might have added that nothing can be more absurd. A modern may with much more Elegance invoke a Ballad, as some have thought Homer did, or a Mug of Ale with the Author of Hudibras . . . The only supernatural Agents which can in any Manner be allowed to us as Moderns are Ghosts; but of these I would advise an Author to be extremely sparing . . . nor would I advise the Introduction of them at all in those Works, or by those Authors to which, or to whom a Horse-Laugh in the Reader, would be any great Prejudice or Mortification (395-399) . . . Man therefore is the highest Subject (unless on very extra-ordinary Occasions indeed) which presents itself to the Pen of our Historian, or of our Poet; and in relating his Actions, great Care is to be taken, that we do not exceed the Capacity of the Agent we describe. Nor is Possibility alone sufficient to justify us, we must keep likewise within the Rule of Probability (400).

Notably, Fielding's project to construct a modern, realist history finds its roots in a concern for the integrity of the religious system, for a desire never to undermine the human capacity for faith, or "belief" as his narrator calls it, by asking one to stretch that capacity too far.<sup>171</sup> It is impossible for man to "believe" that man has "performed" what it is impossible for man to "perform," Fielding's narrator argues. Although Fielding's use of the word "perform" here quite simply connotes the carrying out of an "action" and does not necessarily retain any of the theatrical implications of the term, we might still recall Fielding's comparison of the world to the stage here, noting that all actions "performed" in Fielding's history will be limited to the confines of a

theatrical scenario or paradigm. Hence, as Fielding's narrator promises, the only supernatural agent fit for modern writing is the ghost, and, in fact, this is the only supernatural agent which "appears" in Fielding's narrative, albeit in a theatrical setting. Moreover, the appearance of the ghost, as Fielding also promises, will merely serve the purpose (via Partridge) to provoke a "Horse-Laugh in the Reader." Any kind of supernatural agent in Fielding's history must, therefore, act only in service of the author's satirical motives.

The exception of the ghost thus brings us back to the opening of the above passage in which Fielding's narrator launches a semi-critique of his ancient, epic predecessor, Homer. This seeming digression, which our narrator dismisses as mere irrelevance (since, being a modern, our author cannot invoke a deity which has been "long ...dethroned from [its] Immortality"), nevertheless, provides an insight into the deeper workings of Fielding's project about which our narrator is here not wholly explicit. Although Fielding's narrator asserts, following Shaftesbury, that for a modern to invoke a muse is simply anachronistic, like Shaftesbury, Fielding will continue to invoke the muse throughout his work. The reasoning behind this seeming hypocrisy, of course, can be read in the narrator's sneaking suspicions about Homer as an author; it is possible, he asserts, that Homer was using these deities for satiric means, in order to "burlesque" the superstitious beliefs of his contemporary readers.

The narrator's suppositions about Homer, whether or not they are read as satiric in tone (for Fielding also ridicules the reverence, and continual reliance, which modern authors, himself included, place on ancient writers), reveal the basis of his own project; he will invoke the supernatural only as a means of satirizing his reader. Yet unlike Homer, Fielding takes care, as many critics have argued, to train his reader into proper critical practices. We see this phenomenon in *Tom Jones* arise in relation to the invocation of deities and the presence of the

marvelous as Fielding, at times, places the realist project of modernizing his history in the hands of his narrator and at times in the hands of his reader:

Sleep, however, at length got the better of all Resistance; and now, as if he had really been a Deity, as the Ancients imagined, and an offended one too, he seemed to enjoy his dear-bought Conquest.—To speak simply, and without any Metaphor, Mr. Jones slept till Eleven the next Morning, and would, perhaps, have continued in the same quiet Situation much longer, had not a violent Uproar awakened him (761)

...

The Ancients would certainly have invoked the Goddess Flora for this Purpose [alluding to the role of the basket woman at the start of a coronation parade] and it would have been no Difficulty for their Priest or Politicians to have persuaded the People of the real Presence of the Deity, though a plain Mortal had personated her, and performed her Office. But we have no such Design of imposing on our Reader, and therefore those who object the Heathen Theology, may, if they please, change our Goddess into the above- mentioned Basket-woman (153-4).

In both of these excerpts, Fielding's narrator invokes a divine presence only to replace it with its modern equivalent. The effect of the narrator's realist deflation is similar in both passages.

However, the method, which he tactfully employs in order to achieve this realization differs from one passage to the other. I will demonstrate this contrast through a reading of both passages, beginning with the first citation.

In the first quotation, the effect of the transition is slowly suspended, creating a mild shock in the reader as the tone of the passage shifts along the transition of the marked dash. This effect not only serves to ridicule the reader, who begins almost to believe in Sleep as though he were "a Deity, as the Ancients imagined," but it emphasizes the powers of the narrator's authorial control. Notably, this invocation of Sleep as a deity is never even purportedly genuine. (In other cases of the narrator's use of the supernatural, however, he will invoke the divine only to retract the invocation at the expense of his reader in an effort to ridicule him). Instead of fully applying to the mock-heroic mode here, Fielding outright admits to his reader that Sleep is not a

deity in this context, and yet he uses the power of the ancients' belief, or as he calls it "imagination," in order to figure sleep in the allegorical mode.<sup>172</sup>

The effect of the literary figure transpires as Fielding translates the same sentence, post dash, into the straightforward tones of realism. Once enraptured by the power of the literary metaphor and the artistic syntax, the reader now awakens to the banality of the real-life situation: Jones sleeps and wakes. His fictional history is subjected to the dull habitude of everyday life (as per a Richardsonian model of realist temporality). However, it now lacks the artistic embellishments of a skilled writer. Thus Fielding urges that the modern author's art need not be sacrificed to the realist project—though the supernatural and the marvelous are. What charms in the first half of the sentence is, of course, the illusion that some external power exercises itself over Jones's actions. This momentary suspension of disbelief, which engages the reader, giving him over to the affective power of the text, appears lacking in the second half of the construction in which Jones simply goes through the necessary motions of life.

Thus Fielding attempts to import something from the powers of the romance tradition into his style of writing, preserving a distinction between the poetics of fiction and the mundane of everyday life, while still depriving his work of any supernatural transgressions into the "unbelievable." As he states earlier in his text, this exchange divests the text of the power of the supernatural and places it into the sphere of the author as inspiration no longer becomes an act of divine invocation, but rather a secular exercise of artistic authorship:

For as this Liquor of modern Historians, nay, perhaps their Muse, if we may believe the opinion of Butler, who attributes Inspiration to Ale, it ought likewise to be the Potation of their Readers; since every Book ought to be read with the same Spirit, and in the same manner, as It is writ... That our Work, therefore, might be in no danger of being likened to the Labours of these Historians, we have taken every Occasion of interspersing through the whole sundry Similes, descriptions, and other kind of poetical Embellishments. These indeed are designed to supply the place of the said Ale, and to refresh the Mind, whenever

those slumbers which in a long Work are apt to invade the Reader as well as the Writer, shall begin to creep upon him (150-151).

Here, as in the case of the above description of Jones sleeping, metaphor promises to replace the role of ancient inspiration. It is the embellishments of the author, his controlling exercise over the text, which will supplant the power of the ancient muse. This modernization of the muse, argues Fielding, is clearly superior to that sort of replacement which other modern, “realist” authors have attempted; in order to make their work entertain, these writers have simply masked its dullness with the powers of drink. Such literary attempts at the art of pleasing, which, punningly, add “spirit” to a book only by way of drinking “spirits,” in fact never depart from any ancient notion of enthusiasm. (We might recall here that enthusiasm was literally and definitively linked to the to the drunken practices of the Dionysian rites). Rather, here inspiration becomes an authorial crutch that lulls both author and reader into a dull sleep, as authorship and readership are subjected to a literal act of passive of consumption.<sup>173</sup> Through an artistic attention to detail and metaphor, our narrator thus promises to reawaken his reader into a critical spectatorship, vowing to “refresh” his mind and preserve his subject from any of those hypnotic effects so characteristic of an ancient, Dionysian paradigm of enthusiasm.

This authorial promise brings us to the satirical method of the second quotation cited above. Here, as in the case of the description of Jones sleeping, the author replaces his momentary invocation of a divinity with its modern equivalent. In this case, the basket woman serves as a modern-day replacement for the role that in ancient times would have been played by the “Goddess Flora.”<sup>174</sup> Notably, a modern act of substitution occurs even though the spirit and overall custom of the ancient rite (i.e. the coronation parade) survives. Thus we encounter an historical metaphor, or justification, for what Fielding simultaneously tries to accomplish in his work with the ancient rites of inspiration. Again, as in the case of Jones’s sleep, the author never

attempts to trick the reader into any real belief in the deity. Rather, the narrator only refers to Flora in the context of an ancient time period. Once again (as in the example of the Homeric gods), the narrator, furthermore, denies the fact of Flora ever having actually existed. She was in ancient times, he claims, merely “personated” by a real, live actress who could artfully deceive her spectators by way of her “performance.” Yet Fielding does not simply attribute the ancients’ belief in such a goddess to the theatrical art of the actress who would have “performed” Flora’s “Offices.” Rather, he blames the seemingly ludicrous credulity of the ancient spectator-subject on the rhetorical arts of the politicians and priests of Flora’s time whose eloquence could have “persuaded the people into the real presence of the deity.” Of course, Fielding means to draw a dangerous parallel between ancient and modern times, suggesting that even in modern-day England attitudes of such an enthusiastic or superstitious nature should be blamed on the manipulative art of the politician or the priest. Any moral rhetorician, Fielding argues, will never use his art to deceive and, thereby, violate the charitable laws of a Christian doctrine. Rather, the best modern author practices his oratorical talent for didactic purposes only.<sup>175</sup> Thus our narrator admits to “no such Design of imposing on [his] Reader.” Employing this didactic methodology, the narrator momentarily divests himself of the authorial powers of decision, giving that responsibility to the reading subject.

In this manner, the modern exchange of the basket-woman for the goddess differs from the simile of sleep as deity in which the author alone enacts the replacement of the realist moment for its ancient precedent. Yet even as the author solicits the reader’s judgment in the basket-woman passage (“and therefore those who object the Heathen Theology, may, if they please, change our Goddess into the above- mentioned Basket-woman”) he exercises his authorial power over the reader by seemingly making his choice for him. As many critics have

pointed out, Fielding forces himself on his audience just as he appeals to the reader's supposedly individual sense of judgment. His dialogic mode is steeped in the didactic aims of the text through which the author always exerts his control over the reading subject. This twist may seem ironic, or even hypocritical, in light of Fielding's project to place an aesthetic version of enthusiasm into a critical paradigm, to free the once passive reader from the constraints of an ancient, tyrannical model of inspiration. Yet as Fielding attempts to form our reader into a "free-thinking" modern subject, he never wishes to deprive his work of the important function of rhetoric. Without rhetoric, the work would lose its satirical style; it would cease to have any kind of directed purpose. Wandering in and out of digression,<sup>176</sup> it could never achieve its end or the intended moral-social resolution, which would become so important to the genre of the novel from Fielding's time onward. (Notably, Fielding's digressions belong to a species of the serio-comic style, and what appears to be digression only actually subscribes to the carefully unified "design of the whole"). Fielding, therefore, both appeals to and reigns over his reader. As his narrator claims in one attack on Jacobitism, which places Fielding's artistic project into a political register, the writer is a sovereign "but no jure divino tyrant" (77-78). Distinguishing between the didactic methods of persuasion and violent force,<sup>177</sup> Fielding thus grounds his satire in a species of rhetoric, which will employ the dialogic mode much in the same way that Shaftesbury does in his philosophical attempts at reforming enthusiasm in *The Characteristics*. At times, Fielding solicits his reader in full, or places his characters' voices on an equal philosophical footing, allowing the reader to choose one, the other, or none of the perspectives delineated in the dialogue of the text.<sup>178</sup> Here, he employs and pays homage to the Socratic method (like that of Shaftesbury's *Moralist's*), one which Aunt Western so comically

misunderstands when she claims to Sophia that ancient philosophers did not used to argue with their scholars (332).

More often, however, Fielding's style takes on the semi-dialogical mode of Shaftesbury's *Letter* in which an enthusiasm of the Longinian kind becomes an act of possession as dispossession. Addressing an imagined audience, Fielding's narrator often silences his reader while he addresses him as in the above example of the basket woman. Thus the author himself (like Fielding's ideal for the best reading subject or spectator) must also check his own enthusiasm, applying self-judgment and restraint so as not to transcend the very limits of modern authorship, which he has placed on his own work. This, as we will see, becomes the great challenge that Fielding places on his narrator in his attempts at modernly or mockingly invoking the muse.

Hence, Fielding always returns to his narrator's "faithful promise," a pact which he reiterates in so many ways from his "Chapter on the Marvellous" onward throughout the remainder of the novel: "notwithstanding any Affection which we may be supposed to have for this Rogue, whom we have unfortunately made our Heroe, we will lend him none of that supernatural Assistance with which we are entrusted" (876). In this passage, Fielding begins to allude to an ancient model of inspiration in which the author acts as a kind of messenger who, "entrusted" with the supernatural powers of the Muse, brings the divine word, to his reader. In such a paradigm, the author as prophet, only transcribes and never truly creates, acting as a ventriloquistic vessel for the inspiration he passively receives and imparts onto his reader. Of course, as Fielding here bemoans the inability of the modern author to save his distressed hero by supernatural means (as did the ancients who always had "deities ready at the Writer's Elbow"), he also suggests the truth behind a modern paradigm of inspiration, in which the author, a

liberated and free-thinking agent of the modern public sphere, alone speaks directly to his audience. Here, “the supernatural assistance which with the author is entrusted” simply becomes the author’s own. His inspiration derives from the natural faculties of the mind, or as Fielding will sometimes proclaim, from “Genius.”<sup>179</sup> Yet even as Fielding places the powers of inspiration in the sphere of the author, he often leaves the reader to discover the true source of this inspiration through his tonal method of gentle mockery:

To natural Means alone we are confined; let us try therefore what by these Means may be done for poor Jones; though to confess the Truth, something whispers me in the Ear, that he doth not yet know the worst of his Fortune; and that a more shocking Piece of News than any he hath yet heard remains for him in the unopened Leaves of Fate (876).

Although Fielding never explicitly announces to his audience where this information concerning Jones’s fate comes from, his ideal “judging” reader will of course uncover the contradiction embedded in the irony of Fielding’s promise. If the author is, in fact, “to natural means alone confined,” then he never receives his powers, his knowledge or information, from any external source. The allusion to “the whisper” that the author hears from some higher, unknown informant serves as a satiric parody in which the narrator ironically figures himself as the falsely-deluded, enthusiastic poet of ancient times who in believing himself a prophet supposedly hears the word of God. We are reminded here, once again, of Pope’s similar, mocking gesture in *The Rape of the Lock*, when the sylph whispers a promise of immortality into Belinda’s passive, slumbering ear.

Only pages later, Fielding resumes the parodic gesture when he writes of Sophia: “Night, however at last, restored her to her Pillow, where we will leave her to soothe her Melancholy at least, though incapable we fear of Rest, and shall pursue our History, which something whispers us is now arrived at the Eve of some great Event” (898). “Night” here is meant to be taken in the

same manner as Fielding's previous allusion to "Sleep," in which the mock invocation simply arises so as to reveal the author's own talents in the use of metaphor. Testing while gently mocking his reader, the narrator thus speaks as though the forthcoming events are still somehow out of the author's knowledge or control. In fact the "whisper" that announces the onset of the event only serves, once again, as a parodic trope, or metaphor, for an ancient paradigm of enthusiasm that Fielding continues to satirize throughout *Tom Jones*.

In fact, when Fielding demonstrates the power of metaphor, he simultaneously disavows, or satirizes, an ancient paradigm of enthusiasm while also revealing an underlying possibility for a modern form of "inspiration." When Fielding uses the term "inspiration" in a non-satiric context, he always refers to the artistic powers of the author himself. In the following passages, for example, Fielding applies the term "inspiration" to the information that the author passes on to his reader:

As this is one of those deep Observations, which very few Readers can be supposed capable of making themselves, I have thought proper to lend them my Assistance; but this is a Favour rarely to be expected in the Course of my Work. Indeed I shall seldom or never so indulge him, unless in such Instances as this, where nothing but the **Inspiration** with which we Writers are gifted, can possibly enable any one to make the Discovery (48). . . For the Reader is greatly mistaken, if he conceives that Thwackum appeared to Mr. Allworthy in the same Light as he doth to him in this History; and he is as much deceived, if he imagines, that the most intimate Acquaintance which he himself could have had with that Divine, would have informed him of those Things which we, from our **Inspiration**, are enabled to open and discover (135).

In this first passage, Fielding mockingly employs the rhetoric of an ancient inspiration in which the author applies to the deity for "assistance." Yet here the author subverts the scenario into a modern paradigm of authorial communication; the reader is allowed to apply to "the assistance" of the author, who acting as a kind of modern deity-figure, possesses the elite powers of "inspiration." The function of this "gift of inspiration," as the narrator here discusses it, entails

the faculties of “discovery.”<sup>180</sup> In other words, the successful modern author, according to Fielding’s model, should be endowed with the faculties of “deep observation,” the abilities to divine, discern, or discover insights, which he will then pass on to his reader. Thus inspiration in this sense is a kind of acute vision, or faculty of judgment, peculiar to the gifted writer. Like an ancient version of inspiration, it still transpires or is communicated as in Fenves’s theory of the enthusiastic chain. However, the communication here is both secularized and deprived of its former passivity. Fielding implies that the favor, which the author bestows upon his reader, this “discovery” with which he “inspires” him, should be exercised sparingly. In other words, the gifted reader, like the gifted author, must use his own faculties of “discovery,” or judgment.

Speaking in the veiled language of satire, the reader and author must inexpressly share in the secret, knowing style of a communication that has come to define the necessary structure of Augustan writing.<sup>181</sup> It is, therefore, no surprise that as Fielding again employs the term “inspiration” in the following excerpt as an ability to “open and discover,” he equally imparts this capacity to both writer and reader. (Notably, this faculty is not given, in this case, to his character, the figure of the good squire who despite his “All-worthiness,” becomes at times, a satiric warning against all human lapses into a lack in judgment). Thus “our” shared communication, “our” unveiling “inspiration,” distinguishes author and reader from the characters in the text (whom though we may at times resemble, we should never wholly mirror) by our ability to know and see more than the characters can at any given moment. Our “inspiration” thus becomes our judgment, our ability to distinguish and discover, a capacity which Fielding here differentiates from the more wrongful usage of the term “judgment” as merciless “condemnation” (i.e. the legal as opposed to the Lockean sense of the word).

The capacity to exercise a critical faculty of judgment becomes so important to Fielding's modern reform of enthusiasm that he, at times, uses the terms "judgment" and "inspiration" synonymously. Yet judgment alone, as a rational capacity, cannot wholly constitute this modern notion of inspiration for Fielding. Fielding's attempt to reform enthusiasm and fit inspiration to the purposes of the modern author means that his exercise of a kind of rational empiricism is accompanied by his demand that we judge *feelingly*, as indicated in the above quotation, or in his persistent allusion to Jones as the "sympathetic spectator" (815), a quality which so many of Fielding's more moral characters share in his text (Sophia, Partridge, Allworthy). The talent of the modern author thus rests equally in the powers of the aesthetic to move the audience into a sympathetic response. As Fielding begins to secularize enthusiasm, he connects it to the author's abilities to generate affect. In this manner, Fielding's major novels (*Joseph Andrews*, *Tom Jones*, and the later *Amelia*) share something in common with Richardson's species of realism, for they continue to rely on the sentimental moment even in their departure from the romance tradition.

In his critique of enthusiasm and his attempts at modernizing "inspiration," Fielding thus first and foremost seeks to secularize an ancient version of enthusiasm by way of its aestheticization. As in the works of Shaftesbury and Pope alike, this conscious gesture is most often and overtly expressed to the reader in the context of a theatrical metaphor. For example, in the introductory chapter to Book VII, Fielding's famous "Comparison between the World and the Stage," he considers the Aristotelian principle that the "Stage" is but a mere "Imitation of what really exists" (324). Here, he turns to the oft-quoted lines from Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, which compare the life of a man to the fleeting time of the actor on the stage, whose transitory performance is cut short by the sudden fall of the curtain.<sup>182</sup> At this moment in his comparison, in order to "make the reader Amends" for such a "hackneyed Quotation," he introduces into his

argument a more obscure, forgotten poem by Samuel Boyse, called “The Deity.” The narrator’s reasoning for inserting this poem into his introductory chapter, he claims, lies merely in its being an example of a good poem, which has failed to survive in the literary circle of Fielding’s time. Accordingly, Battestin writes in his footnote that Fielding’s “puff” indeed helped to salvage Boyse’s poem from literary “Oblivion” (324). Yet nothing more is said about the poem by Fielding or his critics, and the narrator as soon leaves off the reference, dropping it just as quickly as he has introduced it into his work. Nevertheless, the careful reader of the poem, will find in Boyse’s lines more than a mere “puff,” but rather the exact kind of comparison between the world and the stage, which Fielding most wishes to invoke for the aesthetic purposes of his modern novel:

From thee\* [\*The Deity—Fielding’s note] all human Actions take their Springs,  
The Rise of Empires, and the Fall of Kings!  
See the VAST THEATER OF TIME display’d,  
While o’er the Scene succeeding Heroes tread!  
With Pomp the shining Images succeed,  
What Leaders triumph, and what Monarchs bleed!  
Perform the Parts thy Providence assign’d,  
Their Pride, their Passions to thy Ends inclin’d:  
A while they glitter in the Face of Day,  
Then at thy Nod the Phantoms pass away;  
No traces left of all the busy Scene,  
But that Remembrance says—THE THINGS HAVE BEEN!” (325).

Here, the power of the deity, like that of the puppet master, controls the actions and fates of his human subjects. Yet Boyse describes the role of the deity in entirely aesthetic terms, conveying his influence to the reader through an exclusively theatrical rhetoric. We begin with the assumption that all human action “springs” from the will of the deity. As for Shakespeare, so for Boyse, does the onset of the theatrical metaphor in line three soon become a matter not merely of agency but of temporal transience: “See the VAST THEATER OF TIME display’d.” The poet thus forces his reader immediately into the role of the spectator, comparing him to the member of

an audience as he commands him to “see!” the images that the poet is about to introduce into his poem. Each image then arises as though it were flashing fleetingly across a theatrical stage. The physical space of the theater, which minimizes the import of all real-world things by attributing their transience to their illusoriness, transforms the forthcoming events into “shining images” and thus deprives the heroic, sacrificial scenes of their tragic sting. As “the deity,” alluded to in the title of the poem but never subsequently named, takes on the metaphoric role of a theatrical director, life assumes the rhetoric of performance. Here, man is described as a mere actor taking on an “assign’d” role, and the theater becomes a place where the director-deity exerts his desired “ends” by moving and playing upon the passions of his players with directional precision. Of course, the audience-reader is also implied in the allusion to the passions, a hint which seems to hurry man to his “End,” as glittering images quickly and immediately dissolve, revealing the “phantom” nature of all that is “set” before us. For as our deity-director nods, in the manner of Pope’s *Dullness*, the phantoms disappear, dying as though they must obey the simple gesture, which results in the much graver existential command of the abruptly falling curtain. In the end, the only knowledge that “these things have been,” or rather the very task of keeping these things alive, falls to the reader-audience member who must help the scenes survive through his “remembrance.” Hence, we see the importance of Fielding’s “puff” highlighted in the very command of the poem itself.

What I want to argue about this poem in terms of its significance to Fielding’s project, however, has to do with the curious line that it walks between the sacred and the secular. It is almost as though, in the act of reading the poem, we begin to lose a sense of the Deity’s presence. The further we stray from the titular mark of this explicitly divine agent, the more we are increasingly left to face the overriding, overwhelming power of the poem’s more secular,

theatrical metaphor. Certainly, this is the exchange that Fielding seeks to make in his work by hinting at the comparison between deity and theatrical director. As the name of deity falls away, slowly erased through the authorially-emphasized process of reading, the modern author still attempts to derive the power of the aesthetic from the ghost of its marginal presence. (Of course, in the context of Fielding's modernism, the deity also becomes mocked as an anachronism). Essentially, the metaphor triumphs. What remains in the deity's place is a more actual director, the satiric author himself, whose project becomes that of manipulating the passions of his readers as in the context of the implied theatrical scenario. If Fielding's new species of writing seeks to borrow this aesthetic force from the theatrical genre, then it also borrows the very grave, important pressure placed on the theatrical audience as per the end of Boyse's poem. Thus it remains the reader's task to remember, and reconstruct, the things that have been imparted by the author, naturally allowing a space for reflection upon the aesthetic experience. Boyse's poem, his extended metaphor, thus anticipates the consequences of Fielding's secular enthusiasm, at what would happen in a fictional, world paradigm in which the presence of the deity is suddenly elided. The answer, in part, lies in the persistent and presiding power of the aesthetic.

Announcing his project to reform enthusiasm and fit it to the purposes of the modern author in the introductory, theoretical tracts of *Tom Jones*, Fielding then brings this promise to fruition in the execution of his work. As we have begun to see, much of Fielding's demonstrative attempts at modernizing enthusiasm point to the author's own use of rhetoric and metaphor along with his employment of the dialogic mode. Here, an ancient, passive form of enthusiasm gets subjected to a philosophy of critical aesthetics, as "inspiration" loses its passive structure, redistributing the power of language onto the free-thinking subjects of the author and reader.

Once Fielding redefines enthusiasm, or “inspiration,” secularizing it so as to promote the invention of the author, endowing him with the artistic faculties of design, judgment, and invention, he also socializes it. Using the structures of satire and the style of the dialogic mode in which the author overtly addresses his reader, Fielding’s art form comes to mimic a real-world model of a public sphere in which art is always subjected to the critique of the judging spectator. Here, of course, Fielding supplements much of his vision of enthusiasm in the public sphere, with large expositions on the proper employment of criticism. Ascribing to a Popean model, Fielding often exhibits the same expectations for both the author/artist and the critic/reader. As we have seen, however, this revision of the enthusiastic model, still preserves a certain hierarchy of author over reader as inspiration transpires and is communicated through the act of writing. It is no surprise then that Fielding’s greatest, or most explicit, attempts at executing his reform of enthusiasm always emphasize the role of the author. By these attempts, I mean his invocations of the muse.

### *Genius, Muse*

Before, I examine the role of the muse in *Tom Jones*, I would like to step back for a moment in order to look at some of Fielding’s earlier employments of invocation in his writing, for it is here that we find the seeds of Fielding’s project in his later novel to reconsider the figure of the muse and its implications for the modern author. Twice in *The Champion* Fielding invokes the muse, and he does so in a manner, which will come to reflect his later usage of her in *Tom Jones*:

Poetry, Sir, is the very Primrose of Parnassus; with the most tender Constitution, it exposes it self to the rudest Weather; it blooms while the Snow is yet on the

Grounds, and seldom lives to take the more kindly Blessings of the Spring: As Men of Gallantry, then, are proud to defend the Ladies, Men of Sense should pique themselves on protecting the Muses: Be it my Glory, therefore, rather to be their *Champion*, than their Enemy; and, while I have the Privilege of communicating my Thoughts though the Channel you have open'd, the Public may be assur'd that no Piece, which deserves Character, shall want one" (*The Champion*, Saturday November 24, 1739, p. 25).

Cicero, who was so justly commended by Rapin, for not having imitated Demosthenes in those Excellencies, which would not have become his own. This very Person, who here appears so thoroughly to have understood the Strength and Bent of his Genius, and who has so well advised others to that Study, could not refrain from sometimes applying himself to those Muses with whom he was so entirely unacquainted, and suffering the Name of an excellent Orator, to be joined to that of a very indifferent Poet. But, not to fetch Instances from ancient History, which is every where full of them, I shall mention some Writers of our own, who have erred in the Same Manner... (*The Champion*, Tuesday November 30, 1739, p. 15).

The first excerpt is taken from a tract in which Fielding justifies his role as critic, speaking to his public by way of his addressee. Defending himself from the libel he has received in executing his project of a critical readership, Fielding thus promises to act in "defense of poetry." Of course, the language that Fielding employs here uses hackneyed metaphors in order arrive at his point of authorial defense and self-preservation. It might come as no surprise, therefore, that such satiric rhetoric leads the author into a reference to the "Muses." Here, the muse literally translates into a figurative term for "poetry." Yet the simile takes on a mocking tone, for Fielding is no actual believer in the muse. When, punning on the title of the serial itself, Fielding names himself the "*Champion*" of "Muses," he facetiously promises that "no Piece, which deserves Character, shall want one." Fielding's satiric tone instantly becomes quite literal here. In other words, he claims that the role of the critic is not to add or detract from a work, but rather to expose or discover it. Only those writings, which already possess and exhibit character, being the only ones "deserving" of such character, will not find themselves "wanting" (i.e. lacking). Moreover, as Fielding emphasizes the actual absence of muses in modern authorship, indicating that authors

alone are responsible for their works (not Muses or Critics), he punningly aligns the critic with the muse in order to emphasize his point. Here, the critic is figured in an apparent act of inspiration. Like the muse, he imparts his words to the public through a metaphoric “chain of enthusiasm”: “while I have the Privilege of communicating my Thoughts [to the Public] though the Channel you have open’d...” The statement mocks an enthusiastic model of ancient times, hinted at in the above allusion to the muse, by suggesting that the author alone can obtain ownership over his own written language (an act which the critic cannot be held responsible for). Moreover, Fielding’s assertion serves to reveal the critic as an author in his own right. Here, the critic, not the Muse, imparts his thoughts, communicating them through the “Channel” of the publically-circulated periodical, and thus the figure of the modern critic-author replaces an older paradigm of inspiration by speaking to the public in his own voice. The social avenue in which the author enacts this modernization of the muse also highlights the reasons behind his disavowal of an ancient form of inspiration.

Essentially, what occurs over the course of this excerpt is an invocation of the muse, set within the linguistic framework of the critic’s mock-heroic register. As the critic satirizes enthusiasm, via the figure of the muse, he concludes his critique by suggesting a modern alternative for her, a gesture, which both culminates and enacts his satiric reform of modern authorship. This approach to the muse, in fact, exactly patterns Fielding’s mocking usage of her in *Tom Jones*, for almost all of Fielding’s invocations in his later novel will belong to the mock-epic mode of satire. As such, the general muse of *Tom Jones* mirrors in sentiment and form the muse of Fielding’s *Champion*.

The second passage, excerpted above, however, takes on a less mocking, more direct tone. Here, Fielding’s intentions are straightforward; he disparages Cicero for invoking a muse,

and quite simply uses this ancient example in order to open up a space in his essay for ridiculing those modern writers who exhibit the same fault. As Cicero invokes the muse, the consequences of his actions serve as a warning to the modern author. By applying to the muse, Cicero has destroyed his own reputation; he thereby exchanges the name of “excellent Orator” for the lesser markings of the “indifferent Poet.” What is most important about Fielding’s critique here is that it foreshadows his later attempts at finding a modern replacement for the ancient muse. The tragedy of Cicero points to the unnecessary place of the muse in works, which already prove sufficient in their “excellencies.” By “excellency,” Fielding, of course, means “originality.”

Thus Rapin has praised Cicero for not imitating his predecessors. In departing from the style of Demosthenes, Cicero exhibits his own “Genius.” Yet the author’s later use of the muse, Fielding argues, only belittles the “Strength and Bent” of such “Genius.” Cicero’s faith in the muse thereby becomes a lack of faith in his own abilities, his own voice. His application to a deity with whom he is “unacquainted” arises as a vain, or false, act of enthusiasm, in which the flailing author attempts to borrow the language of another in a moment of ventriloquism. For Fielding, this is an act of literary theft, a plagiarism, which exchanges straightforward imitation (distinct from satiric imitation, which adds something in its use of the mocking method) for the rewards of original authorship. In the paradigm of Cicero, we thus encounter an implied alternative to the worn-out figure of the muse; Genius will serve as the true “inspiration” of the modern author. Deriving his linguistic powers from his own voice, the ideal modern must apply to Genius alone in his writing. It is precisely this exchange, which Fielding will enact in his later work, *Tom Jones*. There he will attempt to reinvent inspiration, revising ancient enthusiasm so as to fit it to his ideals of a social, public, and original form of modern authorship. Together, these

two approaches to the muse in *The Champion*, one mocking and the other revisionary, thus come to inform Fielding's style of invocation in his later novel.

In the invocations of *Tom Jones*, Fielding reveals his greatest issue with the problem of an ancient paradigm of enthusiasm in his attempts to salvage the role of the authorial subject. In these allusions to the muse, Fielding marks out the distinctions of a modern literary form in which the author departs from a model of inspiration as a borrowed speech act. Not surprisingly, almost all of Fielding's invocations of the muse in *Tom Jones* belong to his use of the mock-heroic/mock-epic style. In this respect, the muse is invoked only to demonstrate the shortcomings of the author; she becomes a crutch for the silent writer, a satire on the grub-street hack, or humbled artist, who unable to find his own voice, simply employs another's. For example:

But hold, as we are diffident of our own Abilities, let us here invite a superior Power to our Assistance. Ye Muses then, whoever ye are, who love to sing Battles, and principally thou, who whilom didst recount the Slaughter in those Fields where Hudibras and Trulla fought, if thou wert not starved with thy Friend Butler, assist me on this great Occasion. All things are not in the Power of all" (178-see footnotes) ... "Recount, O Muse, the Names of those who fell on this fatal Day."... (180)... "unless I would again invoke the Muse, (which the good-natured Reader may think a little too hard upon her, as she hath so lately been violently sweated) it would be impossible for me to recount the Horsewhipping of that Day (183).

In the above excerpts, taken from the scene of Molly's mock-heroic churchyard battle, the muse appears only when the author feels "diffident of [his] own Abilities." Yet the author's choice of a muse here is telling, for it merely mocks the very need for a muse in the first place. By invoking Butler's muse, Fielding refers to a deity who has left his poet starving in the garrets.<sup>183</sup> As Battestin writes in his footnote, Butler has become a paradigm for the neglected genius. Thus the narrator invokes the muse only to emphasize her inadequacy, mockingly concluding that "all

things are not in the power of all.” In fact, he suggests, all things in the world of modern fiction, are in the power of the author alone (and secondarily the reader who recognizes him). The passage concludes as the narrator laments his ill usage of the muse, mockingly comparing the “horsewhipping of [the] day,” which literally refers to the actions that have taken place in Molly’s churchyard battle, to the metaphoric “horsewhipping” of the muse who has been “violently sweated.” The implication suggests that in invoking a muse, not only is the author relying on an inferior animal, but he is attempting to draw words from what is a dry well. Sweated and starved, these images of the muse, thus reveal Fielding’s sentiments towards such repeated invocations of an ancient deity; the modern author has “exhausted” a custom, which no longer serves or suits his purposes.

Consequently, Fielding thus begins to hint in his narrator’s later employments of the mock- heroic style that the figure of the muse, who throughout the text increasingly becomes an object of satire as she is repeatedly applied to, should be dispensed with entirely. Often, for example, the will of the muse seems miraculously to align with the will of the author himself:

But here, as we are about to attempt a Description hitherto unessayed either in Prose or Verse, we think proper to invoke the Assistance of certain Aerial Beings, who will, we doubt not, come kindly to our Aid on this Occasion. Say then, ye Graces, you who inhabit the heavenly Mansions of Seraphina’s Countenance; for you are truly Divine, and are always in her Presence, and well know all the Arts of charming, Say what were the Weapons now used to captivate the Heart of Mr. Jones (511-12) ...Here the Graces think proper to end their Description, and here we think proper to end the Chapter (513).

The “Description,” which our narrator refers to as being “hitherto unessayed either in Prose or Verse,” is of course a hackneyed one. In the episode of Mrs. Waters and the Upton Inn, Fielding writes of a familiar topic in a clichéd rhetoric as the narrator couches his scene of seduction in the language of the epic battle. Most importantly, Fielding’s employment of the mock-heroic mode here implies that such a framework for the sexual act dispels the blame from both of his

characters, concealing Waters's manipulative art and Jones's infidelity to Sophia. Just as the invocation of the Graces deprives the characters of any moral responsibility, since their actions are now ascribed to the puppetry of a deity subject, so does the invocation rob the author of artistic ownership, of his narrative voice. Such an act of ventriloquy proves not only to be mundane and repetitive in its style, as the narrator uses tautologies to praise effusively the "heavenly" "Graces," who are "truly Divine," but it deprives the work of its authorial agency. Fielding thereby begins to expose the relationship between tautology and ancient inspiration as he illustrates the imitative nature of invocation. As the passage arrives at an abrupt halt, however, the author resumes his modern tone. Here, the narration suddenly shifts, turning upon an ironic moment in which the Graces' desire to end their description converges with the author's decision to end the chapter. Fielding thus implies that the true "will of the Graces" is in actuality that of the author's alone. Moreover, Fielding suggests that any effort to invoke the Graces lies in the author's own irresponsibility, in his vain wish to supply another's voice in default of his own whenever that voice may be lacking in artistry.

Fielding's use of the mock invocation, therefore, always restores the powers of language and the moral responsibility of its usage to the authorial subject.<sup>184</sup> As the muse becomes a mocked figure, who in the context of Fielding's modernism, often signifies the intentions and designs of the author himself, she is often referred to in a manner, which playfully intends to entice the reader:

Whether he [Partridge] was innocent or not, will perhaps appear hereafter; but if the Historic-Muse hath entrusted me with any Secrets, I will by no means be guilty of discovering them till she shall give me leave (101).

The narrator's usage of the "historic-muse" in this context not only serves to emphasize the superior insight of the all-knowing author, but it also attempts to curb the reader's judgment in

the event that he may too quickly condemn Partridge for any actions which our narrator has not yet fully explained or justified.<sup>185</sup> Moreover, the reader is now urged on in the act of continued reading, finding pleasure in the pursuit of what the narrator promises eventually to reveal.<sup>186</sup> Of course, the very secrecy that is mockingly implied between author and muse is transformed into a real act of secret sharing between author and reader, for just as the narrator withholds information he reveals it. As readers, we now know more than do the characters in the text, and thus the conspiracy between divinity and author, germane to “historical” versions of inspiration, is transformed into a newly found communication between author and reader, a space in which secrets are revealed at the designing will of the author alone.

On the part of the reader, of course, this modern inspiration is still a passive enthusiasm in which he waits with bated breath for the facts of the history to unfold and transpire. Yet in the authorial triumphs of Fielding’s sovereign narrator, the writer never fully deprives his reader of her critical privileges. After all, these are necessary to both Fielding’s modernization of enthusiasm and his ideal vision of the public sphere. Rather, Fielding urges his reader to withhold her judgment (both of the author and of characters such as Partridge) until the end of his narrative. Fielding’s reasoning behind this forestallment appears in the narrator’s continual appeals to a principle of design, which Fielding shares with both the Augustans and the Cambridge Platonists alike; the best work of art, like the example of the Socratic dialogue or the Popean couplet, involves a interweaving of opposing parts into one, harmonic whole.<sup>187</sup> In his introductory chapter to Book XI, entitled “A Crust for the Critics,” Fielding emphasizes this concept when his narrator warns the reader:

Again, tho’ there may be some Faults justly assigned in the Work, yet if those are not in the most essential Parts, or if they are compensated by greater Beauties, it will savour rather of the Malice of a Slanderer, than the Judgment of a true Critic,

to pass a severe Sentence upon the whole, merely on account of some vicious Part (570).

Fielding's desire for his critics to judge the whole as opposed to its parts<sup>188</sup> echoes his etymological forays into the term "judgment," which here becomes the main subject of his chapter. If the judgment that Fielding calls for is that of a Lockean kind, which attempts to see difference by comparing two objects brought into unity with one another, then only the less discerning, the false (not "true") critic will examine a part instead of its whole. Fielding ascribes other implications to that sort of undifferentiating judgment, which he often associates with the corruption of the British legal system, in here referring to bad critics as "slanderers" or as ones who condemn falsely or without mercy. In attacking the maligning critic, it is no surprise that Fielding appeals to our sentiments of sympathy when he asks us to consider the poor author in such circumstances. What is curious about Fielding's appeal to the reader in this chapter, however, is his usage of an enthusiastic metaphor in order to incite a sympathetic response in his reader's "judgment."

Here, the figure of the muse takes on more serious implications, even beneath Fielding's mocking tone, as she no longer becomes simply invoked, but is rather incorporated into the narrator's metaphor for the predicament of the modern author:

Nor shall we conclude the Injury done [by critics] this Way to be very slight, when we consider a Book as the Author's Offspring, and indeed as the Child of his Brain. The reader who has suffered his Muse to continue hitherto in a Virgin State, can have but a very inadequate Ideas of this kind of paternal Fondness. To such we may parody the tender Exclamation of Macduff. Alas! Thou hast written no Book. But the Author whose Muse hath brought forth, will feel the pathetic Strain, perhaps will accompany me with Tears (especially if his Darling be already no more) while I mention the Uneasiness with which the big Muse bears about her Burden, the painful Labor with which she produces it, and lastly, the Care, the Fondness, with which the tender Father nourishes his Favourite, till it be brought to Maturity, and produced into the World (568-9).

In referring to his work as the author's "brain child," Fielding's sexualized metaphor of the muse makes several distinctions between different classifications of the modern author. The first turns to the unprolific author, he who has written "no book" and is thereby impotent. "Suffering his Muse to continue in a virgin state," he fails to spread the proverbial seed of his authorship by leaving no issue, by imparting no words. Perhaps, this silent author has a better fate than that of the implied author on the following page who, slandered by the critics, adopts the name of "whore" as his work is called a "bastard": "Lastly, the Slander of a Book is, in Truth, the Slander of the Author: For no one can call another Bastard, without calling the Mother Whore" (569). Fielding's use of gendered metaphors is ambiguous here, for in contemplating a "bastard" work, we are either left to assume that the "whore" who mothers the work stands for a female author or for the muse herself. On the other hand, if we allow some leniency here for the ambiguity of the author's gender in this act of slander, we may interpret this second paradigm of authorship as one which points to the artist accused of hack writing. In other words, Fielding's usage of the writer-as-whore metaphor (common to the Restoration period of satire)<sup>189</sup> implies that the writer produces for monetary gains alone just as a whore expects payment for sex.

Finally, we encounter Fielding's ideal paradigm of the modern author, the one for whom he engages our sympathies, the writer who is praised for his "paternal fondness." In this last type, Fielding elaborates on the sexual metaphor of authorship in order to unravel a picture of the muse perhaps just as violent in its use of imagery as Fielding's previous allusion to the muse as a "sweated horse." The conceit figures the author as the silent, patriarchal bystander, who having penetrated his muse then passively watches as she delivers forth the work of art with all of the "strains" and "burdens" associated with the pains of pregnancy and labor. However, as the narrator solicits a sentimental response from his reader, calling for her tears in this scene of

mixed joy and lamentation, pleasure and pain, the metaphor of the mother-muse begins to gain complexity. In the parenthetical phrase, meant to add further reflection and elicit the potential of an increased sentimental response, the narrator implies the possible death of the muse. Assuming that the “Darling,” who may already “be no more,” refers to the muse and not the work itself, we might interpret this aside as an allusion to an era in which the muse no longer serves, in which the author becomes both mother and father, creator and “nourisher” of his own work. Another reading would suggest that the “Darling” indicates the literary work itself, implying that the author’s now unrecognized writing, having missed its canonical mark, has sunken into oblivion. In the latter case, the derisively gendered figure of the muse serves only to further the work of the metaphor and not, in fact, to issue forth the literary production. Reduced to the status of a figure, who passively receives the author’s issue in sexual union and yet does all the work of bearing his literary offspring, the maternal muse for Fielding arises as part of a satiric sentimentalism in which the narrator implies the utter ridiculousness of the conceit, thereby, critiquing the very reliance on a muse in the first place.

Yet a serious undertone surfaces in this parodic simile, especially at the moment when the author-father releases his literary offspring into the public world. This act of letting go, steeped in paternal fondness, is intended to provoke a sympathetic response in the reader in which she is inspired with a similar affection as that of the author for this literary work. As the narrator bases his rhetorical argument against the slandering critic on the author’s affections for, and secondarily on his economic dependence upon, his literary offspring, (“These Children may most truly be called the Riches of their Father...569), he nevertheless solicits our judgment in the most nuanced manner. Revealing the true nature of his tone, the narrator states: “Now however ludicrous all this may appear to some, others, I doubt not, will feel and acknowledge the Truth of

it; nay, may, perhaps, think I have not treated the Subject with decent Solemnity; but surely a Man may speak Truth with a smiling Countenance (569).” Thus Fielding highlights the method of his satire as he admits to a disjunction between the subject and the manner of its deliverance. In fact, he asks us to judge his work even as he discourages slander. As he anticipates our response, highlighting the importance of tone and irony in the modern author’s agenda,<sup>190</sup> he alludes to the double project, the dual intensions, of his satire. The predominant satiric object may be that of the slandering critic. However, the method of Fielding’s satire, its metaphoric frame, points to an equally important satiric object: that of the mother muse. The simultaneous effort at satirizing an ancient model of inspiration (by mockingly assuming proverbial language and antiquated metaphors), while also demanding from the reader a proper kind of judgment, exposes Fielding’s conceit as a microcosm<sup>191</sup> for his work as a whole, for its larger satiric intentions.

Fielding’s longest invocation in *Tom Jones* takes up the space of an entire introductory chapter and concludes with a less overtly mocking tone even as it begins by adopting the language of the heroic epic. Here, the heavy tasks and circumstances of the modern writer, once again, become the subject of Fielding’s invocation. Yet this chapter arrives at a more serious substitution for the ancient figure of the muse that will come to serve the modern author. Nevertheless, Fielding’s narrator first begins his invocation by paying homage to his ancient predecessors, the authors of the epic, and by invoking two mocked muses. These modern-day “muses,” despite their satiric role as figures for human ambition, are still, to some extent, indispensable to a process of artistic production as they prompt the narrator to write. Highlighting the condition of Fielding’s contemporary artists, this mocking version of a wayward type of “inspiration” thus defines the corrupt “reasons” that have fueled modern writing:

*An Invocation.*

COME, bright Love of Fame, inspire my glowing Breast: Not thee I call, who over swelling Tides of Blood and Tears, dost bear the Heroe on to Glory, while Sighs of Millions waft his spreading Sails; but thee, fair, gentle Maid, whom Mnesis, happy Nymph, first on the Banks of Hebrus did produce. Thee, whom Maeonia educated, whom Mantua charm'd, and who, on that fair Hill which overlooks the proud Metropolis of Britain, satst, with thy Milton, sweetly tuning the Heroic Lyre; fill my ravished Fancy with the Hopes of charming Ages yet to come. Foretel me that some tender Maid, whose Grandmother is yet unborn, hereafter, when, under the fictitious Name of Sophia, she reads the real Worth which once existed in my Charlotte, shall from her sympathetic Breast, send forth the heaving Sigh. Do thou teach me not only to foresee, but to enjoy, nay, even to feed on future Praise. Comfort me by a solemn Assurance that when the little Parlour in which I sit this Instant, shall be reduced to a worse furnished Box, I shall be read, with Honour, by those who never knew nor saw me, and whom I shall neither know or see (683).

Fielding's first muse, his narrator's main inspiration, points to the authorial desire for recognition, to the "bright Love of Fame." Yet this ambition for Fielding's narrator stems more from a desire for a lasting legacy than any contemporary success. Here, Fielding follows in the wake of his early modern predecessors when he construes the act of writing as an attempt at immortality. "Comfort me," his narrator asks his "muse," "by a solemn Assurance that when the little Parlour in which I sit this Instant, shall be reduced to a worse furnished Box, I shall read, with Honour, by those who never knew nor saw me, and whom I shall neither know or see." The widespread recognition of the famous, remembered author thus extends his words, his communication, through time to those whom the author will never know by face or name. Thus the transpiring effects of his inspiration, passed on to generations to come, will transcend the limits of time, immortalizing the author's message though not the author himself. Fielding's narrator admits to this latter limitation placed on his body, if not his work, when he imagines his writing parlor, having turned into a coffin, now suddenly "reduced to a worse furnished Box." This muse of personal ambition thus provides the writer with a sense of hope. Reinvigorating the author who has lapsed into a state of paralyzed dejection, she "fill[s] [the]... ravished Fancy with

the Hopes of charming Ages yet to come.” The deprived imagination, the void or lack in the author’s mind, gets “filled up” with equally insubstantial “hopes” for the future. Our narrator thus becomes “charmed,” hypnotized, into an enthusiastic state. This inspiration, one which notably stems from no true deity, but admittedly from the more secular and less substantial desires of the human passions, then takes on that contagious nature of an ancient enthusiasm as it transpires through the ages yet to come.

As Fielding imaginatively anticipates the tender maid of a future era reading his real-life Charlotte in the character of Sophia, he foresees her emitting a sigh from her “sympathetic breast.” Thus the maid, in a moment of sentimental excess, is figured as literally having caught the wind of enthusiasm when she emits a breath (a type of Swiftian exhalation) of passed inspiration in an act reading. To return to Fielding’s image of the ravished imagination, now filled with hope, we might consider our narrator’s enthusiasm here, which is ultimately secular though not at all contained by the critical gesture of judgment, as derived from the aesthetic powers of the imagination. The actually secular nature of the narrator’s enthusiasm is, however, not immediately apparent, for although he may name his muse “the love of fame” at the start of his invocation, the narrator seemingly invokes a whole list of ancient deities in order to aide him in his pursuit of recognition.

Yet the only, actual classical muse that the narrator invokes is the “daughter of Mnesis” who was “produced” on the “banks of the Hebrus.” In other words, our narrator invokes Calliope, the muse of epic poetry, a gesture, which uses the figure of the “muse” itself as a metaphor. The series of invocations that then transpire under the heading of the epic form (as it relates to a love of literary fame) are the learning of “Maeonia,” the charms of “Mantua,” and the harmonically musical lyrics that overlook the city of London. These, as Battestin notes, all refer

to the sites of Homer and Virgil's respective birthplaces and to the site of Milton's completion of *Paradise Lost*.<sup>192</sup> Fielding's narrator thus invokes the three most important literary contributions to his mock-epic material. But why would the author admit to deriving his literary powers from those whom he mockingly revises in his modern-realist work? This paradox both anticipates the second half of Fielding's invocation (below) and, of course, points to the nature of the ironies of the Augustan satirist, to his problematic mode of contradiction, which becomes especially prevalent in the work of Fielding who is not a straightforward Augustan in the sense of Pope or Swift though his work is often understood as a continuation of the Augustan project.<sup>193</sup>

In order to unravel the paradox of Fielding's use of invocation in this one particular instance, I would like to suggest that we might read this homage to the works of Homer, Virgil, and Milton not only as ironic (for Fielding both uses and revises the epic tradition with the employment of his mock-heroic style<sup>194</sup>), but as an indication of the true nature of inspiration, which in fact highlights its reliance on the powers of the imagination. As Fielding imagines his audience of epic writers, all of whom have subscribed to classic paradigms of enthusiasm, his invocation becomes akin to some of his earlier addresses to the reader, in which the narrator "invokes" his audience members only to silence them. Similarly, he now commands the terms of his usage upon his "inspiring" predecessors. The power of the invocation thereby subtly points to the exertions of the imagination itself. However, here the force lies not so much in the author's aesthetic powers as in his overly-impassioned desires. What the narrator demands from his muse is food for a voraciously ambitious appetite: "Do thou teach me not only to foresee, but to enjoy, nay, even to feed on future Praise." As the author's desire for praise becomes all-consuming, his inspiration remains unchecked by self-judgment. Even as Fielding hints at the secular nature behind his narrator's invocation, he reveals this to be a true act of dangerous enthusiasm. The

author's real basis for inspiration lies in his ambition for fame; he derives his inspiration from a secular source, from the writers of the past, and not from an actual belief in the muse. However, the written speech act is still borrowed; the gesture is still anachronistic and still "vain" (as in the sense of imagined, false, or pretended) as the author "feeds" on the praise of an imagined audience.<sup>195</sup> Looking to writers of the past and readers of the future, insubstantial subjects of the dead and the unborn, a crowd who cannot judge or check the author's work, from whom our narrator can tyrannically demand praise, the author's imagination, unrestrained, puffs itself up with the vain desires of its impassioned subject.

It is no surprise then that Fielding's second muse in this invocation appears equally dangerous in nature to the first though she is different in form. The "plumper dame" of monetary ambition differs from the dangers of a "vain enthusiasm," which is defined by "airy Forms" and the ghostly "Phantoms of [the] Imagination." Although this muse is more substantial, and less a figment of the author's fancy, a delusion of the passions, her "substantive" inspiration refers only to the "material" materialism of economic gain:

And thou, much plumper Dame, whom no airy Forms nor Phantoms of Imagination cloathe: Whom the well-seasoned Beef, and Pudding richly stained with Plumbs delight. Thee, I call; of whom in a Treckschuyte in some Dutch Canal the fat Ufrow Gelt, impregnated by a jolly Merchant of Amsterdam, was delivered: In Grubstreet-School didst thou suck in the Elements of Erudition. Here hast thou, in thy maturer Age, taught Poetry to tickle not the Fancy, but the Pride of the Patron. Comedy from thee learns a grave and solemn Air; while Tragedy storms loud, and rends th' affrighted Theatres with its Thunder. To sooth the wearied Limbs in Slumber, Alderman History tells his tedious Tale; and again to awaken thee, Monsieur Romance performs his surprizing Tricks of Dexterity. Nor less thy well-fed Bookseller obeys thy Influence. By thy Advice the heavy, unread, Folio Lump, which long had dozed on the dusty Shelf, piece-mealed into Numbers, runs nimbly through the Nation. Instructed by thee some Books, like Quacks, impose on the World by promising Wonders; while others turn Beaus, and trust all their Merits to a gilded Outside. Come, thou jolly Substance, with thy shining Face, keep back thy Inspiration but hold forth thy tempting Rewards; thy shining, chinking Heap; thy quickly-convertible Bank-bill, big with unseen Riches; thy often-varying Stock; the warm, the comfortable Hose; and, lastly, a

far Portion of that bounteous Mother, whose Offspring, did not some too greedily and wantonly drive their Brethren from the Teat. Come thou, and if I am not too tasteless of thy valuable Treasures, warm my Heart with the transporting Thought of conveying them to others. Tell me, that through thy Bounty, the prattling Babes, whose innocent Play hath often been interrupted by my Labours, may one Time be amply rewarded for them. And now this ill-yolked Pair, this lean Shadow and this fat Substance, have prompted me to write, whose Assistance shall I invoke to direct my Pen? (683-685).

Thus our second muse figure points to the temptations of the Grub Street hack, who in depending upon the substantial gains of a profitable kind of writing, produces texts of no substance. Not only does such writing derive its inspiration from a base form of mimetic learning (“In Grubstreet-School didst thou suck in the Elements of Erudition”), but the kind of “inspiration” it imparts to its reader falls far short of any aesthetic response; it fails to solicit or entice the more creative aspects of the imagination (“thou... taught Poetry to tickle not the Fancy, but the Pride of the Patron”). As literature gets subjected to the commerce of an everyday market, inspiration thus becomes perverted by the materialist desires of the modern-day world. The consequences of such a base form of inspiration, here attacked and satirized, thus arise in the equally perverted forms of its generic instantiations. In Fielding’s bleak attack on the Grub-street school, we encounter a world not unlike that of Pope’s *Dunciad*: “Comedy learns [from a base muse]... a grave and solemn Air; while Tragedy storms loud, and rends th’ affrighted Theatres with its Thunder.” As comedy gets inverted into a generic model of tragedy, and tragedy in its excess ruins the theatrical mode, “History” (the art of prose) induces sleep in the reader, “soothing” “wearied Limbs in Slumber,” as it tells a “tedious Tale.” Romance writing, with all its chicanery, is revived in order to inspire delusion in its readers. It is no surprise that Fielding’s narrator reads the consequences of a base form of inspiration (as ambition) in the perversions of genre. This attack on Grub Street only helps to explain why Fielding’s many attempts at reforming enthusiasm would rely on the very revisions of genre, which he attempts in his

employment of the dialogic mode and which he expounds in the introductory essays of *Tom Jones*.

Of course, Fielding's transition from one satiric inspiration to another, from a parodic invocation of the ancients to an equally-parodic invocation of his modern Grub-Street adversaries, highlights his greatest issue with the use of genre in his period. Fielding satirizes inspiration as he gripes about the all-too excessive practice of reviving dead literary forms without ever expanding upon them: "By thy Advice the heavy, unread, Folio Lump, which long had dozed on the dusty Shelf, piece-mealed into Numbers, runs nimbly through the Nation." On the one hand, we might read this metaphor as pointing to what has happened to these borrowed books as they are revived for modern purposes. Here, Fielding distinguishes his own usage of ancient allusion from that of the hack plagiarist, which only imitates and brings back to life dead works from the writer's "dusty shelf" in order to "dissect" them. This image of the "piece-mealed numbers" running through England violates Fielding's principles of design, which always privilege the whole of a work over its the parts and see little value in the dissected matter of the disjointed particular. Of course, on a much more literal level the metaphor of the "piece-mealed numbers" alludes to the ripping apart of folios whose sheets were used (for much baser purposes) as toilet paper. As Fielding speaks to the "gilded exterior" of his material muse, his narrator, therefore, never solicits her "inspiration" per se, but only asks for the financial prosperity which she represents: "Come, thou jolly Substance, with thy shining Face, keep back thy Inspiration but hold forth thy tempting Rewards." Yet the narrator's shameful invocation of this substantial muse, serves not merely to parody her, but in a more serious sense to expose his own enthusiasm. Here our narrator becomes yet another enthusiastic subject, prone to the human condition and aligned with the very objects he has sought to satirize.

Out of real necessity (“tell me, that through thy Bounty....[my] prattling Babes...[may] be amply rewarded”), the authorial subject becomes complicit in a kind of “enthusiasm,” which he nonetheless despises and ridicules in his work.<sup>196</sup> Fielding’s “*Invocation*” begins as a self-parody on the plight of the modern author and satirist, proving that even the narrator himself is not above the very natural propensities that his human/character subjects exhibit towards enthusiasm. In a way, this self-avowed enthusiasm marks this as the most important and serious invocation of Fielding’s work, for it departs from a narrative trend in which the authorial figure of sovereignty triumphs over his reader-subject. Here, the narrator’s act of confession, his “vain inspiration” based upon the sins of pride, avarice, desire, and ambition and derived from the conditions of material necessity and transient mortality, serves only to humanize him. What begins as a call for divine aggrandizement ends as a humbling gesture. The narrator, admitting to his faults, gently substitutes the human for the divine in an act of modern invocation. In the end, the two muses, one illusory and insubstantial, the other materialist and substantive, the former heavenly and the latter demonic, fall from their divine status in a moment of deflation. Finally, in a process of unveiling, the narrator “discovers” this pair, not as his invoked muses, but merely as his reasons for writing: “And now this ill-yolked Pair, this lean Shadow and this fat Substance, have prompted me to write, whose Assistance shall I invoke to direct my Pen?” Once the narrator ascribes the language of “assistance” to another source, he sets the stage for an act of replacement and marks a moment of transition in his invocation. The older muses, invoked and now proved inadequate, must give way as the author finds a newer, superior source for his “inspiration.”

Fielding employs two possible readings of the term literary “inspiration” when he distinguishes between that which “prompts” the author to write and that which directs his course,

or “assists” him. The latter is the meaning that Fielding wishes to contemplate and preserve as he finds it instrumental to his literary project of reforming enthusiasm. As the “inspiration” of the Ancient writer and the Grub-Street hack fails to suit Fielding’s ideals for the modern writer, our narrator must either replace or curb this enthusiasm in his crowning act of modern invocation. The powers which come to the narrator’s aide are again those which are internal to the author’s own abilities, his own artistic faculties of aesthetic creation and judgment:

First, Genius; thou Gift of Heaven; without whose Aide, in vain we struggle against the Stream of Nature. Thou, who dost sow the generous Seeds which Art nourishes, and brings to Perfection. Do thou kindly take me by the Hand, and lead me through all the Mazes, the winding Labyrinths of Nature. Initiate me into all those Mysteries which profane Eyes never beheld. Teach me, which to thee is no difficult Task, to know Mankind better than they know themselves. Remove the Mist which dims the Intellects of Mortals, and causes them to adore Men for their Art, or to detest them for their Cunning in deceiving others, when they are, in reality, the Objects only of Ridicule, for deceiving themselves. Strip off the thin Disguise of Wisdom from self-Conceit, of plenty from Avarice, and of Glory from Ambition . . . till Mankind learn the Good-Nature to laugh only at the Follies of others, and the Humility to grieve at their own. And thou, almost the constant Attendant on true Genius, Humanity, bring all thy tender Sensations. . . Not without these the tender Scene is painted. From these alone proceed the noble, disinterested Friendship, the melting Love, the generous Sentiment, the ardent Gratitude, the soft Compassion, the candid Opinion; and all those strong Energies of a good Mind, which fill the moistened Eyes with Tears, the glowing Cheeks with Blood, and swell the Heart with Tides of Grief, Joy and Benevolence. And thou, O Learning (for without thy Assistance nothing pure, nothing correct, can Genius produce) do thou guide my Pen. . . Lastly, come Experience long conversant with the Wise, the Good, the Learned, and the Polite. . . From thee only can the manners of Mankind be known; to which the recluse Pedant however great his Parts, or extensive his Learning may be, hath ever been a Stranger (683-687; note, the invocation continues onto page 688).

What saves the narrator from his enthusiastic turn and what also supplants an older conception of the epic muse here is “Genius.” Fielding gestures towards a type of inspiration fit for the modern writer, which redistributes the power of enthusiasm from a divine source (in its ancient paradigm) onto the authorial subject. Notably, genius is what distinguishes the author from his reader and restores the hierarchical balance to Fielding’s narrative in which the author reigns

over, and guides, the reader in his practice. If the author acts as the reader's guide, then Genius becomes the author's guide, what checks his enthusiasm, and saves him in his moments where he most "struggles against the Stream of Nature." As the narrator asks Genius "to lead [him] through all the Mazes, the winding Labyrinths of Nature," he admits to his own potentials for "error." (Punning on the Latinate root of the word, Fielding uses the term "error" here in the Miltonic sense as a "wandering from one's course").

Significantly, Genius, although allegorized, is not described as a deity but rather serves as a substitute for the muse. In Fielding's realist novel of socio-religious principles, Genius is still a "gift of heaven," a human faculty, divinely bestowed. The language of the cult of enthusiasm, moreover, permeates Fielding's invocation of his secular muse when he asks Genius to "Initiate [him] into all those Mysteries which profane Eyes never beheld." The initiation into the cult of Genius thus preserves the mysterious appeal of its ancient predecessor, the cult of enthusiasm, as the author becomes privy to the secret rites of Genius, revealing it as an elite and sacred faculty of knowledge as *insight* (a truth which "profane Eyes never beheld"). Thus authorial "Genius" borrows the enticements of an older inspiration, as secrets are communicated in the act of writing. However, the source of the knowledge, ascribed to an act of seeing and unveiling, deprives the inspiration of its passive nature; Genius becomes an act of seeing and revealing, in fact, a capacity which disposes of "mystery" as it "dis-covers" it. For Fielding, the Genius of the artist lies in his insight into the nature of things, and most particularly into the human subject, for his realism along with his revision of enthusiasm keeps the project of social reform as his work's constant priority. Thus the author must "know Mankind better than they know themselves." The author's art thereby becomes one of revelation, one unlike the artifice of man, as the narrator describes the work of Genius in a language of undressing: "Teach me to...*Remove* the Mist

which dims the Intellects of Mortals, and causes them to adore Men for their Art, or to detest them for their Cunning in deceiving others, when they are, in reality, the Objects only of Ridicule, for deceiving themselves. *Strip off the thin Disguise* of Wisdom from self-Conceit, of plenty from Avarice, and of Glory from Ambition.” According to Fielding’s narrator, the art of humankind is one of deception, a habit of dressing or veiling one’s nature, of concealing it behind an unfit, or inappropriate, mask. Hence we are reminded of Fielding’s metaphor of the world and the stage, which deprives the theatrical of its glamorous appeal.

Yet Fielding manages in *Tom Jones* to borrow a model of a critical aesthetics from the theatrical scenario, which, in deriving the affective powers from the aesthetic and rhetorical arts, also sees the performance as circumscribed by the spectator’s faculties of judgment. Elsewhere in *Tom Jones*, when Fielding cites “Genius” as one of the necessary qualities of his new “order of historians,” he defines this faculty as follows: “By Genius I would understand that Power, or rather those Powers of the Mind, which are capable of penetrating into all Things within our Reach and Knowledge, and of distinguishing their essential Differences. These are no other than Invention and Judgment; and they are oft called by the collective name of Genius” (491). Genius thus becomes a creative capacity for insight and judgment; it employs invention, which Fielding in this passage defines as “discovery,” and judgment, which he here calls the ability to “discern differences” (491; see Locke). This notion of artistic judgment teaches the reader/spectator a truer, more moral concept of judgment as he “learn[s] the Good-Nature to laugh only at the Follies of others, and the Humility to grieve at [his] own.”

Seeing as Fielding always seeks to pair the rational and sentimental in his realist style of satire, his narrator, therefore, completes this picture of the modern invocation, of the author’s newfound “inspiration,” by coupling “genius” with “humanity”: “And thou, almost the constant

Attendant on true Genius, Humanity, bring all thy tender Sensations...Not without these the tender Scene is painted. From these alone proceed the noble, disinterested Friendship, the melting Love, the generous Sentiment, the ardent Gratitude, the soft Compassion, the candid Opinion.” Fielding attests to the fact that there is a natural, and genuine truth to the act of “feeling,” particularly when it is derived from a point of “disinterest.” Therefore, Fielding’s narrator includes the more “generous,” undesigning, or desiring, “sentiment” of the sympathetic spectator in his complete picture of a revisionary inspiration.<sup>197</sup> The author’s art equally relies upon the “discerning” and “discovering” capacities of “genius” and insight as it does upon the ability to move his reader into an affective response. As Fielding’s invocation turns upon a question of substitution, whose “Assistance” shall the author [now] “invoke to direct [his] Pen”?, an older paradigm of enthusiasm, marked by the “Shadow” of the ancient muse and the “Substance” of material desire, now dissipates, giving way to a new model of “inspiration.” This modern pattern of authorial inspiration, steeped in a language of disinterest and the philosophy of a critical aesthetics, now takes flight once Fielding’s longest exploration of the invocational genre in *Tom Jones* momentarily sheds the mocking method, briefly lifting the curtain, to discover the satirist’s true tone. The hope, of course, is that we will follow the satirist’s lead. Allowing him to take us by the hand, we follow his directions. Catching his “inspiration,” we take in the discerning insight and the humane sympathy necessary to our role as the ideal, Augustan spectators of *Tom Jones*.

The effect of this new inspiration, defined by its association with “genius” and “humanity,” is to enact a social reform of an older model of enthusiasm. The novel form now unfolds as a practice of disclosure between author and reader, which imports the affective power of a theatrical scenario and an ancient reliance on enthusiasm into Fielding’s art of prose while

subjecting it to a critically aesthetic paradigm fit for modern writing. Thus Fielding's modern redactions of enthusiasm in *Tom Jones* revise an ancient model of inspiration, depriving it of its former passivity and subjecting it to a critically aesthetic paradigm so as to suit inspiration to the purposes of the modern author. Such a secular enthusiasm allows for a type of invocation dressed for the modern's aesthetic occasion. Invocation now becomes an act of discovery, an unveiling moment of communication, which conspires to include both author and reader into an open act of public exchange. To return to Fielding's second passage from *The Champion*: that early essay reveals the nature of Fielding's invocations, as well as his satiric applications to the muse in *Tom Jones*, as attempts to save the writers of Fielding's own time from Cicero's "error." Redirecting Augustan authorship onto a new path, Fielding's novel ridicules "those Muses with whom he was so entirely unacquainted" only to acquaint his reader with a new modern muse, here discovered as the "Strength and Bent of...Genius" itself.

## Lawful Inspiration: Kant's Spirit of Genius and the Romantic Return

In the *Third Critique*, Kant defines genius as the “free correspondence of the imagination to the *lawfulness* of the understanding” (195).<sup>198</sup> Here, Kant associates the free play of the imagination with the animating forces of the spirit. Genius takes on a rhetoric of revolutionary freedom as something natural-born, original, and non-imitative. Although genius in its defiance of imitation cannot be represented, it must, however, find a form of presentation—an “expression” in which the aesthetic can be related, or “communicated,” to a wider public. In this act of aesthetic expression, genius finds its telos in taste and judgment. The free play that defines the animating forces of genius and the imagination is, nevertheless, restrained by the laws of universal understanding; as genius animates, judgment restrains. This Kantian synthesis of the empirical and the rational reflects a new definition of inspiration and genius that began to emerge in the early stages of the modern period. Kant's definition of genius, his account of lawful inspiration, reminds us of the role of aesthetic judgment that arises in Shaftesbury's, Pope's, or Fielding's modern modulations of enthusiasm. For these writers, dialogical structures, the apostrophe or appeal to a friend, or “secular” other, reveal the conversational mode of eighteenth-century concepts of genius and inspiration.

This dissertation has argued that early eighteenth-century invocation redefined an ancient model of inspiration by activating authorial voice and appealing to readerly judgment. Using a philosophical language of aesthetic experience, modern inspiration highlighted the importance of affective experience alongside a need for the critical, governing capacities of judgment by

appealing to a friend as a judging spectator or to the author's own aesthetic capacities, "his genius." Genius for early eighteenth-century writers refers to the author's capacities of "invention." As Pope defines it in his preface to Homer, invention in this timeperiod marks the writer's ability to "discover," unveil, or unmask something to the reader. Modern inspiration became an act of authorial revelation now socialized through the dialogic appeals of the text. This movement towards a type of didactic inspiration, which sheds the passive structures of classical enthusiasm, highlighted the need for dialogic structures in "inspired" works of literature and philosophy that circulated in England during the Restoration period and the first half of the eighteenth century.

But what would happen to this concept of genius in the wake of Kant and the rise of Romanticism? Romantic enthusiasm has been described as "secular," evinced by the author's animating apostrophes to nature. Yet Romantic enthusiasm often reveals an act of veiling, not unveiling, an appeal the mystery, to what cannot be "discovered" by human eyes. Moreover, marked by its inward, autobiographical turn, Romantic inspiration often left behind the dialogic structures and expressive forms that Kant defined as the necessary appeal to taste and judgment in all lawful acts of inspiration and genius. Romanticism's shift in the rhetoric of the genius doctrine, in fact, complicated issues of agency in poetic acts of invocation and inspiration. Is Romanticism a rupture, as we have defined it, which gives rise to a secular movement in literary form and experience? Or is it rather a *return*—a slip back into the exclusive, private and sacred version of enthusiasm that predated the rise of modernity? Romantic enthusiasm, as an apostrophe to the "god in nature" reinforces the kind of non-communicative assumptions about enthusiasm, which I would argue complicates its having been labeled as "secular."

I have argued in this dissertation that secularization occurs prior to Romanticism in the precursory stages of the Enlightenment with the phenomenon of secular enthusiasm in literature. What I have called “secular enthusiasm” points to an early eighteenth-century effort to aestheticize enthusiasm. In this manner, eighteenth-century enthusiasm anticipates and embodies what we now call “Romanticism” in its turn toward aestheticized forms of inspiration. Enthusiasm inflects modern inspiration as it relies on movement, transport, or feeling, on the author’s capacity to stir, or animate, his reader into a state of affective response. Yet eighteenth-century modulations of enthusiasm are distinct from Romantic inspiration in their reliance on a critical impulse, or turn, in all acts of aesthetic production and reception. This gesture towards the crucial, restraining, governing capacities of judgment, encapsulated in what I have identified as dialogical forms of inspiration, apostrophe, and address, aligns with an eighteenth-century terminology of the aesthetic; it exposes what Shaftesbury, Kant and others have defined as a moral philosophy of aesthetics, or a critical aesthetics, a type of affective form that becomes “lawful” in its reliance on judgment and communication. This eighteenth-century definition of the aesthetic, founded upon a synthesis of the rational and the empirical, aligns the phenomenon of modern enthusiasm with the social impulses tied to the eighteenth-century triumph of the public sphere (Habermas).<sup>199</sup> Essentially, this movement defines the “secular” in eighteenth-century terms.

According to such an account, we might then argue that Romanticism loses its secularity in slipping back into a private realm of transport. Romantic paradigms of inspiration reveal a kind of non-communicative enthusiasm. In the typical Romantic prototype, inspiration never becomes a form of converse that extends beyond the bounds of nature itself; man communes with nature in isolation from society. In this manner, Romanticism slips back into a sacred model

of enthusiasm. Romantic inspiration is not quite classical (in its reliance on the aesthetic and on naturally-born forms of genius), but nor is it “modern” in its insistence on private experiences of transport.

Of course, I am referring to one kind of Romanticism here. We might recall Wordsworth’s apostrophe to nature at the start of the 1805 *Prelude*<sup>200</sup> or Shelly’s invocation of the wind in the “Ode to the West Wind.”<sup>201</sup> Such representations of the Romantic spirit as forms of “secular enthusiasm” are rendered problematic once we come to understand the transformation of enthusiasm and inspiration in the first half of the eighteenth century and during the rise of modernity. Yet our definition of what we call “Romanticism” has also significantly changed since M.H. Abrams’s account of the secular in 1971.<sup>202</sup> *Natural Supernaturalism*’s illustration of the Romantic moment as a “secular” shift in autobiographical, poetic form has not only been complicated by new accounts of the secular in Romanticism studies (here I am thinking of Colin Jager in particular)<sup>203</sup> but also by the broadening context of the Romantic canon. How does inspiration shift from early to late Romanticism, and how do we account for transitional figures in the period such as Anna Leticia Barbauld or even John Keats?

We might read Barbauld as a transitional figure whose oeuvre invokes both eighteenth and nineteenth-century paradigms of enthusiasm. In “Washing Day,” for example, Barbauld relies on a more eighteenth-century version of modern enthusiasm when she works to feminize enthusiasm’s reform by apostrophizing the female dialect as a replacement for the prototypical figure of the muse: “The Muses are turned gossips; they have lost/ The buskin’d step, and clear high-sounding phrase, / Language of gods. Come, then, domestic Muse,/ In slip-shod measure loosely prattling on . . . (ll. 1-4).”<sup>204</sup> Conversation, “gossip” itself, is the mode of discourse that becomes the apostrophized subject. Yet a more nineteenth-century version of enthusiasm

emerges in “A Summer Evening’s Meditation,” as the speaker reveals a movement towards apostrophizing the mysteries in nature; here, the role of the poet is to invoke the mystery (a Romantic construct)—not to “discover” it in the fashion of an Augustan concept of poetic “invention.”<sup>205</sup>

The Romantic turn, or perhaps the Romantic return, is marked by such slippery, transitional figures who complicate our understanding of periodization along with our definitions of such literary-historical categories as “Romanticism” or the “secular.” Movements in the philosophy of aesthetics equally contribute to such ambiguities in our understanding of “modern” inspiration or enthusiasm. A shift in the genius doctrine in the late eighteenth century, around the time of Kant’s *Third Critique*, re-complicates the internal or external divide of inspiration’s relationship to an other—and, once again, calls into question *where* the origins of inspiration come from. Once Kant translates an older concept of “genius” as “the particular spirit given to a person at birth” into his notion of the naturally-inspired artist, inspiration in its relationship to “genius” takes on new connotations. With Kant’s assertion that genius is “naturally” bestowed, he adds to Pope’s or Fielding’s notion of “genius” as the mental faculty of invention, insight, and judgment; genius and inspiration are now definitively attributed to an external and natural source. Of course, this concept of the genius loci long predates Kant and never solves the issues of language’s origins in either the rise of the modern or the Romantic period.

Similarly, Keats’s claim about enthusiasm in his “Ode to Psyche”—“I see, and sing, by my own eyes inspired” (l. 43)—raises the issue of perception as it relates to the origins of inspiration and language.<sup>206</sup> Where does inspiration come from? Is it self-generated, a result of the author’s own internal “genius,” his faculties of cognition and perception (whether these be naturally or divinely bestowed)? Or is inspiration inherited through our communion with place,

with Nature itself? The dialogic structures of modern modulations of enthusiasm in the Restoration and the first half of the eighteenth century only become increasingly difficult to locate in the latter half of the century with the rise of Romantic philosophies of language and the self.

I have argued that eighteenth-century efforts to modernize enthusiasm both aestheticize inspiration and render it dialogical, emphasizing the author's faculties of genius, invention, and rhetoric. This account of modern inspiration differs from Romantic accounts of private enthusiasm and autobiographical poetic form. Yet recent critical efforts to define the illustration of the porous author in Romantic poetry further complicate what we mean by the "Romantic subject." Here, the author is described as without a body or "self," a porous, receptive entity who remains indistinct from his surroundings. Such an account of the Romantic writer only renders issues of agency and authority increasingly problematic, which in the first half of the eighteenth century become so instrumental to authorial efforts at modernizing enthusiasm. Critical accounts of invocation and language in the Romantic period equally complicate the eighteenth-century picture of poetic and philosophic enthusiasm that this dissertation puts forward.

Deconstructionist theories of Romantic apostrophe and address, for example, (see the work of Barbara Johnson and Jonathan Culler)<sup>207</sup> have revealed apostrophe not only as an act of animation, but also as an act of silencing, a privatizing impulse, which both deprives the apostrophized subject of her voice and estranges the reader in instances of Romantic "address."<sup>208</sup> Romantic inspiration, like Romantic genius, only complicates issues of authority and the question of where language comes from in supposedly "secular" accounts of inspiration.

Eighteenth-century modulations of enthusiasm reveal the persistent need for an other, the necessary impulse of “imagining an audience of one’s own making,” as Shaftesbury states in the opening of his *Letter Concerning Enthusiasm*. The role of this “other,” the apostrophized outsider who becomes necessarily internalized through the author’s aesthetic-poetic process of language and image-making is, I have argued, indispensable to any definition of “secular enthusiasm” in eighteenth-century literature and philosophy. But what happens to inspiration or invocation as this “other”<sup>209</sup> becomes sidelined, estranged, or lost entirely, in the margins of a Romantic enthusiasm? A typical account of Romantic inspiration, one might argue, simply replaces “God” with “Nature.” Yet the categories of the secular and the sacred may be complicated by the slippery structures of invocation in the Romantic lyric, which continually call into question the nature of the authorial subject and the origins of language in Romantic models of inspiration and genius. Can the “secular” survive in Romantic lyricism without a firmly-defined other?

It seems that more work must be done in rethinking the historical and philosophical boundaries of the standard Enlightenment secularization thesis. Perhaps, a distinction between how we define the categories of the “secular” and the “sacred” in the Augustan and the Romantic periods, and throughout an ever-expanding era of Enlightenment, is necessary before we can begin to answer these questions. What are the continuities and what are the conflicts between eighteenth-century and Romantic forms of inspiration and enthusiasm? I hope, at least, to have complicated these distinctions in my argument for the phenomenon of “secular enthusiasm” in eighteenth-century literature and philosophy.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Abrams, M.H. *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature*. New York: Norton, 1971; Jager, Colin. *The Book of God: Secularization and Design in the Romantic Era*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007; Taylor, Charles. *A Secular Age*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> *Oxford English Dictionary*. See definitions 1a, 1b, and 2. (*Oxford English Dictionary*. Second Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>3</sup> Beiser, Frederick. *The Sovereignty of Reason: the Defense of Rationality in the Early English Enlightenment*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.

<sup>4</sup> Swift, Jonathan. *A Tale of the Tub, to Which Is Added the Battle of the Books, and the Mechanical Operation of the Spirit: Together with the History of Martin, Wotton's Observations Upon the Tale of a Tub, Curll's Complete Key, Etc. the Whole Edited with an Introd. and Notes Historical and Explanatory*. Ed. Adolph Charles Louis Guthkelch and David Nicol Smith. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958.

<sup>5</sup> Pocock, J.G.A. "Enthusiasm: The Antiself of Enlightenment." *Enthusiasm and Enlightenment in Europe, 1650-1850*. Ed. Lawrence Klein and Anthony La Vopa. San Marino: Huntington Library, 1998.

<sup>6</sup> Klein identifies this paradox in his essay, "Sociability, Solitude, and Enthusiasm" published in his edited volume on the same topic, *Enthusiasm and Enlightenment in Europe, 1650-1850*. San Marino: Huntington Library, 1998. This essay works out many of the issues which Klein begins to encounter around the problem enthusiasm in his book, *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness: Moral Discourse and Cultural Politics in Early Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), where enthusiasm does not yet play as central of a role.

<sup>7</sup> This essay is published in the same collection as Klein's, *Enthusiasm and Enlightenment in Europe, 1650-1850*. Ed. Lawrence Klein and Anthony La Vopa. San Marino: Huntington Library, 1998.

<sup>8</sup> As Frederick Beiser notes in his etymological account of the term "enthusiasm" (*The Sovereignty of Reason: the Defense of Rationality in the Early English Enlightenment*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), shwärmerei was a German term used for "radicals who swarmed together...like bees" (188).

<sup>9</sup> Taken from "Enthusiasm: The Antiself of Enlightenment." *Enthusiasm and Enlightenment in Europe, 1650-1850*. Ed. Lawrence Klein and Anthony La Vopa. San Marino: Huntington Library, 1998.

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<sup>10</sup> Prostko, Jack. "Natural Conversation Set in View: Shaftesbury and Moral Speech." *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 23 (1989): 42-61.

<sup>11</sup> See in particular the definitions of sympathy which arise out of Hume's *Treatise* (Hume, David. *A Treatise of Human Nature*. Ed. David Fate Norton and Mary J. Norton. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) and Adam Smith's *A Theory of Moral Sentiments* (Smith, Adam. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Amherst: Prometheus Books, 2000). For an excellent explanation of the eighteenth-century aesthetic definition of sympathy, see the introduction to David Marshall's *The Surprising Effects of Sympathy: Marivaux, Diderot, Rousseau, and Mary Shelley* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

<sup>12</sup> Shaftesbury links the venting of the humors to the use of humor, or comedy. As Ernst Cassirer points out in his chapter on Shaftesbury from his book, *The Platonic Renaissance in England* (New York: Gordian Press, 1970). Shaftesbury's understanding of humor is not constrained to intellectual sarcasm or irony, but by "humour" he means: "the basic sense in which the Renaissance had given the term, that is, as a liberating, life-giving, and life-forming power of the soul" (183).

<sup>13</sup> For more materials on portrayals, theories, and debates surrounding the topic of enthusiasm, please note some of the following selected works: Morillo, John D. "Poetic Enthusiasm." *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Poetry*. Ed. Gerrard, Christine. Malden: Blackwell; 2006; Williams, Abigail. "The Poetry of the Un-Enlightened: Politics and Literary Enthusiasm in the Early Eighteenth Century." *History of European Ideas*, 2005; 31 (2): 299-311; Goring, Paul. "Anglicanism, Enthusiasm and Quixotism: Preaching and Politeness in Mid-Eighteenth Century Literature." *Literature & Theology: An International Journal of Theory, Criticism and Culture*, December 2001; 15 (4): 326-41; Zupančič, Alenka. "Enthusiasm, Anxiety, and the Event." *Parallax*, 2005 Oct-Dec; 11 (4 [37]): 31-45; McDowell, Paula. "Enlightenment Enthusiasms and the Spectacular Failure of the Philadelphian Society." *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Summer 2002; 35 (4): 515-33; Irlam, Shaun. *Elations: The Poetics of Enthusiasm in Eighteenth-Century Britain*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999; Mee, Jon. "Anxieties of Enthusiasm: Coleridge, Prophecy, and Popular Politics in the 1790s." *Huntington Library Quarterly: Studies in English and American History and Literature*, 1998; 60 (1-2): 179-203; Hawes, Clement. *Mania and Literary Style: The Rhetoric of Enthusiasm from the Ranters to Christopher Smart*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996; McNelly, Brett C. "Method or Madness: Methodist Devotion and the Anti-Methodist Response." *Religion in the Age of Reason: A Transatlantic Study of the Long Eighteenth Century*. Ed. Duncan, Kathryn. New York: AMS, 2009; Stasio, Kathryn. "The Primitive Church, the Primitive Mind, and Methodism in the Eighteenth Century." *Religion in the Age of Enlightenment*, 2009; 1: 59-81; Frank, Jason. "Besides Our Selves': An Essay on Enthusiastic Politics and Civil Subjectivity." *Public Culture*, 2005 Fall; 17 (3 [47]): 371-92; Johns, Adrian. "The Physiology of Reading and the Anatomy of Enthusiasm." *Religio Medici: Medicine and Religion in Seventeenth-Century England*. Ed. Ole Peter Grell and Andrew Cunningham. Aldershot, England: Scolar, 1996; Morillo, John. "John Dennis: Enthusiastic Passions, Cultural Memory, and Literary Theory." *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Fall 2000; 34 (1): 21-41; Rogal, Samuel J. "Enlightened

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Enthusiasm: Anti-Methodism in the Literature of the Mid and Late Eighteenth Century.” *Enlightenment Essays*, 1974; 5 (1): 3-13; Williamson, George. “The Restoration Revolt Against Enthusiasm.” *Studies in Philology*, 1933; 30: 571-603; Steffan, T. Guy. “The Social Argument against Enthusiasm, 1650-1660.” *Studies in English*, 1941; 39-63; Babcock, R. W. “A Note on Genius, Imagination and Enthusiasm. In some late Eighteenth-century Periodicals.” *Notes and Queries*, 1947; 192: 93-95; Ponsford, Michael. “Poetical Fury’: The Religious Enthusiasts of the Late Seventeenth Century.” *Christian Scholar's Review*, 1986 Sept.; 16 (1): 24-39; Goring, Paul. *The Rhetoric of Sensibility in Eighteenth-Century Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. Achinstein, Sharon. *Literature and Dissent in Milton's England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

<sup>14</sup> Milton, John. *Complete Poems and Major Prose*. Ed. Merritt Yerkes Hughes. New York: Odyssey Press, 1957.

<sup>15</sup>Not surprisingly, accounts of invocation and the muse in Milton’s epic have a long critical history. Although my discussion of Milton’s Urania deals very briefly a few of the more recent works of scholarship, please note the following important, selected works on this topic in Milton criticism: Verity, A.W. Ed. *Milton: Paradise Lost*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910; Hunter, William B. “Milton’s Muse.” *Bright Essence: Studies in Milton’s Theology*. University of Utah Press: 1971; Daiches, David. “The Opening of *Paradise Lost*.” *The Living Milton*. Ed. Frank Kermode. London: 1960. Davies, Stevie. “Milton’s Urania: The meaning not the name I call.” *SEL: Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 1988 Winter; 28 (1): 95-111. Hunter, William B. “Milton’s Urania.” *SEL: Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 1964 Winter; 4 (1): 35-42. Gregory, E. R. *Milton and the Muses*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1989. Cope, Jackson I. “Milton’s Muse in *Paradise Lost*.” *Modern Philology: A Journal Devoted to Research in Medieval and Modern Literature*, 1957 Aug; 55 (1): 6-10. Flinker, Noam. “Courting Urania: The Narrator of *Paradise Lost* Invokes his Muse.” *Milton and the Idea of Woman*. Ed. Walker, Julia M. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988. Shaheen, Naseeb. “Milton’s Muse and the De Doctrina.” *Milton Quarterly*, 1974; 8: 72-76. Gregory, E. R. “Three Muses and a Poet: A Perspective on Milton’s Epic Thought.” *Milton Studies*, 1977; 10: 35-64. Budick, Sanford. *The Dividing Muse: Images of Sacred Disjunction in Milton’s Poetry*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985. Henry, Nathaniel H. “The Mystery of Milton’s Muse.” *Renaissance Papers*, 1967; 69-83. Woodhouse, A.S.P. *The Heavenly Muse: A Preface to Milton*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972. Johnson, Lee M. “Milton’s Epic Style: The Invocation in *Paradise Lost*.” *The Cambridge Companion to Milton*. Ed. Dennis Danielson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989. Summers, Joseph H. *The Muse’s Method: An Introduction to Paradise Lost*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962.

<sup>16</sup> Phillips, Philip Edward. *John Milton’s Epic Invocations: Converting the Muse*. New York: Peter Lang, 2000.

<sup>17</sup> Haan, Estelle. “From Helicon to Heaven: Milton’s Urania and Vida.” *Renaissance Studies: Journal of the Society for Renaissance Studies*, 1993 Mar; 7 (1): 86-107.

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<sup>18</sup> The significance of Urania is highly debated in Milton criticism. In addition to Haan's article, see in particular: Davies, Stevie. "Milton's Urania: The meaning not the name I call." *SEL: Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 1988 Winter; 28 (1): 95-111 and Hunter, William B. "Milton's Urania." *SEL: Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 1964 Winter; 4 (1): 35-42.

<sup>19</sup> Fish, Stanley. "With Mortal Voice: Milton Defends Against the Muse." *ELH*. 1995 Fall; 62 (3): 509-27.

<sup>20</sup> Schwartz, Regina Mara. *Sacramental Poetics at the Dawn of Secularism: When God Left the World*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008.

<sup>21</sup> Ellenzweig, Sarah. *The Fringes of Belief: English Literature, Ancient Heresy, and the Politics of Freethinking, 1660-1760*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008.

<sup>22</sup> Jager, Colin. "This Detail, This History: Charles Taylor's Romanticism." *Varieties of Secularism in a Secular Age*. Ed. Michael Warner, Jonathan VanAntwerpen, and Craig Calhoun. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010.

<sup>23</sup> As one would assume, the topic of secularization has a long and exhaustive history of theoretical underpinnings and debates. For additional materials relevant to my use of the category of the secular here (particularly as it relates to concepts and issues of modernity), please note some of the following arguments, which represent a small selection from the vast canon of secularization criticism: Kahn, Victoria. "Early Modern Secularism." *Representations*, 2009 Winter; 105: 1-167; Warner, Michael. *Varieties of Secularism in a Secular Age*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010; Jager, Colin. *Secularism, Cosmopolitanism, and Romanticism*. College Park, MD: University of Maryland Press, 2008; Jakobsen, Janet R. *Secularisms*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008; Lee, Susanna. *A World Abandoned by God: Narrative and Secularism*. Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2006; Bilgrami, Akeel. Two Concepts of *Secularism*. *The Yale Journal of Criticism: Interpretation in the Humanities*, 1994 Spring; 7 (1): 211-27; Jager, Colin. "After the Secular: The Subject of Romanticism." *Public Culture*, 2006 Spring; 18 (2 [49]): 301-21; Tomlinson, T.B. "The Secular Spirit of Milton's England: 1640s-1660s." *Literature and History*, 1984 Autumn; 10 (2): 218-230; Fraser, Ian. *Dialectics of the Self: Transcending Charles Taylor*. Exeter, England: Imprint Academic, 2010; Creaven, Sean. *Against the Spiritual Turn: Marxism, Realism, and Critical Theory*. London, England: Routledge; 2010; Kaufmann, Michael W. "The Religious, the Secular, and Literary Studies: Rethinking the Secularization Narrative in Histories of the Profession." *New Literary History: A Journal of Theory and Interpretation*, 2007 Fall; 38 (4): 607-627; Collings, David. "After the Covenant: Romanticism, Secularization, and Disastrous Transcendence." *European Romantic Review*, 2010 June; 21 (3): 345-361; Stewart, Carol. *The Eighteenth-Century Novel and the Secularization of Ethics*. Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2010; Canuel, Mark. "Romanticism, Religion, Secularization." *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 2009 Fall; 33 (3): 150-155. Fessenden, Tracy. "The Secular' as Opposed to What?" *New Literary History: A Journal of Theory and Interpretation*, 2007 Fall; 38 (4): 631-636; Pecora, Vincent P. *Secularization and Cultural Criticism: Religion, Nation, & Modernity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006; Ward, Graham. "How Literature Resists Secularity." *Literature & Theology: An International*

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*Journal of Religion, Theory, and Culture*, 2010 Mar; 24 (1): 73-88.

<sup>24</sup> Pocock, J.G.A. "Enthusiasm: The Antiself of Enlightenment." *Enthusiasm and Enlightenment in Europe, 1650-1850*. Ed. Lawrence Klein and Anthony La Vopa. San Marino: Huntington Library, 1998.

<sup>25</sup> Fenves, Peter. "The Scale of Enthusiasm." *Enthusiasm and Enlightenment in Europe, 1650-1850*. Ed. Lawrence Klein and Anthony La Vopa. San Marino: Huntington Library, 1998.

<sup>26</sup> Klein, Lawrence. *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness: Moral Discourse and Cultural Politics in Early Eighteenth-Century England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

<sup>27</sup> Beiser, Frederick. *The Sovereignty of Reason: the Defense of Rationality in the Early English Enlightenment*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.

<sup>28</sup> All citations of Shaftesbury's works are taken from: Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley Cooper. *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*. Ed. Lawrence E. Klein. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

<sup>29</sup> According to Cassirer, Shaftesbury is the first to write about genius as a "concept [which] attains universal significance." "Artistic genius," writes Cassirer, "does not imitate created nature; it imitates the creative genius of the universe itself" (166). Cassirer also sees the birth of the "genius doctrine" as being linked to Shaftesbury's notions about platonic love, or enthusiasm (*The Platonic Renaissance in England*. New York: Gordian Press, 1970).

<sup>30</sup> Grean, Stanley. *Shaftesbury's Philosophy of Religion and Ethics: A Study in Enthusiasm*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1967.

<sup>31</sup> See the following selected publications on Shaftesbury's aesthetic philosophy: Voitle, Robert. "Shaftesbury's Moral Sense." *Studies in Philology* 52 (1955): 17-38; Townsend, Dabney. "From Shaftesbury to Kant: The Development of the Concept of Aesthetic Experience." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 48 (1987): 287-306; Stolnitz, Jerome. "On the Significance of Lord Shaftesbury in Modern Aesthetic Theory." *Philosophical Quarterly* 11 (1961): 97-113 and "On the Origin of Aesthetic Disinterestedness." *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 20 (1961): 131-143; Raphael, D.D. *The Moral Sense*. London: Oxford University Press, 1947; Cowan, Brian. "Reasonable Ecstasies: Shaftesbury and the Language of Libertinism." *Journal of British Studies* 37 (1998): 111-138; Darwall, Stephen. *The British Moralists and the Internal "Ought," 1640-1740*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995; Cassirer, Ernst. *The Platonic Renaissance in England*. New York: Gordian Press, 1970; Caygill, Howard. *Art of Judgment*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1989.

<sup>32</sup> For work on Shaftesbury's style see Markley, Robert. "Style as Philosophical Structure: The Contexts of Shaftesbury's Characteristics." *The Philosopher as Writer: The Eighteenth Century*. Ed. Robert Ginsberg. London: Associated University Presses, 1987 and "Sentimentality as

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Performance.” *The New Eighteenth Century: Theory, Politics, English Literature*. Ed. Laura Brown and Felicity Nussbaum. New York: Methuen, 1987; Prince, Michael. *Philosophical Dialogue in the British Enlightenment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996; and Marshall, David. *The Figure of Theater: Shaftesbury, Defoe, Adam Smith, and George Eliot*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.

<sup>33</sup> Markley, Robert. “Style as Philosophical Structure: The Contexts of Shaftesbury’s Characteristics.” *The Philosopher as Writer: The Eighteenth Century*. Ed. Robert Ginsberg. London: Associated University Presses, 1987. Prince, Michael. *Philosophical Dialogue in the British Enlightenment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

<sup>34</sup> For an extensive account about the role of dialogue in Shaftesbury’s *The Moralists*, please see Michael Prince’s work: *Philosophical Dialogue in the British Enlightenment*. Note in particular, the following quotation: “For Theocles, philosophical dialogue stages the design argument in social terms. It transfers the analogical correspondence between parts and wholes, phenomena and noumena, into a model for the way social contradictions –the competing assertions of interested individuals- might be resolved through rational debate. One divides in order to unite, locates difference in order to achieve synthesis” (50). (Prince, Michael. *Philosophical Dialogue in the British Enlightenment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). Cassirer also discusses the social implications of Shaftesbury’s dialogue in *The Moralists* in light of his theories of plastic nature (*The Platonic Renaissance in England*. New York: Gordian Press, 1970, p. 195).

<sup>35</sup> Marshall, David. *The Figure of Theater: Shaftesbury, Defoe, Adam Smith, and George Eliot*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986. See also: Prince, Michael. *Philosophical Dialogue in the British Enlightenment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

<sup>36</sup> Cassirer discusses Shaftesbury’s use of the satiric tone when he sees humor as that which critiques enthusiasm: “Humour need not justify itself before religion, but religion before humour (169-170).” I will expand upon this assertion by explaining the important role that the satiric voice and the structure of satire have in a socially reformed notion of enthusiasm that Shaftesbury illustrates in both *The Letter* and *The Moralists*. Here, I hope to show that the structural and formal nuances of the satiric mode do much more for Shaftesbury’s use of satire along with its generic implications than merely present humor as a critique of enthusiasm in Shaftesbury’s reform. Robert Markley is one of the few critics (aside from Cassirer) to remark on Shaftesbury use of satire. He writes that Shaftesbury’s linking of ‘criticks’ with ‘satirists’ virtually erases traditional generic distinctions between critical and creative writing, between secondary and primary forms of discourse. “Like satire, criticism participates in the radical, creative activity of trying to generate its own linguistic authority and to reassert the authority of aristocratic and neoclassical values. For Shaftesbury, to write is to create an authoritative discourse, to redefine the traditional ‘authority’ of language itself” (151). Markley’s notion of the satirist as a critic is close to what I will argue in my sections on both *The Letter* and *The Moralists*, in which a reform of enthusiasm endows the self-critical author, or satirist, the agency to make his own discourse.

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<sup>37</sup> Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley Cooper. *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*. Ed. Lawrence E. Klein. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

<sup>38</sup> In fact, Shaftesbury's philosophy mediates between the extremes of sophistry and empiricism. Theorists have often explained Shaftesbury's moral sense philosophy as an argumentative response to the teachings of Locke (whom he studied under for many years) and have distinguished him from the later empiricists, such as Hume. See in particular Stephen Darwall, *The British Moralists and the Internal "Ought," 1640-1740*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

<sup>39</sup> For more on Shaftesbury's moral and disinterested aesthetics, see the work of Jerome Stolnitz, "On the Significance of Lord Shaftesbury in Modern Aesthetic Theory." *Philosophical Quarterly* 11 (1961): 97-113, Dabney Townsend, "From Shaftesbury to Kant: The Development of the Concept of Aesthetic Experience." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 48 (1987): 287-306, Ernst Cassirer, *The Platonic Renaissance in England*. New York: Gordian Press, 1970, and Robert Voitle "Shaftesbury's Moral Sense." *Studies in Philology* 52 (1955): 17-38..

<sup>40</sup> A term which Shaftesbury borrows from Ralph Cudworth. In his work, *The True Intellectual System of the Universe*, Cudworth describes plastic nature as the major ordering, or designing, principle of the universe. This philosophical school adopted by many of the Cambridge Platonists countered the claims of both mechanism and anarchy, or chaos. (see Cassirer, *The Platonic Renaissance in England*. New York: Gordian Press, 1970). Here, the universe was composed of God's design, which allowed all parts to cohere into a correspondent whole. God did not actively, or directly bring into effect all universal actions and objects, but rather man, or what Shaftesbury calls God's "forming forms" also contributed to the creative actions within the universe. Nevertheless, as a second maker, man was still subject to the laws of God. See in particular the Prometheus allegory, described in the later section of this essay, "Prometheus, Muse."

<sup>41</sup> My background argument here echoes one of Prince's more astute observations in his work Shaftesbury's dialogue: "For Theocles, philosophical dialogue stages the design argument in social terms. It transfers the analogical correspondence between parts and wholes, phenomena and noumena, into a model for the way social contradictions –the competing assertions of interested individuals- might be resolved through rational debate. One divides in order to unite, locates difference in order to achieve synthesis" (50). Prince, Michael. *Philosophical Dialogue in the British Enlightenment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. Cassirer also discusses the social implications of Shaftesbury's theory of plastic nature (*The Platonic Renaissance in England*. New York: Gordian Press, 1970, p. 195).

<sup>42</sup> My argument for Shaftesbury's text as an embodiment of his principles of a universal theory of plastic art and nature echoes the spirit of an assertion that Robert Markley makes in his essay, "Style as Philosophical Structure: The Contexts of Shaftesbury's Characteristics": "Language," he writes, "...embodies and deploys a system of values; it does not passively reflect a moral or aesthetic order but attempts to define and shape what 'order' itself may be (147). Thus "style" for Markley both reflects and performs the values of the writer; it becomes a merger of form and

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content that carries forth its own ideology. Given this notion of style in application to Shaftesbury, it is easy to think about his implementation of the dialogue in *The Moralists* as an embodiment of his social and aesthetic values surrounding the concept, therein discussed, of a plastic nature.

<sup>43</sup> In terms of philosophies of form in the eighteenth century, R.L. Brett, *The Third Earl of Shaftesbury: A Study in Eighteenth-Century Literary Theory*. London: Hutchinson's University Library, 1951, Ernst Cassirer, *The Platonic Renaissance in England*. New York: Gordian Press, 1970, and Stanley Grean, *Shaftesbury's Philosophy of Religion and Ethics: A Study in Enthusiasm*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1967, all make the same argument that in the war between immanence and transcendence (which will later become so important to Kantian philosophy), Shaftesbury was on the side of immanence. This position he derives from Cudworth and the Cambridge Platonists in their theories of plastic nature.

<sup>44</sup> *The Moralists* is rife with interruptions both self-generated (by Theocles) and elicited by way of the viewer's, or interlocutor's, responses to Theocles's enthusiasm. The dialogic design thus arises from this metaphor which I have explicated here of the two musicians (orator and critic) in responsive exchange. See in particular pages 299 and 312.

<sup>45</sup> Little has been written on Shaftesbury and taste. However, Howard Caygill gives a cursory explanation of Shaftesbury's moral sense philosophy in light of issues of universal taste, or judgment (*Art of Judgment*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1989).

<sup>46</sup> According to Cassirer, Shaftesbury is the first to write about genius as a "concept [which] attains universal significance." "Artistic genius," writes Cassirer, "does not imitate created nature; it imitates the creative genius of the universe itself" (166). Cassirer also sees the birth of the "genius doctrine" as being linked to Shaftesbury's notions about platonic love, or enthusiasm (*The Platonic Renaissance in England*. New York: Gordian Press, 1970).

<sup>47</sup> For an account of Cudworth and the Platonists' theory of plastic nature, see: Ernst Cassirer, *The Platonic Renaissance in England*. New York: Gordian Press, 1970.

<sup>48</sup> See the first chapter of Alvin Kernan's *The Cankered Muse: Satire of the English Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), which lays out his theory of satire.

<sup>49</sup> See Peter Fenves's "The Scale of Enthusiasm" in *Enthusiasm and Enlightenment in Europe, 1650-1850*. Ed. Lawrence Klein and Anthony La Vopa. San Marino: Huntington Library, 1998.

<sup>50</sup> See Locke's definition of wit (*An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Ed. Peter H. Nidditch. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975) along with Addison's notions of true and false wit *The Spectator Papers*. No. 58, Monday, May 7, 1711, and No. 63, Saturday, May 12, 1711.

<sup>51</sup> See the last chapter of Foucault's *The Order of Things*, "The Man and his Doubles." These quotations refer to pages 303 and 307 and are taken from the first section of the chapter, entitled

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“The Return of Language.” Foucault, Michel. *The Order of Things*. New York: Random House, 1970.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. *The Dunciad*. In particular, the last book of Pope’s final four-book version of the poem.

<sup>53</sup> For an excellent account on Pope and the issues of order and pride, particularly as they relate to “irreligious pride” (lix), see Maynard Mack’s introduction to the Twickenham edition of Pope’s *Essay on Man* (Mack, Maynard. “Introduction.” *The Poems of Alexander Pope*. Vol. III i. *An Essay on Man*. Ed. Maynard Mack. London: Methuen and Company, 1950).

<sup>54</sup> All references to Pope’s work are taken from the Twickenham edition of the *Poems of Alexander Pope* (Ed. John Butt et al.). *The Rape of the Lock* references refer to Vol. II: *The Rape of the Lock*. Ed. Geoffrey Tillotson. London: Methuen, 1940.

<sup>55</sup> There is a striking resemblance here to the lines from Pope’s *Essay on Criticism*, which compare the vice of Envy to a solar eclipse:

Envy will Merit as its Shade pursue,  
But like a Shadow, proves the Substance true;  
For env’d Wit, like Sol Eclips’d, makes known  
Th’ opposing Body’s Grossness, not its own.  
When first that Sun too powerful Beams displays,  
It draws up Vapours which obscure its Rays; (ll.466-471).

Essentially, envy here represents the desire for wit and thus highlights a passion and ambition, which for Pope comes to pervert enthusiasm. The sun, a sublime untouchable image, inspires infectiously with its obscuring “vapours,” creating a blinding “dullness” from an overwhelming brightness. Notably, such “vapours” are often linked to a language critical of enthusiasm as a kind of distemper associated with melancholy or madness. See in particular Swift’s *Tale of the Tub* or Shaftesbury’s *Letter Concerning Enthusiasm*.

<sup>56</sup> See in particular Laura Brown’s chapter on *The Rape of the Lock* (*Alexander Pope*. New York: Basil Blackwell, 1985) along with the work of Carol Fabricant (“Defining Self and Others: Pope and Eighteenth-Century Gender Ideology,” *Criticism* 39:4 (1997), 503-530), Helen Deutsch (*Resemblance and Disgrace: Alexander Pope and the Deformation of Culture*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), Christa Knellwolf (*A Contradiction Still: Representations of Women in the Poetry of Alexander Pope*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), Donald Mell (*Pope, Swift, and Women Writers*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1996), Felicity Nussbaum (*The Brink of All We Hate: English Satire on Women, 1660-1750*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1984), Ellen Pollak (*The Poetics of Sexual Myth: Gender and Ideology in the Verse of Swift and Pope*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), Valerie Rumbold (*Women’s Place in Pope’s World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), and Ruth Salvaggio (*Enlightened Absence: Neoclassical Configurations of the Feminine*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988). For a more current engagement with these

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topics see Tita Chico's "The Arts of Beauty: Women's Cosmetics and Pope's Ekphrasis." *Eighteenth-Century Life* 26:2 (2002), 1-23.

<sup>57</sup> I deal here namely with the work of Alex Hernandez ("Commodity and Religion in Pope's Rape of the Lock." *SEL Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*. 48.3 (2008): 569-584) and Howard Weinbrot ("Fine Ladies, Saints in Heaven, and Pope's Rape of the Lock: Genealogy, Catholicism, and the Irenic Muse." *Augustan Subjects: Essays in Honor of Martin C. Battestin*. Ed. Albert J. Rivero. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1997), but emerging critical concerns about the role that the sylphs play in the poem (see John Sitter, "What the Sylphs Do: Studying the Rape of the Lock." *Approaches to Teaching Pope's Poetry*. New York: MLA, 1993) have come to question Pope's decision to use Rosicrucian elements in the poem. In Swift's *Tale of the Tub*, the Rosicrucians are listed amongst the Aeolian Dissenters, following in the wake of Jack, who are marked for their enthusiastic madness.

<sup>58</sup> Beiser, Frederick. *The Sovereignty of Reason: the Defense of Rationality in the Early English Enlightenment*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.

<sup>59</sup> David Morris in his essay, "The Kinship of Madness in Pope's *Dunciad*," (*Philological Quarterly* 51: 1972, 813-3) writes that Pope "insists that self-love is a positive force, but it is beneficial only when self-love and social are the same. . . unless reason directs self-love outward toward society, the ego swells in a morbid, all-consuming selfishness; in his pride man imagines the whole universe created for him alone (823). Pride thus becomes the "annihilating power of madness" (826). Also, see Martin Price's argument (*To the Palace of Wisdom*. Garden City: Doubleday, 1964): "Pope sees a genuine transformation of self-love into social love, and he finds in that transformation a return to man's original nature, to his authentic self (130)." In his discussion of the *Essay on Man*, Price argues that ". . . once [Pope] has made clear the limits of reason, [he] can restore it to its place in a continuity that ascends from self-love to selflessness (132)."

<sup>60</sup> See in particular Shaftesbury's two essays on enthusiasm in *The Characteristics*, his *Letter Concerning Enthusiasm* and *The Moralists*. (*Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*. Ed. Lawrence E. Klein. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

<sup>61</sup> See the first chapter of Alvin Kernan's *The Cankered Muse: Satire of the English Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959) which lays out his theory of satire.

<sup>62</sup> Pollak, Ellen. *The Poetics of Sexual Myth: Gender and Ideology in the Verse of Swift and Pope*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985.

<sup>63</sup> See also Michael Seidel's statement in *Satiric Inheritance: Rabelais to Sterne* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), which claims the *The Rape of the Lock* is designed to ease the tension between Catholic families. The tension in the poem stems from the fact that here attraction acts as a kind of "vanity or overcompensated desire" (227).

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<sup>64</sup> Critics have long sought to explain the slippery imagery of Pope's fantastical mock epic by contemplating not only what is seen in the poem but rather by emphasizing the unseen, the world that escapes human eyes and remains invisible to both the reader and the society-bound members of Belinda's "Beau-monde." Helen Deutsch (*Resemblance and Disgrace: Alexander Pope and the Deformation of Culture*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996) has sought to explain the invisible framework of the poem through a language of the minuscule and the miniature whereas other critics such as Cynthia Wall ("Poetic Spaces," *The Cambridge Companion to Alexander Pope*, ed. Pat Rogers. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) have regarded Pope's imagistic emphasis on the invisible as evidence of the insubstantial, as dependent upon a world of "melting vapours." Tita Chico ("The Arts of Beauty: Women's Cosmetics and Pope's Ekphrasis," *Eighteenth-Century Life* 26:2 2002, 1-23) takes Pope's obsession with the invisible to another level by suggesting that Pope's ekphrastic poetics arises out of a desire to give voice to that which is unseen in the poem.

<sup>65</sup> According to Bonnie Latimer ("Alchemies of Satire: A History of the Sylphs in The Rape of the Lock." *Review of English Studies*. 57.232 2006: 684-700), the sylphs permit us to glimpse at what we could not otherwise see. For Latimer, however, the role that the sylphs play in the poem becomes problematic once we acknowledge the fact that it is Belinda who hears them. "In *Gabalys*," says Latimer, "the ability to summon a sylph is contingent on the possession of esoteric, hermetic knowledge" (697). Belinda, Latimer claims, does not possess such knowledge. Of course, what Latimer misses here is the fact that Belinda does *not* ultimately hear the sylphs; she carelessly forgets her dream vision, and Ariel's words go unheard. Belinda sees only what remains in the physical world, the amatory promises of her billet-doux over those of divine prophecy and transformation. In Belinda, we see only the potential of the prophetic word. As failed or false prophet, she becomes the vessel which contains a fanciful vision or foresight into her own future.

<sup>66</sup> In a Letter to Caryll, Pope writes: "'Tis certain the greatest magnifying glasses in the world are a mans own eyes, when they look upon his own person; yet even in those, I appear not the great Alexander Mr. Caryll is so civil to, but that little Alexander the women laugh at. But if I must be like Alexander, 'tis in being complimented into too good an opinion of myself: they made him think he was the son of Jupiter, and you persuade me I am a man of parts (112)" (Pope, Alexander. *The Rape of the Lock*. Ed. Cynthia Wall. Boston: Bedford, 1998).

<sup>67</sup> Brooks, Cleanth. *The Well Wrought Urn: Studies in the Structure of Poetry*. London: Dobson, 1949.

<sup>68</sup> See Hernandez, Alex E. "Commodity and Religion in Pope's Rape of the Lock." *SEL Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*. 48:3 2008, 569-584) and Brown, Laura. *Alexander Pope*. New York: Basil Blackwell, 1985.

<sup>69</sup> In Shaftesbury's *Letter Concerning Enthusiasm*, (*Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*. Ed. Lawrence E. Klein. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) melancholy is attributed as the cause of enthusiastic disorders. Shaftesbury derives his pathology here in part from the humoral theories of the Renaissance.

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<sup>70</sup> Fenves, Peter. "The Scale of Enthusiasm." *Enthusiasm and Enlightenment in Europe, 1650-1850*. Ed. Lawrence Klein and Anthony La Vopa. San Marino: Huntington Library, 1998.

<sup>71</sup> I believe that, like Shaftesbury, Pope challenges Lockean empiricism here with his attempt to awaken our skepticism as a necessary device in combating negative forms of enthusiasm. As David Fairer points out in his book chapter "Pope and the Elizabethans," (*The Cambridge Companion to Alexander Pope*, ed. Pat Rogers. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) the Scriblerians reacted to the humoural theories of the passions by emphasizing the importance of reason and judgment as faculties of the mind which could, and should, reign in the imagination, or fancy.

<sup>72</sup> In his article, "Versions of the Lock: Readers of *The Rape of the Lock*," (*ELH* 43:1 1976, 53-73) Murray Cohen analyzes the last section of Canto V as Pope's system of readerly classification. Here, Cohen argues, that Pope mocks different types of readership in their mythologization and interpretation of the lock's transformation. "If we trust the muse and consider the lock metamorphosed (not missing), then we bestow the lock with symbolic power and free it from its physical limits, ... Followers of the muse see beyond the limits of conventional sight with the eyes of the sylphs who, throughout the poem, see more than actually exists" (56). If one group of interpreters see the lock as a physical lock, then they lose it as soon as it is unseen, Cohen argues. Another admits to the lock's transformation but only as a higher-order object. These readers thus know that they interpret. However, their interpretation corrupts the lock as it becomes a device, a symbol in which viewers see what they want to see, a self-serving projection (57).

<sup>73</sup> Allan J. Gedalof. "The Implicit Mock Heroic in Pope's *Essay on Man*." *Genre*. 1980; 13: 187-201.

<sup>74</sup> To name a few, see for example: page 366 of John Sutherland's "Wit, Reason, and An Essay on Man." *Modern Language Quarterly*. 1969; 30: 356-369; Douglas H. White. *Pope and the Context of Controversy: The Manipulation of Ideas in An Essay on Man*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970; and page 40 of Ronald Bogue's "The Meaning of Grace in Pope's Aesthetic." *PMLA*. May 1979; 94 (3): 434-448.

<sup>75</sup> Williams, Aubrey. "Introduction to An Essay on Criticism." *The Twickenham Edition of the Poems of Alexander Pope*. v i. Ed. Aubrey Williams and E. Audra. London: Methuen and Company, 1961. Empson, William. "Wit in the Essay on Criticism." *The Structure of Complex Words*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1951. Hooker, Edward. "Wit: The Essay on Criticism." *The Seventeenth Century: Studies in the History of English Thought and Literature from Bacon to Pope*. Ed. Richard Foster Jones. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1951.

<sup>76</sup> Bogel, Frederic. "Dulness Unbound: Rhetoric and Pope's Dunciad." *PMLA*. October 1982; 97 (5): 844-855.

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<sup>77</sup> Meyer Spacks, Patricia. "Imagery and Method in An Essay on Criticism." *PMLA*. January 1970; 85 (1): 97-106.

<sup>78</sup> John Sutherland citing Pope (361). "Wit, Reason, and An Essay on Man." *Modern Language Quarterly*. 1969; 30: 356-369.

<sup>79</sup> Meyer Spacks, Patricia. "Imagery and Method in An Essay on Criticism." *PMLA*. January 1970; 85 (1): 97-106. (see page 100). Bogue, Ronald. "The Meaning of Grace in Pope's Aesthetic." (see pages 434-439).

<sup>80</sup> *Oxford English Dictionary*. (*Oxford English Dictionary*. Second Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>81</sup> Ronald Bogue. "The Meaning of Grace in Pope's Aesthetic." *PMLA*. May 1979; 94 (3): 434-448).

<sup>82</sup> All references to Pope's work are taken from the Twickenham Edition of the *Poems of Alexander Pope* (Ed. John Butt et al.). The *Essay on Criticism* citations refer to Vol. I. Ed. E. Audra and Aubrey Williams. London: Methuen and Company, 1961. Citations from *An Essay on Man* refer to Vol. III. Ed. Maynard Mack. London: Methuen and Company, 1950. References to *The Dunciad* are taken from Vol. V. Ed James Sutherland. London: Methuen and Company, 1963.

<sup>83</sup> The aesthetic concept of parts and wholes has been discussed at length in Pope criticism. See, for example: Douglas White, (33, 74) *Pope and the Context of Controversy: The Manipulation of Ideas in An Essay on Man*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970; Martin Kallich (112), "Unity and Dialectic: The Structural Role of Antithesis in the Essay on Man." *Papers on English Language and Literature*. 1965; 1: 109-124; and Martin Kallich (6), *Heav'n's First Law: Rhetoric and Order in Pope's Essay on Man*. De Kalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1967; Mack, Maynard. "Introduction." *The Poems of Alexander Pope*. Vol. III i. *An Essay on Man*. Ed. Maynard Mack. London: Methuen and Company, 1950; and Colin Manlove who states: "In *An Essay on Criticism*, Pope sets forth a consistent neoclassical view of the work of literature as a whole made of subordinate parts, none of which juts out. What he is talking about is a process of arrangement, a kind of internal harmony, rather than the fusing of a series of items into a unity that transcends them" (139) ("Parts and Wholes: Pope and Poetic Structure." *Alexander Pope: Essays for the Tercentenary*. Ed. Colin Nicholson. Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988).

<sup>84</sup> Patricia Meyer Spacks (103) ("Imagery and Method in An Essay on Criticism." *PMLA*. January 1970; 85 (1): 97-106). Although Meyer Spacks acknowledges this moment in the text, she never analyzes Pope's reasons for identifying himself as muse, beyond his desire to emphasize himself as the human, fallible poet. I will take a much different interpretation of Pope's decision to name himself the poem's muse in this chapter.

<sup>85</sup> Critics have persistently commented on the Popean employment of examples, particularly in his poetic treatises. See in particular Colin Manlove's assertion that Pope begins with figures of

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individuals only to extend those examples to the larger world of humankind (150) (“Parts and Wholes: Pope and Poetic Structure.” *Alexander Pope: Essays for the Tercentenary*. Ed. Colin Nicholson. Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988). Tony Tanner in his essay “Reason and the Grotesque” (*Critical Quarterly*. 1965; 7: 145-160) claims that in Pope’s moral essay poems he “celebrates certain people who manifest the virtues of true reason, but there is only one of these figures to each essay (usually the addressee) (150).” Patricia Meyer Spacks (“Imagery and Method in An Essay on Criticism.” *PMLA*. January 1970; 85 (1): 97-106) says of the *Essay on Criticism* that the “the poem’s central abstractions—wit, nature, sense, judgment—achieve solidity through a variety of imagery, but much of its general moral doctrine depends on a single group of human images to generate the emotional energy that makes it real to the reader.” The function of this figure, she asserts, is the same in Pope’s satiric and non-satiric poems (101). According to Charles Beaumont (“The Rising and Falling Metaphor in Pope’s Essay on Man.” *Style*. 1967; 1:121-130), the function of Popean exemplarity is to “offer positive models and explicit statements to contrast his negative satire, except in the *Dunciad*, in which the positive is more implicit” (122).

<sup>86</sup> Arthur Fenner (“The Unity of Pope’s Essay on Criticism.” *Philological Quarterly*. 1960; 39:435-466) refers to this trend in Pope’s Essay as related to two formal patterns common to the classical treatise: a history of poetry and a catalogue of trope and genres (436). We might read Pope’s list of exemplars, both good and bad, of the ideal critic as participating in this tradition of the history and the catalogue.

<sup>87</sup> John Sitter (“Theory and Story in *An Essay on Criticism*.” *Teaching Eighteenth-Century Poetry*. Ed. Christopher Fox. New York: AMS, 1990) states that because Longinus inspires by example, he is given a “climatic position” in the poem (245).

<sup>88</sup> For an excellent account of the role of Longinian exemplarity and sublimity in the poem as they are tied to problems of mimesis, see Blakey Vermeule’s essay, “Shame and Identity: Pope’s Critique of Judgment in *An Essay on Criticism*” (*1650-1850: Ideas, Aesthetics, and Inquiries in the Early Modern Era*. 1998; 4:105-36).

<sup>89</sup> According to Arthur Fenner (“The Unity of Pope’s Essay on Criticism.” *Philological Quarterly*. 1960; 39:435-466), Roscommon’s work served as a paradigm of the aesthetic principle of unity for Pope (437). Also, Roscommon contrasts genuine inspiration in his work with acts of mere possession (438).

<sup>90</sup> This historical “fact” is comprised, as Aubrey Williams points out (“Introduction to *An Essay on Criticism*.” *The Twickenham Edition of the Poems of Alexander Pope*. v i. Ed. Aubrey Williams and E. Audra. London: Methuen and Company, 1961), by the ambiguous information surrounding the poem’s initial composition. Pope both asserts in his Letters that the poem was written in the year after Walsh’s death and that he had shown the poem to Walsh in the year before his death. Given the poem’s assertions, Williams says that most likely the former account is true (197-98).

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<sup>91</sup> Williams (*Ibid*) reads this line somewhat differently in his introduction, asserting that Pope “took to the ‘low numbers’ of didactic poetry because no longer had Walsh’s guidance” (198). I read the image of the low numbers not as pointing to the low form of didactic poetry but rather as a double entendre on “low” as earth-bound (i.e. human or mortal) and on the elegiac “low” of the poem.

<sup>92</sup> Reuben Arthur Brower. *Alexander Pope: The Poetry of Allusion*. London: Oxford University Press, 1968.

<sup>93</sup> As Patricia Meyer Spacks notes in her essay, “Fictions of Passion: The Case of Pope,” (*Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*. 1990; 20: 43-53) the dialogic aspects of the epistles are “covert” (52).

<sup>94</sup> Mack, Maynard. “Introduction.” *The Poems of Alexander Pope*. Vol. III i. *An Essay on Man*. Ed. Maynard Mack. London: Methuen and Company, 1950.

<sup>95</sup> Meyer Spacks, Patricia. “Imagery and Method in An Essay on Criticism.” *PMLA*. January 1970; 85 (1): 97-106. Sitter, John. “Theory and Story in An Essay on Criticism” *Teaching Eighteenth-Century Poetry*. Ed. Christopher Fox. New York: AMS, 1990. Brower, Reuben Arthur. *Alexander Pope: The Poetry of Allusion*. London: Oxford University Press, 1968. Fabian, Bernard. “Pope and Lucretius: Observations on An Essay on Man.” *Modern Language Review*. 1979; 74: 524-37. Kallich, Martin. *Heav’n’s First Law: Rhetoric and Order in Pope’s Essay on Man*. De Kalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1967. Varey, Simon. “Rhetoric and an *Essay on Man*.” *The Art of Alexander Pope*. Ed. Howard Erskine-Hill and Anne Smith. New York: Barnes and Noble: 1979. White, Douglas. *Pope and the Context of Controversy: The Manipulation of Ideas in An Essay on Man*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970.

<sup>96</sup> Fabian, Bernard. “Pope and Lucretius: Observations on An Essay on Man.” *Modern Language Review*. 1979; 74: 524-37.

<sup>97</sup> According to Kallich (*Heav’n’s First Law: Rhetoric and Order in Pope’s Essay on Man*. De Kalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1967), this brevity is achieved through the effects of the poem’s antitheses (109-110).

<sup>98</sup> A surprisingly large number of critics have explored the influence of Shaftesbury on Pope’s *Essay on Man*. Most of these comparisons (and/or contrasts) have focused on Shaftesbury’s neo-Platonic philosophy of form along with his association with Cudworth’s theories of a plastic nature. None have sought to compare the formal trends in genre and style which the *Essay on Man* shares with Shaftesbury’s philosophic essays. However, Douglas Canfield (“The Fate of the Fall in Pope’s *Essay on Man*.” *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*. Spring 1982; 23 (2): 134-150) has alluded briefly to Shaftesbury’s use of the dialogic mode in *The Moralists* (135). Goldgar, Bertrand. “Pope’s Theories of the Passions: The Background of Epistle II of the *Essay on Man*.” *Philological Quarterly*. 1962; 41:730-743 (see pages: 731, 733). Lawlor, Nancy. “Pope’s *Essay on Man*: Oblique Light for a False Mirror.” *Modern Language Quarterly*. 1967;28: 305-316 (see page: 306). Shackleton, Robert. “Pope’s *Essay on Man* and the French

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Enlightenment.” *Studies in the Eighteenth Century*. Ed. R.F. Brissenden. Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1973 (see page 2). White, Douglas. *Pope and the Context of Controversy: The Manipulation of Ideas in An Essay on Man*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970 (see page: 21). Mack, Maynard. “Introduction.” *The Poems of Alexander Pope*. Vol. III i. *An Essay on Man*. Ed. Maynard Mack. London: Methuen and Company, 1950.

<sup>99</sup> Maynard Mack entertains the idea of this philosophical debt to Shaftesbury’s Moralists in his introduction to the Twickenham edition of *An Essay on Man* (pp.xxvii-xxviii). *The Poems of Alexander Pope*. Vol. III i. *An Essay on Man*. Ed. Maynard Mack. London: Methuen and Company, 1950.

<sup>100</sup> Reuben Arthur Brower (*Alexander Pope: The Poetry of Allusion*. London: Oxford University Press, 1968) reads this revision of the Miltonic line as evidence of the poem’s Horatian employment of conversation and dialogic debate: “though vindicate refers to similar kinds of justification, the word reeks with the atmosphere of debate and points scored (208).”

<sup>101</sup> Bolingbroke is a controversial figure in the criticism of *An Essay on Man*. Some agree that Pope is in accordance with Bolingbroke throughout the poem and others read the figure of Bolingbroke as Pope’s critical and poetic opposition in the poem. Katherine Quinsey (“Dualities of the Divine in Pope’s *Essay on Man* and the *Dunciad*.” *Religion in the Age of Reason: A Transatlantic Study of the Long Eighteenth Century*. Ed. Kathryn Duncan. New York: AMS, 2009) perhaps sums up this tension in the poem the best when she states that Bolingbroke either occupies the role of “Horatian adversary” or “presiding spirit” in the poem (140).

<sup>102</sup> As Simon Varey states (“Rhetoric and an *Essay on Man*.” *The Art of Alexander Pope*. Ed. Howard Erskine-Hill and Anne Smith. New York: Barnes and Noble: 1979), the opening lines did not include Bolingbroke’s name until the 1734 version of the poem. In the earlier versions, Bolingbroke is referred to more obliquely as Laelius, or Lucilius, the inventor of satire. Pope thus opens poem, Varey argues, in its earliest printed form thinking of himself as satirist (133).

<sup>103</sup> Katherine Quinsey (“Dualities of the Divine in Pope’s *Essay on Man* and the *Dunciad*.” *Religion in the Age of Reason: A Transatlantic Study of the Long Eighteenth Century*. Ed. Kathryn Duncan. New York: AMS, 2009) reads the term “expatiate” in this context not in the sense of conversing at length about a topic (which is my interpretation of the word here) but as expressing “the freedom of the mind and soul from the limitations of the body.” Thus the aim of the line seeks “to stave off ennui and despair”; Pope’s “rationalist view of life” is reduced to this phrase (144).

<sup>104</sup> See Varey (Ibid) on this gesture and its relationship to the structure of satire (133).

<sup>105</sup> Notably, Pope’s usage of the term “genius” also relates to the phenomenological belief in the powers of the genius loci. See definition one of the *Oxford English Dictionary* in which “genius” is defined as the “tutelary,” “controlling” or “attendant” spirit connected to a place or institution.

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<sup>106</sup> Ronald Bogue (“The Meaning of Grace in Pope’s Aesthetic.” *PMLA*. May 1979; 94 (3): 434-448) argues that the aesthetic quality of grace in Pope’s poetry “breaks uniformity and creates variety” (44). This aspect of contrast, or variety, has often been noted in rhetorical studies of Pope’s works.

<sup>107</sup> Katherine Quinsey (“Dualities of the Divine in Pope’s *Essay on Man* and the *Dunciad*.” *Religion in the Age of Reason: A Transatlantic Study of the Long Eighteenth Century*. Ed. Kathryn Duncan. New York: AMS, 2009) states that the final lines of the poem reveal Bolingbroke not as Pope’s inspiration but as the man who “constrains” that inspiration (150). I, of course, argue here that inspiration and constraint serve one and the same function in Pope’s poetic invocations.

<sup>108</sup> Nancy Lawlor (“Pope’s *Essay on Man*: Oblique Light for a False Mirror.” *Modern Language Quarterly*. 1967;28: 305-316) reads this act of “steering” in the poem’s design and conclusion as the steering, or mediating, between the doctrines of Christianity and Deism (305).

<sup>109</sup> See William Bowman Piper (“The Conversational Poetry of Pope.” *SEL*. Summer 1970; 10 (3): 505-524) on Pope’s poetic and conversational employment of politeness (512). See also Douglas White (*Pope and the Context of Controversy: The Manipulation of Ideas in An Essay on Man*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970) on the term “steering” (3).

<sup>110</sup> Douglas Canfield (“The Fate of the Fall in Pope’s *Essay on Man*.” *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*. Spring 1982; 23 (2): 134-150) does not read these lines as mere human or poetic variation but focuses more on Pope, the poet’s, metaphoric “fall” here. Bolingbroke in his work critiques the “fabular” and divisive usage of the fall by modern divines. This thus becomes an allusion to Bolingbroke’s religious critiques well as evidence of the fallible nature of the man and poet (137, 145). Pope reinterprets the fall, Canfield argues, in order to save its religious significance (150).

<sup>111</sup> Reuben Arthur Brower (*Alexander Pope: The Poetry of Allusion*. London: Oxford University Press, 1968) states that the figure of the poet’s little bark is borrowed from Horace. The metaphor of poetic navigation, which initially appears in the essay’s “Design,” Brower argues and Horatian style of conversation as a poetic ideal (implied in the word “converse”) thus reveal that Pope learns more from Bolingbroke as a “master of conversation” than as a philosopher (238). (Of course, these two concepts are intertwined in the Socratic essay, a genre which Brower does not discuss here).

<sup>112</sup> Nancy Lawlor (“Pope’s *Essay on Man*: Oblique Light for a False Mirror.” *Modern Language Quarterly*. 1967;28: 305-316) reads these lines as an ironic attribution to Bolingbroke, in which Pope actually wishes to highlight his own doctrine of deism as one which is not in fact borrowed from Bolingbroke (315). Obviously, my reading counters this assertion and does not read these lines ironically.

<sup>113</sup> *Oxford English Dictionary*. (*Oxford English Dictionary*. Second Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

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<sup>114</sup> Much has been done in Pope criticism to analyze these lines. See in particular Douglas White's claims (*Pope and the Context of Controversy: The Manipulation of Ideas in An Essay on Man*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970) about self love and self preservation (96) along with his reading of this line which aligns the actions done for the good of the self as ones which attribute to the social good (187). Notably, White claims that Pope's notions about self and social love are derived from Shaftesbury (102). See also previous footnote on self-love in Pope from chapter 3.

<sup>115</sup> See Laura Brown's argument (*Alexander Pope*. New York: Basil Blackwell, 1985) that the "Essay's account of art is based on notions of social order" (61) and Robert Shackleton on poem's third epistle (3) ("Pope's *Essay on Man* and the French Enlightenment." *Studies in the Eighteenth Century*. Ed. R.F. Brissenden. Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1973).

<sup>116</sup> Sitter, John. *The Poetry of Pope's Dunciad*. Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1972.

<sup>117</sup> Additionally, this recalls Pope's theory of poetry in "Peri Bathous."

<sup>118</sup> The argument surrounding the lack of action in Pope's *Dunciad* figured largely in the canonical, formalist criticism on Pope in the mid-twentieth century. On the one side were those who sought to explain the classical and mock-classical reasons behind the poem's lack of action (Aubrey Williams, Emrys Jones, John Sitter) and on the other were those who leaned towards a critique of the poem in light of its lack of action and in opposition to its mock-epic predecessor *The Rape* (Ian Jack and to a lesser extent H.H. Erskine-Hill). My decision to align these two poems to some extent counters Erskine-Hill's insistence on contrasting *The Rape* and *The Dunciad* in his argument that the latter lacks all of the "epic ingredients" of the former. Williams, Aubrey. *Pope's Dunciad*. Baton Rouge: LA, 1955. Jones, Emrys. "Pope and Dulness." *Pope: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Ed. J. V. Guerinot. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972. Sitter, John. *The Poetry of Pope's Dunciad*. Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1972. Erskine-Hill, H. H. "The 'New World' of Pope's *Dunciad*." *Essential Articles for the Study of Alexander Pope*. Ed. Maynard Mack. Hamden, CT: Archon, 1968. Jack, Ian. *Augustan Satire: Intention and Idiom in English Poetry, 1660-1750*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966.

<sup>119</sup> See John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Book I, ll. 1-6. Milton, John. *Complete Poems and Major Prose*. Ed. Merritt Yerkes Hughes. New York: Odyssey Press, 1957.

<sup>120</sup> Williams argues (*Pope's Dunciad*. Baton Rouge: LA, 1955) that it is the hero's job in *The Dunciad* to carry the Smithfield muses to ear of kings (25). In answer to what Williams says in his analysis of *The Dunciad's* problematic action, we might conclude that the heroic action of the poem thereby lies in the act of bringing. This action, says Williams, becomes a metaphor suggestive of a moral and social breakdown (41) (i.e. it is reduced to the nobility's listening, receiving ear).

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<sup>121</sup> Peter Stallybrass and Allon White (*Politics and Poetics of Transgression*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989) analyze this phrase “The Smithfield Muses” as a prime example of satire’s desire to mix the high with the low: “Even the very phrase ‘The Smithfield Muse’ is a dislocating and ironic compound of high classical and low grotesque which perfectly symbolizes the poetics of transgression at the heart of Pope’s project” (110). The poet laureate, they argue, thus becomes “the contaminating mediator” who brings the low of the grotesque to the high of the court.

<sup>122</sup> *Oxford English Dictionary*. (*Oxford English Dictionary*. Second Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>123</sup> Williams (*Pope’s Dunciad*. Baton Rouge: LA, 1955) writes in his chapter on theatricality that what was immoral about the theater for Pope concerned the concept of role playing and of exceeding the limits of one’s self or role. According to Pope, Williams states, man should “keep to the role assigned to him by God...; an attempt to transcend [that] given role was an act of pride.” Although this statement is true, particularly in light of Pope’s *Essay on Man*, it is here complicated by Pope’s metaphorical alignment here of the satirist with the actor on the stage.

<sup>124</sup> A final footnote in Pat Rogers’s article “The Name and Nature of Dulness: Proper Nouns in *The Dunciad*.” *Anglia* 92 (1974): 79-112) emphasizes the distinction between Swift and the dunces here in Pope’s mode of address. The manner in which Pope addresses Swift, Rogers argues, implies that Swift’s “name is the same by whatever name one chooses to address him with...; his fame is evident in the fact that he cannot be described by a single name.” The dunces, on the other hand, “can be placed as soon as named” (112).

<sup>125</sup> For analyses of *The Dunciad*’s relationship to theatricality see Williams (pp. 87-103) (*Pope’s Dunciad*. Baton Rouge: LA, 1955), Dustin Griffin’s chapter on *The Dunciad* in his book on Pope, (*Alexander Pope: The Poet in the Poems*. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1978) and to a lesser extent John Sitter’s assertions in *The Poetry of Pope’s Dunciad* (34) (*The Poetry of Pope’s Dunciad*. Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1972).

<sup>126</sup> Dustin Griffin in his book on Pope (*Alexander Pope: The Poet in the Poems*. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1978) argues that “self-revelation for Pope always means keeping an audience in view, even in his most apparently self-absorbed moments” (13).

<sup>127</sup> In his book on Pope, Dustin Griffin (*Ibid*) explores the possible significances of Pope’s use of the word “curtain” in the final lines of *The Dunciad* (252-253). One interpretation, which Griffin entertains, is that the curtain image suggests Pope’s implicit “mastery” over his own “show.” Even in the poem’s ending we have a “countervailing sense of Pope’s creating word” (249), Griffin states. If we explore this implication further, then *The Dunciad*’s finale, although an apparent reversal of *The Rape*’s conclusions about poetic rhetoric and inspiration, actually ends on a similarly suggestive note to Pope’s earlier mock epic. Both imply the potential of the poet’s rhetorical to control the fate of the muse and poetic inspiration at large within the context of modernity.

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<sup>128</sup> A number of critical works have chosen to concentrate on the role of prophesy in *The Dunciad*, particularly in light of its biblical allusions. See in particular the work of Philip Brockbank (“The Book of Genesis and the Genesis of Books: The Creation of Pope’s *Dunciad*.” *The Art of Alexander Pope*. Ed. Howard Erskine-Hill and Anne Smith. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1979), Thomas Jemiely (“Consummatum Est: Alexander Pope’s 1743 *Dunciad* and Mock Apocalypse.” *More Solid Learning’: New Perspectives on Alexander Pope’s Dunciad*. Ed. Catherine Ingrassia. Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Press, 2000) and Robert Griffin (“Pope, The Prophets, and *The Dunciad*.” *SEL* Summer 1983; 23 (3): 435-446). Often critics (such as Jemiely and Brockbank) wish to emphasize the notion of biblical prophecy and apocalypse as something already assured and accurate, something inevitable and as Jemiely says something from which only God can provide deliverance (169-170). However, I think it is important to realize Pope’s mockery of prophecy, particularly as it pertains to Protestant attitudes towards the bible. Even when Pope argues in Scriblerus’s notes that what “the prophet says shall be is already to be seen” since he “uses the future tense for the preterit,” he argues that prophesy only “foretells from what we feel” and what we “fear.” Prophesy is thus in part an effect of the passions and still inscribed by a certain uncertainty. Even when the poet himself prophesies, there is a sense of a conditional that underlines the survival of the work within its own self-ordained burial as it reaches its reader (Swift in particular). In contrast to what Jemiely argues, I think we must see a secular undertone or revision to Pope’s apocalypse in which he suggests it is the reader, as judge, and not God here who can provide deliverance.

<sup>129</sup> See also David Oakleaf’s analysis of this quotation which aligns it with Addison’s pleasures of the imagination (Oakleaf, David. “Sliding Down Together: Fielding, Addison, and the Pleasures of the Imagination in *Tom Jones*.” *English Studies in Canada*, December 1983; 9 (4): 402-417).

<sup>130</sup> All quotations from Fielding’s *Tom Jones* are taken from the Wesleyan Edition: Fielding, Henry. *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling*. Ed. Martin C. Battestin and Fredson Bowers. Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1975.

<sup>131</sup> Fielding, Henry. *Joseph Andrews*. Ed. Martin C. Battestin. Middletown: Wesleyan Edition, 1967.

<sup>132</sup> Of particular note is John Richetti’s assertion in his article, “The Old Order and the New Novel of the Mid-Eighteenth Century: Narrative Authority in Fielding and Smollett”: “Assimilating the classical epic by parodic means, Fielding stabilizes the formless materials of modern life and forces potentially wayward readers towards his branch of comic recurrence. To that extent, his version of the novel modifies Bakhtin’s requirements for the genre: the comic recurrences, serious enough under the parodic surface, look to an inescapable past rather than that realm of pure experience, knowledge, and practice that marks the novel for Bakhtin as the ‘genre of becoming.’ In their reliability, Fielding’s repetitions evoke a world where God is in his heaven because the narrator as a surrogate Providence is in charge” (188-9). Here, the use of Bakhtin thus helps us to read Fielding’s satiric style as connected to a secular version of modern writing (Richetti, John. “The Old Order and the New Novel of the Mid-Eighteenth Century:

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Narrative Authority in Fielding and Smollett." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, April 1990; 2 (3): 183-196).

<sup>133</sup> See in particular Nicolas Hudson's use of the term "heteroglossia" (Hudson, Nicolas. "Fielding's Hierarchy of Dialogue: Meta-Response and the Reader of *Tom Jones*." *Philological Quarterly*, Spring 1989; 68 (2): 177-194), which mirrors Miller's reading of Fielding's style: "Always listening for Fielding's voice amidst novel's heteroglossia our role as readers is not really to judge but to amalgamate all the tendencies of response which we have been taught to favor, to temper that response according to tendencies we have been directed to distrust" (180) ("The Voices of Henry Fielding: Style in *Tom Jones*." *The Augustan Milieu: Essays Presented to Lois A. Landa*. Ed. Eric Rothstein and George S. Rousseau. Oxford: Clarendon: 1970). K.G. Simpson draws a similar conclusion in "Technique as Judgment in *Tom Jones*" (Simpson, K.G. "Technique as Judgment in *Tom Jones*." *Henry Fielding: Justice Observed*. Ed. K.G. Simpson. London: Barnes and Noble, 1985): "[The] plot of [the] reader narrator relationship concludes that...any fixed and single view-point is necessarily inadequate (168-169)." See also Bernard Harrison's argument (*Henry Fielding's Tom Jones: The Novelist as Moral Philosopher*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1975) in which he discusses Fielding's insistence on never privileging one viewpoint as tied to issues of moral judgment and the work of the sympathetic imagination (48).

<sup>134</sup> Campbell, Jill. "Fielding's Style." *ELH*, Summer 2005; 72 (2): 407-428.

<sup>135</sup> See in particular pages 263-264. Also note Miller's exception to this rule: "If mimetic voices are clearly distinguishable from the narrator's normal voice-and achieve their effect from this very fact-there are some other cases that are rather more problematic." For example, unlike other voices clearly distinguishable from narrator's "we have in the Skeptic and the Sentimentalist an aspect of the narrator himself" (283) ("The Voices of Henry Fielding: Style in *Tom Jones*." *The Augustan Milieu: Essays Presented to Lois A. Landa*. Ed. Eric Rothstein and George S. Rousseau. Oxford: Clarendon: 1970).

<sup>136</sup> A selection of works in which judgment figures largely into the critical argument are as follows: Alter, Robert. "Fielding and the Uses of Style." *Novel: A Forum on Fiction*, Fall 1967; 1 (1) 53-63; Lockwood, Thomas. "Matter and Reflection in *Tom Jones*." *ELH*, Summer 1978; 45 (2): 226-235; Lynch, James J. "Moral Sense and the Narrator of *Tom Jones*." *SEL: Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 1985 Summer; 25 (3): 599-614; Preston, John. "Tom Jones and the Pursuit of True Judgment." *ELH*, 1966 Sept; 33 (3): 315-26; Rothstein, Eric. "Virtues of Authority in *Tom Jones*." *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*, 1987 Spring; 28 (2): 99-126; Snow, Melinda. "The Judgment of Evidence in *Tom Jones*." *South Atlantic Review*, 1983 May; 48 (2): 21-36; Reilly, Patrick. "Fielding's Magisterial Art." *Henry Fielding: Justice Observed*. Ed. K.G. Simpson. London: Barnes and Noble, 1985; Simpson, K.G. "Technique as Judgment in *Tom Jones*." *Henry Fielding: Justice Observed*. Ed. K.G. Simpson. London: Barnes and Noble, 1985; Miller, Henry Knight. "The Voices of Henry Fielding: Style in *Tom Jones*." *The Augustan Milieu: Essays Presented to Lois A. Landa*. Ed. Eric Rothstein and George S. Rousseau. Oxford: Clarendon: 1970; Alter, Robert. *Fielding and the Nature of the Novel*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press: 1968; Harrison, Bernard. *Henry Fielding's Tom Jones: The Novelist as Moral Philosopher*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1975; Preston, John. *The*

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*Created Self: The Reader's Role in Eighteenth-Century Fiction*. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1970. Butler, Gerard J. "Making fielding's Novels Speak for Law and Order." *Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*, 1996 Fall; 37 (3): 232-43. Johnson, Maurice. *Fielding's Art of Fiction*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1961; Battestin, Martin C. *The Providence of Wit: Aspects of Form in Augustan Literature and the Arts*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1974.

<sup>137</sup> Paxman, David. "Tom Jones and the Paradox of Moral Purpose." *Eighteenth-Century Novel*, 2002; 2: 113-35.

<sup>138</sup> Rawson, Claude. *Henry Fielding and the Augustan Ideal Under Stress*. Boston: Routledge, 1972. p. 52.

<sup>139</sup> From Ian Watt's *Rise of the Novel*. This excerpt is reprinted in: Battestin, Martin. *Twentieth-Century Interpretations of Tom Jones*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1968. Notably, Watt relates Fielding's use of plot directly to Pope here.

<sup>140</sup> See in particular: Golden, Morris. *Fielding's Moral Psychology*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1966. Golden deals in particular with the social implications of moral sense, which of course becomes pertinent to my arguments about Shaftesbury's social reform of enthusiasm (pp. 4-8). See also Preston, John. "Tom Jones and the 'Pursuit of True Judgment'" (*ELH*, 1966 Sept; 33 (3): 315-26) for the relationship between judgment and moral sense and Lynch, James J. "Moral Sense and the Narrator of *Tom Jones*." *SEL: Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 1985 Summer; 25 (3): 599-614.

<sup>141</sup> Martin Battestin and R.S. Crane have grounded Fielding's theology in the beliefs of the Latitudinarian Divines. See: Battestin, Martin C. *The Moral Basis of Fielding's Art: A Study of Joseph Andrews*, Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1959. Battestin, Martin C. *The Providence of Wit: Aspects of Form in Augustan Literature and the Arts*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1974, and Crane, R.S. "The Concept of Plot and the Plot of *Tom Jones*." *The Novel: An Anthology of Criticism and Theory 1900-2000*. Ed. Dorothy J. Hale. Malden: Blackwell, 2006. However, other critics have sought to re-establish Shaftesbury in this vein of Fielding criticism, arguing that Battestin, Harrison, Crane, and others have mistakenly attributed too much importance to the Latitudinarian faith in Fielding's work and that more attention must be given to Fielding's many allusions to the Earl of Shaftesbury in his work. See in particular: Butler, Lance St. John. "Fielding and Shaftesbury Reconsidered." *Henry Fielding: Justice Observed*. Ed. K.G. Simpson. London: Barnes and Noble, 1985. This argument has in recent criticism resulted in a synthesis between the two schools, as when John Richetti states in his book chapter, "Ideology and Literary Form in Fielding's *Tom Jones*" (in Richter, David. *Ideology and Form in Eighteenth-Century Literature*. Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 1999): "Tom's positive philosophy resembles the ethics of Shaftesbury ...and the Latitudinarian Divines" (40).

<sup>142</sup> In *Fielding's Moral Psychology*, Morris Golden (*Fielding's Moral Psychology*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1966) has argued, however, that in a Champion paper of March 15, 1740 Fielding's approach appears closer to that of the moralists than the

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Latitudinarians in its explorations of vice and excess passion. Citing Fielding's *Works* XV 243-4, Golden asserts: "Here is a dislike for enthusiasm as thorough as Horace's or Shaftesbury's, an attitude that is closely related to Fielding's suspicions in his novels of all those who profess intense religious motivations" (31).

<sup>143</sup> Notably, this is not Fielding's term for *Tom Jones* or his new species of writing, but rather is a term which we have retrospectively superimposed on some of Fielding's works as twentieth-century criticism became invested in the generic distinctions between the epic and what is now known as the "novel."

<sup>144</sup> Alter, Robert. *Fielding and the Nature of the Novel*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968). See also Alter's claim in "Fielding and the Uses of Style" ("Fielding and the Uses of Style." *Novel: A Forum on Fiction*, Fall 1967; 1 (1) 53-63) that although the novel has been defined as a private experience "Fielding with a neoclassical conception of epic very much in mind, repeatedly insists that a novel is something to be shared by a community of the discriminating" (53).

<sup>145</sup> Fielding, Henry. *The Female Husband*. Ed. Claude E. Jones. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1960.

<sup>146</sup> Notably, Fielding's style takes another sharp turn toward the end of his career as a novelist. One might draw very different observations from an examination of Fielding's *Amelia*, for example, in comparison to these earlier works—including *Tom Jones*. See: Fielding, Henry. *Amelia*. Ed. Martin C. Battestin. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1983.

<sup>147</sup> Here I depart from Watt's denial of Fielding's realism in comparison to Richardson. (Watt, Ian. *Rise of the Novel*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001). Rather, I see Fielding as occupying a different space in the realist genre as he at times approximates and at times departs from Richardson in his satiric sentimentalism and his explorations into the interiority of the human subject. See also Chibka, Robert. "Henry Fielding, Mentalist: Ins and Outs of Narration in *Tom Jones*." (*Henry Fielding in Our Time: Papers Presented at the Tercentenary Conference*. Ed. J.A. Downie. England: Cambridge Scholars, 2008) on the role of interiority in Fielding's *Tom Jones*.

<sup>148</sup> A continually emerging trend in Fielding criticism has sought to place Fielding in the philosophical tradition of Shaftesbury, either by way of his theories of moral sense (Lynch, James J. "Moral Sense and the Narrator of *Tom Jones*." *SEL*, 1985; 25 (3): 599-614; Preston, John. "Tom Jones and the 'Pursuit of True Judgment'" *ELH*, 1966; 33 (3): 315-26; Golden, Morris. *Fielding's Moral Psychology*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1966) or as an attempt to account for Fielding's theological beliefs (Battestin, Martin C. *The Moral Basis of Fielding's Art: A Study of Joseph Andrews*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1959 and *The Providence of Wit*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1974 and Crane, R.S. "The Concept of Plot and the Plot of *Tom Jones*." *The Novel: An Anthology of Criticism*. Ed. Dorothy Hale. Malden: Blackwell, 2006). However, little has been done to link Fielding's reform of enthusiasm as it relates to his use of style in *Tom Jones* to Shaftesbury's similar project in *The Characteristics*.

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<sup>149</sup> Fielding, Henry. *Joseph Andrews*. Ed. Martin C. Battestin. Middletown: Wesleyan Edition, 1967.

<sup>150</sup> To name few references, see: Chibka, Robert L. "Taking the Serious Seriously: The Introductory Chapters of Tom Jones" (*The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*, 1990 Spring; 31 (1): 23-45) pp 32-33. Hunter, Paul J. "Novels and The Novel: The Poetics of Embarrassment," (*Modern Philology*, 1988 May; 85 (4): 480-98) p 481. Wickman, Matthew. "Of Probability, Romance, and the Spatial Dimensions of Eighteenth-Century Narrative." (*Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, 2002 Oct; 15 (1): 59-80). Wright, Andrew. *Henry Fielding: Mask and Feast* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965) p. 37, and Wess, Robert V. "The Probable and the Marvelous in Tom Jones." *Modern Philology*, 1970 Aug; 68 (1): 32-45. For a more in-depth exploration on this topic, see my discussion below of Fielding's chapter on the marvelous.

<sup>151</sup> For more on Fielding and Jacobitism, see: Battestin, Martin C. "Tom Jones and 'His Egyptian Majesty: Fielding's Parable of Government'" *PMLA*, March 1967; 82 (1): 68-77; and Campbell, Jill. *Natural Masques: Gender and Identity in Fielding's Plays and Novels*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995.

<sup>152</sup> In his book, *The Moral Basis of Fielding's Art: A Study of Joseph Andrews* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1959), Battestin briefly refers to the problem of Methodism for Fielding, explaining it along the lines of a negative type of enthusiasm, which, he argues, ran counter to Fielding's moral-Christian objectives: "The tenets of natural depravity, enthusiasm, and salvation by faith and the imputed righteousness of Christ served, [Fielding] felt, as too comfortable a rationalization for self-indulgence, and dangerously subverted public morality. As the antithesis of his own Pelagian notions, Methodism was the inevitable target of his satire and the perfect foil to set off the practical advantage of the benevolist ethic in society" (83-4).

<sup>153</sup> J. Paul Hunter writes in his book, *Occasional Form* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976) that the "guidance of Thwackum and Square" acts as "an unreliable chorus" akin to those of Fielding's reflexive plays and his usage the role of "the bad example" (120-121). "Their guidance provides Tom with negative models of what ethical action and psychological interpretation may be." Thus Thwackum and Square serve as "a reminder of Allworthy's limitations" (121).

<sup>154</sup> Battestin, Martin C. *The Moral Basis of Fielding's Art: A Study of Joseph Andrews*, Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1959. p. 13.

<sup>155</sup> For an argument against Battestin's evaluation of Shaftesbury, see: Butler, Lance St. John. "Fielding and Shaftesbury Reconsidered." *Henry Fielding: Justice Observed*. Ed. K.G. Simpson. London: Barnes and Noble, 1985.

<sup>156</sup> Notably, a similar tactic occurs in the heteroglossia of Fielding's novel. See introduction.

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<sup>157</sup> In *Tom Jones and the Romance Tradition* (Victoria: University of Victoria Press, 1976), Henry Knight Miller speaks of the role of the conversion experience in the romance genre as a phenomenon which was “never merely psychological or behavioral.” Rather, “it was a change in the character’s psyche, a reorientation of the soul.” It “did not seek to be natural...but spiritual and transcendent” and often would occur “instantaneously” (61). Given Miller’s explication of this stock moment in the Romance genre, we might read Fielding’s usage of the conversion experience in the fates of Square and Blifil as a mockingly serious attempt to revise this Romantic gesture, curing it in the case of Square, of its enthusiastic turn.

<sup>158</sup> I argue here that Fielding attempts to mediate between the extremes of a Thwackum and a Square. This mediating method reveals a tendency on Fielding’s part which not only upholds the principles of a Socratic dialogue but which, according to Nancy Mace in her work *Henry Fielding’s Novels and the Classical Tradition* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1996) also appeals to Horace’s “golden mean,” which finds happiness in the middle ground (58).

<sup>159</sup> Notably, this theory of the enthusiastic vapors also parallels Swift’s illustrations of enthusiasm in the *Tale of the Tub* as well as Pope’s depiction of vapors in the cave of spleen episode of *The Rape of the Lock*.

<sup>160</sup> Taking up the topic of rhetoric in his article, “Fielding’s Hierarchy of Dialogue: Meta-Response and the Reader of *Tom Jones*,” (*Philological Quarterly*, Spring 1989; 68 (2): 177-194), Nicolas Hudson writes that the most successful rhetoricians in the novel not those who “appeal to goodness of [the] audience” but “those who always keep their relationship with listeners covert and indirect, who avoid explicitly mentioning their intentions and expectations...[who] work around the words to create belief and prompt action” (178). This covert form of rhetoric indeed explains Blifil’s usage of the oratorical art and aligns him with the figure of Satan who, as in Hudson’s picture of Blifil (184), employs a rhetoric which “appeals to pride and flattery.”

<sup>161</sup> See Battestin’s footnote on page 62.

<sup>162</sup> For more on this engagement with Methodism and Methodist marriages see the opening to Fielding’s *The Female Husband* (Fielding, Henry. *The Female Husband*. Ed. Claude E. Jones. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1960). Also, see page 430 of *Tom Jones* for more allusions to Whitefield and the cult of Methodism.

<sup>163</sup> See Frederic Beiser’s definition of enthusiasm, put forth in the Introduction.

<sup>164</sup> In *Natural Masques* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), Jill Campbell figures Partridge as the very ghost, which he so often fears (most particularly in this episode of Garrick’s Hamlet). Campbell cites Fielding’s work in the *Jacobite’s Journal*, in which he asks “what is our idea of a Ghost but that it is the shadow only, or appearance of something which has once existed, but at present is no more.” Partridge, Campbell argues, “exists in [the] novel in [a] perpetual ghosting hour-with himself as chief ghost of the kind I have been describing” (176). If we think of Campbell’s argument for the figure of Partridge in light of the ghost, as the only

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acceptable form of the marvelous in Fielding's narrative (used only for satiric purposes), then Partridge becomes one such satirized version of the marvelous in Fielding's text.

<sup>165</sup> References to the role of the sympathetic spectator in *Tom Jones* abounds throughout Fielding criticism. Maurice Johnson writes in *Fielding's Art of Fiction* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1961): "In making moral judgments the reader must exercise his powers of sympathy and imagination, not judging only by his own experience but imagining himself in other people's shoes (93)." Morris Golden claims in *Fielding's Moral Psychology* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1966) that for Fielding "sympathy [is the] path towards knowledge" (4). R.S. Crane's famous essay, "The Concept of Plot and the Plot of *Tom Jones*" (*The Novel: An Anthology of Criticism and Theory 1900-2000*. Ed. Dorothy J. Hale. Malden: Blackwell, 2006) turns to a discussion of the comic analogues of fear and pity in *Tom Jones* (126-129), claiming that even in the service of these more comically "subdued emotions," we readers are still "sympathetic spectators." Robert Wess in his article "The Probable and the Marvelous in *Tom Jones*" (*Modern Philology*, 1970 Aug; 68 (1): 32-45) argues for the figure of Tom as a paradigm of the sympathetic spectator (35) John Preston's article "Tom Jones and the 'Pursuit of True Judgment'" (*ELH*, 1966 Sept; 33 (3): 315-26), which would later become incorporated into his book *The Created Self (The Created Self: The Reader's Role in Eighteenth-Century Fiction*. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1970), claims that Fielding tests Shaftesbury's ideas of readership (as both disinterestedly detached and affectively invested), when he "emphasizes... Tom as [the] sympathetic spectator" (321). Finally, Kaplan writes in his article, "Fielding's Novel about Novels: The Prefaces and the Plot of *Tom Jones*" (*SEL: Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 1973 Summer; 13 (3): 535-49) that the role of "sympathetic identification" in *Tom Jones* "is essential to support the combination of artifice and actuality that the novel presents" (540).

<sup>166</sup> See in particular Adam Smith's definition of sympathy in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (*The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Amherst: Prometheus Books, 2000).

<sup>167</sup> Of course, as Maurice Johnson, points out in his book, *Fielding's Art of Fiction* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1961), even Jones's judgment is somewhat flawed in this instance. "Partridge," writes Johnson "is not only fool in play's episode." "Tom has lacked the insight to recognize that the play is about himself" (102).

<sup>168</sup> David Oakleaf argues in his article, "Sliding Down Together: Fielding, Addison, and the Pleasures of the Imagination in *Tom Jones*" (*English Studies in Canada*, December 1983; 9 (4): 402-417), that the Man on the Hill's enthusiastic praise of nature comes close to the "excesses of narrator." His "rapture parodies [the] narrator's rapture" though it "lacks the narrator's finely modulated control." The Man on the Hill's enthusiasm, he argues, serves as a reminder that "too great an indulgence of the imagination also is a denial of social feeling" (413).

<sup>169</sup> Fielding takes a number of occasions in *Tom Jones* to attack the mob mentality, whose dangers I imply point to Fenves's model of the schwärmer and a passive form of enthusiasm, which escalates towards Shaftesbury's notion of panic in his Letter (see chapter one). Two of Fielding's most striking attacks on the mob point to the fates of Jenny and Partridge, who

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become sacrificed to the body of mob politics. (See pages 59 and 91 respectively). On page 59, Fielding also discusses the difference between judgment and gossip as it relates to the dangers of mob mentalities.

<sup>170</sup> In Robert Alter's essay, "Fielding and the Uses of Style" (*Novel: A Forum on Fiction*, Fall 1967; 1 (1) 53-63), he argues that Fielding's "most typical procedure is to order a statement so that awareness of its ironic counter-meaning gradually dawns on us, throwing a retrospective light on key words or phrases and illuminating the falseness of their conventional application" (56). I here refer to this syntactical method of Fielding's in his application of irony along with Eleanor Hutchen's definition of tonal irony the classification system of four types of verbal irony that she outlines in her book, *Irony in Tom Jones* (University: University of Alabama Press, 1965). The four types include denotative, connotative, tonal and referential. Tonal irony is defined as a "clash of tone with sense or with another tone" [in which the] ironic tone often "stressed" the author's "true attitude by contrast" (68). See also William Empson's "Tom Jones" (*Kenyon Review*, 1958; 20: 217-249) for his explanation of single versus double irony (218-219).

<sup>171</sup> In *Henry Fielding: Mask and Feast* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965), Andrew Wright argues that Book VIII of *Tom Jones* which restricts the narrative to the laws of probability summons the reader's faithful belief in the author's narration. Ironically, argues Wright "this is an invocation to belief made by an author who in the following pages will stretch as far as possible his reader's capacity for maintaining faith" (37). J. Paul Hunter issues forth a similar argument in his work, "Novels and the Novel: The Poetics of Embarrassment" (*Modern Philology*, 1988 May; 85 (4): 480-98). "The marvelous according to Fielding has a tenuous place in the new species of writing for which he wishes to set the rules, but his concern as a theorist is not matched by his caution as a novelist, not even in his definition-setting example, *Tom Jones*," writes. "Marvellous? Not technically perhaps, for no natural laws are violated, but the fine line of likelihood is everywhere walked precariously, and no reader would wish to have to depend, in life, on coincidence so shaky or fortune so slippery" (481). Wright and Hunter unearth the greatest irony beneath Fielding's attack on the marvelous, which informs his species of realism. Yet as Fielding refuses to stretch our faith, while stretching it, he calls for a kind of "faith" which mingles skepticism with religious feeling. Thus the novel puts into practice Fielding's notions of enthusiastic and religious reform (p. 481).

<sup>172</sup> In "Fielding and the Uses of Style" (*Novel: A Forum on Fiction*, Fall 1967; 1 (1) 53-63), Robert Alter argues that Fielding employs "similes...not merely as parodies of the extended epic simile, but as instruments to wrest from us, through the presence of rhetorical persistence, a kind of comic assent to the writer's satiric judgments" (54).

<sup>173</sup> Much has been written on consumption in *Tom Jones*, particularly as regards Fielding's principles of taste. However, the critique of a Grub Street culture of literary commerce is also embedded beneath this language of reading as consumption. John Richetti argues in his essay, "Ideology and Literary Form in Fielding's *Tom Jones*" (in Richter, David. *Ideology and Form in Eighteenth-Century Literature*. Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 1999) that good reading is unlike eating. By offering bill of fare and promising to please his readers is "parodying or echoing the language of consumer culture, imagining vulgar readers/consumers who long for the

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voyeuristic excitements of represented vice and whose insatiable curiosity will keep them reading past all moderation as they seek to satisfy an artificially extended appetite for narrative, such as that catered to by his implicit rivals in the market, the purveyors of amatory and sensational fiction” (42). Thus even as Fielding aims to obey the laws of pleasure expounded in the aesthetic philosophy of empiricist writers such as Hume, he also seeks to limit pleasure from excess in a narrative, which ultimately finds troubling the laws of consumer culture.

<sup>174</sup> In my analysis of the figure of Flora, I here expand upon what Jill Campbell has already argued concerning this image in her book, *Natural Masques: Gender and Identity in Fielding's Plays and Novels* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995): “Dwelling on the basket woman Flora, Fielding sketches the possibility of a kind of layered consciousness in a viewer’s or readers reception of a spectacle or text: we are not imposed upon to believe in Flora’s actual presence at Sophia’s entrance, but her invocation influences or impresses us as ‘preceding Pomp’ nonetheless. As Fielding describes it, this layered consciousness is created by a process of historical change; we inherit the heathen’s reverence for or awe of Flora, because they believed in her, though we do not” (169).

<sup>175</sup> For more on Fielding’s didactic method of writing, see J. Paul Hunter’s essay, “Fielding and the Modern Reader: The Problem of Temporal Translation” printed in *Henry Fielding in his Time and Ours*. Los Angeles: William Andrews Clarke Memorial Library: University of California Press, 1987.

<sup>176</sup> The wandering motif in *Tom Jones*, which becomes significant in light of Fielding’s fictional narrative and the mock-epic/heroic wanderings of his hero along with his stylistic employment of the “wandering” digression, takes on an interesting modern interpretive significance in the work of Fielding according to Hilary Teynor. In “A Partridge in the Family Tree: Fixity, Mobility, and Community in *Tom Jones*,” (*Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, 2005 Apr; 17 (3): 349-72) she argues that the act of wandering becomes socially consequential as in the case of Partridge in which the individual is never “solidified in the context of a community” (354).

<sup>177</sup> Patrick Reilly contrast Fielding with Swift in his article “Fielding’s Magisterial Art” (in *Henry Fielding: Justice Observed*. Ed. K.G. Simpson. London: Barnes and Noble, 1985) by observing how their treatment of their readers as part of their satiric method. Fielding he argues “invites us as jurors, but Swift seeks to humiliate us” (75). Although this may be somewhat of a generalization regarding both authors’ constantly shifting treatments of their readers, it does accurately highlight Fielding’s anti-violent principles, his overall attempt at never simply conforming to the role of the author as “jure-divino tyrant.”

<sup>178</sup> See for example Jill Campbell’s analysis of the moment in which Allworthy solicits Sophia’s reaction to the positions of Thwackum and Square (in: *Natural Masques: Gender and Identity in Fielding's Plays and Novels*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995): “We might recall this moment later in the novel when Allworthy cites Sophia’s reticence as proof of her properly feminine character. Her reticence is structured like Fielding’s” . . . “Fielding has left no question in the course of *Tom Jones* that the two moral systems advanced by Thwackum and Square offer an unacceptable a pair of choices as the two moral conclusions he himself has

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refused to choose between, and Sophia's judgments of people and situations have consistently proved sounds; so that we might interpret her withholding of assent from both men's views as confirmation of the higher wisdom inherent in a "Sophia" (161).

<sup>179</sup> See my analysis of Fielding's long "Invocation" in the following section below.

<sup>180</sup> A term which Fielding also associates with "genius." See the analysis of "Genius" in the following section.

<sup>181</sup> Robert Alter in *Fielding and the Nature of the Novel* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1968) discusses how irony operates in *Tom Jones* as shared moment between author and reader in order to implicate [the reader] "in a particular relationship with the narrator and the material narrated, and this relationship is important both in winning his assent to the values affirmed through the novel (39). This "whole literary method works on the tacit assumption of a community of values, both moral and aesthetic, between writer and reader-like that which united the epic poet and his audience" (45) Alter argues. J. Paul Hunter's "Novels and The Novel: The Poetics of Embarrassment" (*Modern Philology*, 1988 May; 85 (4): 480-98) makes a similar claim about the novel as a "social form" which, nevertheless, asserts a "tendency toward the confessional and exhibitionistic." The novel, he argues walks the line between public and private as "readers can peek into traditionally secret spaces" 487. This entails novel's close relation to autobiography 488. Alter's claims about irony and Hunter's arguments about the novel form, however, only remind us of the work which has been done on the structure of satire and its development of a secret space of sharing between satirist and reader. See in particular Frederic Bogel's *The Difference Satire Makes* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001) and Melinda Rabb's *The Secret History of Satire* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008).

<sup>182</sup> From *Macbeth* Act V, Scene v: "---Life's a poor Player, / That struts and frets his Hour upon the Stage / And then is heard no more" (Shakespeare, William. *Macbeth. The Riverside Shakespeare*. Ed. G Blakemore Evans. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974).

<sup>183</sup> See Battestin's footnote number 2, on page 183 of Wesleyan edition of *Tom Jones*.

<sup>184</sup> Glenn W. Hatfield's *Henry Fielding and the Language of Irony* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968) deals extensively with Fielding's preoccupations about the status of language and is useful for our purposes as it relates to Fielding's reform of enthusiasm. Hatfield frames the problematic disintegration of moral language to issues of the public sphere: "Debased language contributed to the undermining of society, but a debased society also contributed to the undermining of language" (4). Hatfield extends these arguments about debased language, which he finds support for Locke's association of the linguistic contract with the social contract (52), to the problem of meaningless language. Fielding's essays on conversation in *The Champion*, he argues are "more preoccupied with the absence of meaning than its perversion . . . In one sense . . . the reduction of words to meaninglessness is itself a perversion. . . or more accurately perhaps, meaninglessness is the final stage of corruption, the condition of pure verbalism apotheosized in Pope's version of *The Dunciad* and the uncreating word" (17).

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<sup>185</sup> James J Lynch in “Moral Sense and the Narrator of *Tom Jones*” (*SEL: Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 1985 Summer; 25 (3): 599-614) discusses the importance of suspended acts of judgment to Fielding’s moral narrative when he discusses a gesture in Fielding towards the conscious reader who trains his sensibility (599-600). This equally entails “our capacity to react sentimentally and yet be aware of the rational limits of feeling” (601). Finally, Lynch concludes that this practice of suspended judgment suggests the presence in Fielding’s work of a “corrective system embodied” in the moral sense philosophy.

<sup>186</sup> See Sandra Sherman’s article, “Reading At Arm’s Length: Fielding’s Contract with the Reader in *Tom Jones*” (*Studies in the Novel*, 1998 Summer; 30 (2): 232-45), in which she discusses the pleasure principle behind Tom Jones’s theory of readership. Fielding’s is a “narrative theory premised on the appeal to readerly desire” (235). Secrecy lies “at bottom of this interest” (236), which “includes a formal appeal” (238). The design of the text ascribes to the notion that “novels should be irresistible” (241), she writes.

<sup>187</sup> Claude Rawson in his book *Henry Fielding and the Augustan Ideal Under Stress* (Boston: Routledge, 1972) alludes to these Augustan principles of art in Fielding’s work when he states that Fielding was “closer to Pope than Swift ... in his exuberant couplet rhetoric” (52).

<sup>188</sup> A number of Fielding critics point out this philosophy of Fielding’s that the literary work must be judged as a whole. See in particular, Robert Chibka, “Taking the Serious Seriously: The Introductory Chapters of *Tom Jones*” (*The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*, 1990 Spring; 31 (1): 23-45) p 32 and Maurice Johnson, *Fielding’s Art of Fiction* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1961) p 92.

<sup>189</sup> See in particular Aphra Behn’s, *The Rover*. Behn, Aphra. *The Rover: Regents Restoration Drama Series*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967.

<sup>190</sup> For more on tone and irony in Fielding’s style, see: Alter, Robert. “Fielding and the Uses of Style.” *Novel: A Forum on Fiction*, 1967; 1 (1): 53-63; Hutchens, Eleanor. *Irony in Tom Jones*. University: University of Alabama Press, 1965. Empson, William “Tom Jones.” *Kenyon Review*, 1958; 20: 217-249. Miller, Henry Knight. “The Voices of Henry Fielding: Style in *Tom Jones*.” *The Augustan Milieu*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1970; Campbell, Jill. “Fielding’s Style.” *ELH*, 2005; 72 (2): 407-28.

<sup>191</sup> Fielding’s use of the episode or anecdote as a microcosm for his larger narrative has frequently been gestured to. See in particular John Preston’s analysis of what he terms the “parable” of Sophia’s bird on page 102 of his book, *The Created Self* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1970).

<sup>192</sup> For more on Fielding’s response to Milton in *Tom Jones*, see: Burke, John J. Jr. “Fielding’s Epic Combat with Milton in *Tom Jones*.” *Henry Fielding in Our Time: Papers Presented at the Tercentenary Conference*. Ed. J.A. Downie. England: Cambridge Scholars, 2008.

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<sup>193</sup> For more on Fielding's relationship to the Augustan satirists see: Hunter, J Paul. "Fielding and the Disappearance of Heroes." *The English Hero: 1660-1800*. Ed. Robert Folkenflik. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1982 and *Occasional Form*. Baltimore: John's Hopkins University Press, 1976.

<sup>194</sup> See Mace, Nancy. *Henry Fielding's Novels and the Classical Tradition* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1996) and Miller, Henry Knight. *Tom Jones and the Romance Tradition* (Victoria: University of Victoria Press, 1976) for more arguments emphasizing the complications of genre as regards Fielding's employments of the epic and romance traditions.

<sup>195</sup> For an analysis of food imagery in *Tom Jones*, see O'Brien, Timothy. "The Hungry Author and Narrative Performance in *Tom Jones*." *SEL*, 1985; 25 (3): 615-32.

<sup>196</sup> The narrator too is not safe from the threats of enthusiasm. This makes sense in light of Fielding's sentiments about enthusiasm as a naturally-occurring phenomenon, which may be seen in so many of his character studies. The narrator here thus proves to be like his characters in his fallibility (a point which many critics have made). See in particular, Regina Janes's "Fielding and the Case of the Misguided Reader." *Henry Fielding in Our Time: Papers Presented at the Tercentenary Conference*. Ed. J.A. Downie. England: Cambridge Scholars, 2008.

<sup>197</sup> Notably, Fielding's invocation continues so as to also invoke the secular "deities" of Learning and Experience. We might read these latter two versions of the modern muse as faculties which aide the development and progress of "Genius." Martin Battestin has stated that Fielding "revealed the ethical orientation of his novels by invoking the four Muses of the prose epic, Genius, Learning, Experience, and Humanity (65) in his book, *The Moral Basis of Fielding's Art* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1959). However, Battestin never analyzes what these "muses" mean for Fielding's revision of inspiration or how this revision pertains to his project of modernization, thereby opening up a space for my argument in this essay.

<sup>198</sup> Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. Ed. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews. Trans. Paul Guyer. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. See in particular pages 186-202 for Kant's doctrine on genius as it relates to the categories of the beautiful and to inspiration.

<sup>199</sup> Habermas, Jürgen. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Trans. Thomas Burger. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991.

<sup>200</sup> Wordsworth, William. *The Prelude, 1799, 1805, 1850: Authoritative Texts, Context and Reception, Recent Critical Essays*. New York: Norton, 1979.

<sup>201</sup> Shelley, P.B. *Shelley's Poetry and Prose*. Ed. Donald H. Reiman and Neil Fraistat. New York: Norton, 2002.

<sup>202</sup> Abrams, M.H. *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature*. New York: Norton, 1971

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<sup>203</sup> Jager, Colin. *The Book of God: Secularization and Design in the Romantic Era*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007

<sup>204</sup> Barbauld, Anna Letitia. *The Poems of Anna Letitia Barbauld*. Ed. William McCarthy and Elizabeth Kraft. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

<sup>206</sup> Keats, John. *The Poems of John Keats*. Ed. Stillinger, Jack. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1978.

<sup>207</sup> See: Johnson, Barbara. "Apostrophe, Animation, and Abortion." *Diacritics: A Review of Contemporary Criticism*, 1986 Spring; 16 (1): 29-47; Johnson, Barbara. "Muteness Envy." *Deconstruction: Critical Concepts in Literary and Cultural Studies*. London: Routledge, 2003; Culler, Jonathan. "Apostrophe." *Diacritics: A Review of Contemporary Criticism*. 1977 Winter. 7 (4): 59-69.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid. Compare Johnson's assertions about apostrophe in her essay, "Apostrophe, Animation, and Abortion," to those in her essay, "Muteness Envy." Also, see Culler's theory of the "embarrassing" effects of apostrophe on the reader.

<sup>209</sup> My allusion to an "other" here can be construed either as the subject of the reader or/and the poetic addressee.

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