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Alan T. McKenzie

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**"I HAVE BEFORE ME THE
IDEA OF A DOVE"
Bringing Motion to Mind
in Burke's
*A Philosophical Enquiry into
the Origin of Our Ideas of the
Sublime and Beautiful***

Alan T. McKenzie

"Natural objects affect us, by the laws of that connexion, which Providence has established between certain motions and configurations of bodies, and certain consequent feelings in our minds."

This sentence, which opens Part Five of the *Enquiry*, puts motion before configuration and ascribes it to objects, with the implication that our "consequent feelings" have more to do with motion than shape, and perhaps also that natural objects are more moving, as well as more mobile, than artificial ones. Notice, in passing, that the "connexions" between the motions and configurations of bodies and "certain consequent feelings in our minds" have been established by "Providence," for Burke the ultimate source of impetus and the authority for these

¹ Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, ed. James T. Boulton (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968), 163. All quotations from the *Enquiry* are from this edition.

movements.⁷ Burke then mentions painting, which adds imitation, and architecture, which adds reason, to the natural stimulations of natural objects. He moves on to a not very satisfactory discussion of the connections of words with the sublime, without pausing to notice (nor, so far as I can see, has anyone else) that in doing so, he has first removed motion, and then absorbed and controlled it. I propose to investigate a sequence of passages in which the *Enquiry* brings motion to mind, sometimes to stir the mind, sometimes to eliminate the motion, and sometimes to encourage and control it with the stabilities of architecture and the subtleties of print.

Motion comes to mind at critical junctures throughout the *Enquiry*. The motions of the objects the mind contemplates are analyzed, the dynamics of various natural and artificial images and examples are considered, and the movements of the argument and the author's own mind are attended to. Occasionally readers are invited, by implication and exhortation, to attend to the movements of their own minds as they consider examples, real and supposed, put forth in the course of the argument. The need for the mind to be moved, the capacity of words to move it, and the historical examples, artistic images, and natural objects that bring several kinds of motion to the mind constitute the subject of this essay. The introduction of various kinds of movement at various stages of the argument and the striking devices by which the *Enquiry* contains movement and achieves stability constitute its thesis.

I begin with the first of four quite terrific, but remarkably unmoving, examples that seem both crucial to the working of the essay and essential to the theme of movement in the mind. Burke added this example in the "Introduction on Taste," with which he began the Second Edition of the *Enquiry* (1759). It extends the excessively conventional illustration (drawn from Apelles) of the shoemaker who set the painter right about shoes in several directions, geographic, aesthetic, psychological, and, ultimately, political:

A fine piece [i. e. painting] of a decollated head of St. John the Baptist was shewn to a Turkish emperor; he

⁷ Burke's obligations to the providential tradition are well set forth in Howard Caygill, *Art of Judgement* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 80-85; John Dennis connected the sublime to the sacred in *The Advancement and Reformation of Modern Poetry* (1701).

praised many things, but he observed one defect; he observed that the skin did not shrink from the wounded part of the neck. The sultan on this occasion, though his observation was very just, discovered no more natural Taste than the painter who executed this piece, or than a thousand European connoisseurs who probably never would have made the same observation. His Turkish majesty had indeed been well acquainted with that terrible spectacle, which the others could only have represented in their imagination. On the subject of their dislike there is a difference between all these people, arising from the different kinds and degrees of their knowledge; but there is something in common to the painter, the shoemaker, the anatomist, and the Turkish emperor, the pleasure arising from a natural object, so far as each perceives it justly imitated; the satisfaction in seeing an agreeable figure; the sympathy proceeding from a striking and affecting incident. So far as Taste is natural, it is nearly common to all.'

Burke employs this example early in his analysis of the empiricism and universality of taste; I begin with it because of its striking immobility. No one in the passage moves, and no one is moved by it, "terrible" though it is. It seems to me that Burke must have counted on the contrast between the shudder in the reader's mind and the mere curiosity or indifference in the minds of the various participants in the two beheadings, the first one primarily religious, and the second primarily aesthetic. Its immobilities are generic and empirical—generic in that, as a painting, it is only an imitation, and only a depiction (Burke had read *The Poetics*). This example is less moving than three other examples of the mind-body problem later in the *Enquiry*, two drawn from current events, and one from humanism and history. It is also, I think we must agree, far less moving than either the Biblical incident there depicted or the subsequent demonstration so thoughtfully supplied by the Sultan. We must assume that the painter viewing the piece was less moved by the work of a fellow painter than by the demonstration ordered for his benefit. Burke's sources suggest

¹ 20; Boulton supplies a detail which Burke omitted: "the Emperor, Mabomet II, to prove the validity of his criticism, ordered a slave to be beheaded so that Bellini might see how the skin shrank back from the wound"—96.

as much; in them the painter fled Constantinople fearing his own neck would be next.⁴

While it is easy to suspect both racism and creedism in the actions and the indifference of the "Turkish emperor," it is more to the point to notice that the immobility of the incident must be ascribed to empiricism, with important implications for the aesthetics of that now discredited "-ism." The Sultan was not moved by the painting (nor, we may assume, by the demonstration) because the "terrible spectacle" depicted and then reenacted was so familiar to him. His reaction to the painting was determined by what he did know, about executions, and what he did not know, about the subject of the painting. And what he knew and did not know was determined exclusively by what he had seen (or not seen) and how often he had seen it.

The sultan's indifference to so much sanctity and suffering is all the more striking in that no motion has been brought to any mind up to this point in the *Enquiry*. It first enters a few pages later, in a discussion of certain westerners who are equally immune to the stimuli of art, religion, or history:

There are some men formed with feelings so blunt, with tempers so cold and phlegmatic, that they can hardly be said to be awake during the whole course of their lives. Upon such persons, the most striking objects make but a faint and obscure impression. There are others so continually in the agitation of gross and merely sensual pleasures, or so occupied in the low drudgery of avarice, or so heated in the chace of honours and distinction, that their minds, which had been used continually to the storms of these violent and tempestuous passions, can hardly be put in motion by the delicate and refined play of the imagination. (24)

This first bringing to mind of motion barely suggests the necessity, complexity, and significance of the process throughout the remainder of the *Enquiry*. It does, however, indicate that those who are neither sultans nor swine have minds that can, indeed must, be "put in motion." It is that necessity on

⁴ See Carlo Ridolfi, *Le Maraviglie dell' Arte* (Venice, 1648), 1, 40-41 and Roger De Piles *Abregé de la Vie des Peintres* (Paris: Nicolas Langlois, 1699), 251.

which the aesthetics of the essay, the humanism of the author and his readers, and the social dynamics of the period depend. The degree to which a mind is put in motion becomes a measure of the humanity of that mind.

Conversely, the nature of the stimuli serves as an indication of the extent to which that mind has been civilized. These first two passages may, in combination, be taken as a subtle comment to this effect; the sultan has been over-civilized, but in the wrong culture, while those whose minds have become used to gross pleasures or violent and tempestuous passions are impervious to, or spoiled by, it. This is a comment of the sort we might rather expect from Hume or Gibbon. The other examples and images we shall have occasion to inspect will confirm that in the aesthetic system in which they participate it is natural for the mind to be moved, and it is civilized for it to be moved by the artifacts that culture has created or converted. We have already seen the brief extent to which several minds have been moved by a painting. We will soon calibrate the motions induced by some other aesthetic objects, including poems, plays, and buildings, and by one soothing commercial product and social practice, tobacco. We will also have to consider, before we are through, three more executions. In confining the mind to responses to those objects it can have brought to it, Burke adheres to the empirical tenets of his contemporaries. This restriction has the virtue of making the movements of that mind shareable, predictable, and, under the best circumstances, manageable. Later ages took it upon themselves to provide the mind with more violent and creative movements, and then to do away with it as an agent or an entity altogether. Burke goes only so far along this path as to allow that the "mind of man possesses a sort of creative power," but one restricted to representing "the images of things in the order and manner in which they were received by the senses, or in combining those images in a new manner, and according to a different order. This power is called Imagination."

While it would be intriguing to consider the extent to which an imagination that "is only the representative of the senses" (16) differs from various current notions that the mind is, if in fact there is any such thing, merely the product of cultural conventions, economic circumstances, assorted discourses, or biological secretions, the salient point for Burke is that the mind's operations consist primarily of responses to

pleasures and pains conveyed to it by the senses from the wide assortment of particulars in the world around it. The examples that he draws from that assortment, examples from nature, art, literature, history, and contemporary politics, control and illuminate his argument. They illustrate the movements of every mind and impart movement to the reader's mind in ways that bear examination.

The natural objects which produce sensations are sufficiently various to impart movement and prevent stagnation, but sufficiently categorizable to enable investigation. Nature is comprehensive, but by no means incomprehensible. Which is not to say that it will yield entirely to clear—or even stable—ideas, definitions, or tastes:

For when we define, we seem in danger of circumscribing nature within the bounds of our own notions, which we often take up by hazard, or embrace on trust, or form out of a limited and partial consideration of the object before us, instead of extending our ideas to take in all that nature comprehends, according to her manner of combining. We are limited in our enquiry by the strict laws to which we have submitted at our setting out. (12)

These notions are "ours," but they are also random, partial, circumscribed, and more restrictive than the comprehensive nature they fail to do justice to. In dealing with a nature as "comprehensive" as this, the mind will have to exert itself constantly. It can never settle for, or into, "notions." Only a mind in motion, a mind constantly "extending" itself to incorporate vastly different elements, will do. The lines from Horace which Burke drew from his own mind in support of this point read:

———Circa vilem patulumque morabimur orbem
Unde pudor proferre pedem vetat aut operis lex.

([If you do not] linger along the easy and open pathway,
[and if in your copying you do not leap into the narrow

well,] out of which either shame or the laws of your task will keep you from stirring a step.⁵

These lines suggest the necessity of a more spacious conception for the creative mind, and they encourage movement along neglected paths and over unbroken ground. That well, which Burke omitted, seems to be circumscribing rather than deep. Effective composition will present the author's investigations in such a way as "to set the reader himself in the track of invention, and to direct him into those paths in which the author has made his own discoveries" (13). I read this passage as an expression of the movements good prose can impart to a good mind—movements that are controlled, original, stimulating, steady, and well thought through. The best prose will move a good mind through a landscape in which instructive examples, lofty images, solid figures, wise words, and established authors rise to view. Burke's prose—all of Burke's prose—moves the mind of his reader through a landscape rich in vivid and extreme particulars, the better to perform the empirical task: "Let us first consider this point in the sense of Taste, and the rather as the faculty in question has taken its name from that sense. All men are agreed to call vinegar sour, honey sweet, and aloes bitter" (14). While he needs *natural* substances for this part of his argument, these particulars, typically, have been fetched from all over the palate, and the globe—especially the aloes, from Asia, by way, perhaps, of the Bible. He allows for a difference between natural and artificial objects, and confesses "that custom, and some other causes, have made many deviations from the natural pleasures or pains which belong to these several Tastes; but then the power of distinguishing between the natural and the acquired relish remains to the very last" (14). This passage has not been

⁵ Horace, *Ars Poetica*, ll. 132, 135, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough, The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), 460–61. This is one of many of Burke's examples which Boulton labels "misquoted" (12n2); Frances Ferguson cites other "misquotations" in pursuit of Burke's susceptibility to rhetoric; surely the point is that Burke was quoting from memory. See "The Sublime of Edmund Burke, or the Bathos of Experience," *Glyph* 8 (1981): 62–78, esp. 67–9 (reprinted in *Solitude and the Sublime: Romanticism and the Aesthetics of Individuation*, (New York: Routledge, 1992), 43–5. It is worth mentioning that throughout the *Enquiry*, and indeed in everything he spoke and wrote, Burke, like Longinus, found rhetoric an especially effective means of moving the mind, and was moved by the eloquence of others, much of which he had stored in his memory.

sufficiently noted by those who choose to regard Burke and his contemporaries as prisoners of their language, their economic system, or one or another of their well-polished conventions.

These extreme particulars quicken the mind of every reader; they keep the argument vivid and moving; and they enable the writer and the reader to keep pace with one another. This point may be illustrated with the natural, but both conventional and far-fetched commodity, tobacco. Burke's selection of natural stimulants is instructive. Subscribers to *The Spectator* confirm and satisfy their taste with tea (#409), while Hume confirms both taste and empiricism by borrowing from Cervantes a hogshead of old wine tasting of iron and leather (in "Of the Standard of Taste"). Burke looks into these particular and extreme stimulants by looking not at the singular tastes acquired by one individual, but at the practices (to use a term that would not have been in his vocabulary, though the idea was manifestly available to him) of other nations, and other classes. Note the distrust of substances that move the mind directly, bypassing the perceptual processes on which the *Enquiry* and empiricism depend:

Thus opium is pleasing to Turks, on account of the agreeable delirium it produces. Tobacco is the delight of Dutchmen, as it diffuses a torpor and pleasing stupefaction. Fermented spirits please our common people, because they banish care, and all consideration of future or present evils. (15)

While this discussion of the ways in which natural stimulants move the minds of members of other nations, ethnic groups, and classes may suggest that Burke's mind was not open in ways we might wish it had been, it also indicates several of the directions in which it was working—towards classification, identifiable and explicable uniformity, and an instructive excitement. Various aspects of experience produced disagreeable, but uniform and wholly understandable sensations in the minds of whole nations and classes of people, who then turned to artificial substances for alternative sensations. For Burke, and not only for Burke, it is inconceivable that a lone Dutch person would acquire a taste for tobacco. Partly because s/he would never get his/her hands on the stuff, and partly because even if s/he did, its taste, in the absence of agreeable cultural associations, would not be genial.

Which is not to suggest that Burke is recommending tobacco as the stimulant of choice to move the British mind in the right directions, or at the right speed. He has, as I have already suggested, another engine, a bookish one, in mind. The movements that all these other, actual external particulars impart to the mind can be, given the capacities for error in the various faculties of the mind, erratic, excessively violent, or otherwise misleading. The mind is not always, indeed not usually, set in motion in the right direction. Thus taste often goes astray, led by "the gloss of novelty," pushed by weakness and indolence, or bewildered by "ignorance, inattention, prejudice, rashness, levity, obstinacy" (24-5). Fortunately, however, taste (from whatever distance it has to import the commodities that satisfy it at the moment) does not make the mind go very far, or very fast: "It is known that the Taste (whatever it is) is improved exactly as we improve our judgment, by extending our knowledge, by a steady attention to our object, and by frequent exercise" (26). The deliberate movements of the judgment, mentioned here with evident approval, impede the excessive mobility of the imagination by "throwing stumbling blocks" in its way (25). These blocks are fashioned out of the concrete material of experience.

All the faculties of the mind, though Burke is not certain whether taste is a separate faculty or a complex function of the judgment, have ground to cover—it is their pace that needs adjusting. The best minds learn to cover it slowly, as Burke proves by an analogy of the mind put in motion by print: "At first they [who have cultivated that species of knowledge which makes the object of Taste] are obliged to spell, but at last they read with ease and with celerity" (26). The mind, in other words, is put into motion of the right kind and direction by print. Books are not the stumbling blocks of the imagination, but the paving stones of reason.

Part One of the *Enquiry* begins with "novelty" and "curiosity," either one of which has some capacity to move the mind, but a capacity that is soon dismissed. The first is the most superficial and fleeting of properties to inhere in (or rather rest lightly on the surface of) objects, while the second "is the most superficial of all the affections; it changes its object perpetually" (31). Moreover, and worse, curiosity "quickly runs over the greatest part of its objects" (31). Its skimming of surfaces condemns curiosity and the minds it inhabits to a superficiality inimical to the principles of empiricism: "We see children

perpetually running from place to place to hunt out something new; they catch with great eagerness, and with very little choice" (31—we can see this in the several stanzas of the "Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College," among other places). Curiosity will not bring to mind the kind of motions necessary to develop gravity, maturity, or discrimination, three essential components of Augustan aesthetics, Augustan ethics, Augustan literature, and the well-formed Augustan mind.

If the world had only "novelty" to offer and the mind only "curiosity" to receive it, soon even the feeble movement motivated by a change of objects would cease. A little novelty in objects and a little curiosity in the mind can help the mind to make something of itself in the face of the world that it inhabits, but they can help only a little. They won't "move" it much, and they won't "turn" it at all—terms we will come to appreciate as this essay progresses. The Augustan mind needed more and better stirring than either novelty or curiosity could provide. This forceful and lasting motion will be brought to the mature mind by the capacity of objects, persons, and events to excite pain or pleasure (32), the central distinction on which the entire argument of the *Enquiry* depends.

Before Burke considers pleasure and pain in earnest, he posits a state necessitated by the thrust of his argument but drawn, he insists, from introspection, the state of indifference. He needs it, he detects it, and he abhors it: "There is nothing which I can distinguish in my mind with more clearness than the three states, of indifference, of pleasure, and of pain" (33). Indifference serves to separate pain from pleasure as part of the insistence that the former cannot be, as Locke had argued, merely the removal of the latter. Convenient though it is for his argument, indifference is but a state of stagnation from which the mind must be provoked by external stimuli. While Burke does not distrust indifference as much as, say, Johnson, or fear it as much as, say, Cowper, (or, for that matter, cultivate it as much as Hume) neither does he see it as a state to be indulged or prolonged. The last thing the Augustan mind wanted was an opportunity to descend into itself in search of deep, internal, and otherwise unavailable truths. While the mind must move, it has no more reason or desire to move into itself than it has capacity to move by itself. It can watch itself work, it can attend to the movements external stimuli produce within it, and it can make those workings and

movements clear to itself and to others, all through the inductions of language, over which, as they thought, the Augustan mind could, if it worked at it, exercise control.

This state of indifference disappears in the face of the central division of the essay between pleasure (the result of passions that concern society, and thus the source of the beautiful) and pain (the result of passions that concern self-preservation, and thus the source of the sublime). The definition of the sublime, spelled out here, indicates the psychodynamics inherent in it: "Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain, and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the *sublime*; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling" (39).

This definition calls forth the second of the executions that both stabilize and impart energy to the *Enquiry*. This one, too, was added, in the Second edition, in support of the argument regarding the power of pain. It adduces the torments of Damiens, the would-be regicide whose painful and lingering punishments in Paris in January of 1757 would have been fresh in the minds of Burke and his readers. This could have been the most moving passage in the *Enquiry* (as may be confirmed by anyone who will consult or recall the opening pages of Foucault's *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*). As it stands, however, the excruciating and overtly political tortures of Damiens are absorbed into and immobilized by the argument.

The incident is invoked in support of Burke's insistence that the body conveys real pain more forcibly than the mind could imagine the most intense pleasures: "Nay I am in great doubt, whether any man could be found who would earn a life of the most perfect satisfaction, at the price of ending it in the torments, which justice inflicted in a few hours on the late unfortunate regicide in France" (39). Notice that the reader's mind is moved to concentrate on only as much space as is occupied by the regicide's (or the reader's own) body, and to dwell in only "a few hours" of time (Damiens was tortured for *days*). Worse than pain, but a logical extension of it, Burke continues, is death. In fact, "what generally makes pain itself... more painful, is, that it is considered as an emissary of this king of terrors" (40). Students of Burke's politics, and perhaps his psychology, will connect the occasion of the

execution with that regal noun. Excessively ingenious readers may divert themselves by considering that "emissaries" move so that Kings may stay seated.

All readers must sense that this second turning to execution is scarcely more moving than was that of the earlier beheadings. This passage occurs in a brief digression on the sublime embedded in a section of the book otherwise given over to the placid pleasures of beauty. John the Baptist's head was severed for reasons of lust or prudery, and cited in the course of a discussion of taste. Damiens was quartered in the interests of political stability (indeed, immobility), and cited as an example of "justice." This justice, French justice refined to the point of barbarism, sought to move the mind by rending the body. The power of this example to move the mind of the reader seems to have been so taken for granted that Burke spares his reader, as Foucault does not, the tremendous particulars. In his aesthetics, if not always in his political pamphlets, Burke's prose moves the reader's mind only with its own, inherent force; a force that sometimes contains the violence of exceedingly moving particulars.

The third example of the artfully suppressed and exploited dynamics of an execution appears near the end of Part One, in the course of the discussion of the differences between imitation and representation with respect to tragedy. Burke supposes the movement of a crowd from the theater to the gallows. This execution is more English, more hypothetical, and, in one sense more moving than that of Damiens in that the crowd bestirs and removes itself. The example hints at the moderation of movements widened, that is, socialized, into more minds than one. It also evokes the curious aesthetics of the stage of state.

Burke is dealing with the complicated passions of sympathy, imitation, and ambition, though most of what he has to say pertains only to sympathy. Imitation had been so thoroughly dealt with by Aristotle that Burke leaves it alone, and the third, ambition, does not long detain him. In separating sympathy from imitation and demonstrating the priority and strength of the former, Burke turns from pleasure to delight and the effects of tragedy rather than painting. The movement is greater here because delight contains an element of muted terror drawn from the spectacle of calamity, either on the stage or in history. Tragedy's capacity to move an audience,

however, is nothing in comparison to that of an actual spectacle:

Chuse a day on which to represent the most sublime and affecting tragedy we have; appoint the most favourite actors; spare no cost upon the scenes and decorations; unite the greatest efforts of poetry, painting, and music; and when you have collected your audience, just at the moment when their minds are erect with expectation, let it be reported that a state criminal of high rank is on the point of being executed in the adjoining square; in a moment the emptiness of the theatre would demonstrate the comparative weakness of the imitative arts, and proclaim the triumph of the real sympathy. (47)⁶

In proving that sympathy has more power than imitation Burke also indicates the relative immobility of the arts, the weak motives of beauty, and the strong and stirring inducements of terror. Staged tragedies, even brilliantly staged tragedies, can certainly make the mind "erect." But the theatre of political cruelty will empty the play-house and fill the square. Any public execution, even one as strikingly unparticularized as this one, will be more moving than any play. More moving too, it seems fair to venture, than any painting, or any prose account of an execution, even one that concluded with *ecartement*. Boulton suggests (47 n17) that it was the singularly moving execution of Lord Lovat in April of 1747 that Burke had in mind. But Burke supplies no indication that this was the case, and does nothing whatsoever to bring the particulars of this or any other incident to the mind of his reader. He strengthens his argument by generalizing both the aesthetic and the historic particulars. This time readers are

⁶ Richard Payne Knight objected that the crowd's movement would be as much a matter of curiosity as of sympathy, and would depend on the relative infrequency of executions. He supports this point by supposing what would happen if the theatres had been closed except for one night during the "juridical slaughter and methodical murder" of the French revolution. *An Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste*, 2nd ed. (London: T. Payne, 1805), 317-18; this text is much concerned with both energies and cruelties. See also Burke's later *Some Thoughts on the Approaching Executions* (1780), where, according to Christopher Reid's *Edmund Burke and the Practice of Political Writing* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1985), 30-31, Burke combines the aesthetic and political components of executions into a "dramatic economy" wherein deliberate movement by the government inspires awe.

invited to picture themselves not in the sultan's court, assessing the royal taste, or in the seat of judgement, confirming the legitimate (French) torments of a regicide, but in an armchair, alone with a book, acknowledging the capacity of a spectacle to move the crowd, but leaving the reader him/herself utterly undisturbed.

Part One establishes some other discriminations in addition to the essential separation of pleasure from pain and the suggestive one of imitation from sympathy. Some of these deserve more consideration than they can be given here. The separating of delight from pleasure (35-7) and love from lust (42-3), for example, has implications that extend well beyond the moving of the mind. In dividing pleasures into "those which belong to *generation*" and those that belong to "*general society*" (humans), for example, Burke makes only the former of these pleasures "violent," and that only "at particular times." Love can, sometimes, produce "very extraordinary effects," but that is as much as Burke is willing to grant.

Thus divided, these effects require only the slightest figures or terms of movement, as when animals are said to "pursue their purposes" directly, and "Men are carried to the sex in general" (42). Burke shifts this passion from considerations of movement to considerations of time, or rather season, contrasting intermittent human desires with the seasonal rut of animals: "the generation of mankind is a great purpose, and it is requisite that men should be animated to the pursuit of it by some great incentive. It is therefore attended with a very high pleasure; but as it is by no means designed to be our constant business, it is not fit that the absence of this pleasure should be attended with any considerable pain. The difference between men and brutes in this point, seems to be remarkable" (41). In other words, the human mind contemplates the beautiful without hurry or much movement of any sort. The distinction returns later in the essay, as if to protect its stillness, when Burke again distinguishes beauty from sublimity, and love "from desire or lust; which is an energy of the mind, that hurries us on to the possession of certain objects, that do not affect us as they are beautiful, but by means altogether different" (91).

Subtle and restrained as the analysis of the social passions of sympathy, imitation, and ambition may be, the mind barely stirs; the passions that respond to beauty sit still on the page, in the gallery, or in the theatre, where they "transfuse...from

one breast to another" (44). These three passions, especially sympathy, modify our responses, in ways so tranquil, and so readily comprehended, that their movement into other, kindred, minds is scarcely perceptible, but very effective. In correcting Aristotle by giving primacy to sympathy rather than imitation, Burke makes aesthetics subject to the confirmation of others and thus more conventional than formal. This widening movement, in effect a socializing of aesthetics, dampens the movement in each mind; shared sensations are noticeably less dynamic than isolated sensations and individual judgments. While the self that Burke dealt with was not much disturbed by beauty, it was confirmed and somehow reassured by the turbulence and terror of the sublime.

Burke supplements the execution that empties the theatre with another, much more hypothetical, example, another one that sounds more like Gibbon than Burke: "This noble capital, the pride of England and of Europe, I believe no man is so strangely wicked as to desire to see destroyed by a conflagration or an earthquake, though he should be removed himself to the greatest distance from the danger. But suppose such a fatal accident to have happened, what numbers from all parts would crowd to behold the ruins, and amongst them many who would have been content never to have seen London in its glory?" (47-8). That the greatest number of people move across the longest distances in this hypothetical, discrediting, and, it seems fair to add, highly plausible, example confirms the outmoded assumptions about human nature shared by Burke and his contemporaries, and still, it seems to me, conveniently and accurately designated as Augustan humanism.

In distinguishing sympathy, the passion that emptied the theatre and filled the ruined streets of London, from imitation, the passion dearest to neo-classical criticism, Burke posits a "rule" to allow us to ascertain which motive has been in effect: "When the object represented in poetry or painting is such, as we could have no desire of seeing in reality; then I may be sure that its power in poetry or painting is owing to the power of imitation, and to no cause operating in the thing itself...But when the object of the painting or poem is such as we should run to see if real, let it affect us with what odd sort of sense it will, we may rely upon it, that the power of the poem or picture is more owing to the nature of the thing itself than to the mere effect of imitation (49-50—closing with an acknowledgment that "Aristotle has spoken so much and so solidly

upon the force of imitation in his poetics, that it makes any further discourse upon this subject the less necessary."). The reader will have noticed that the power to induce movement and the need to perform it ("such as we should run to see if real") are here united.

Part One ends with a claim to have troubled the waters of "science," which must never be allowed to stagnate. In fact, Burke seems not to have troubled the waters, but divided them. On one side we have the placid, still pools of beauty, on the other, the turbulent oceans of the sublime. By one or the other of these the mind does move, indeed must be moved, in response to either pleasure or pain. When it moves in response to pleasure, it does not move very far or very fast: "it is very evident that pleasure, when it has run its career, sets us down very nearly where it found us. Pleasure of every kind quickly satisfies; and when it is over, we relapse into indifference, or rather we fall into a soft tranquillity" (34). When it moves in response to pain, it moves farther, faster, and with a greater potential to disturb and mislead. Yet the three most potentially moving passages, the executions of a slave, a regicide, and a rebel, have scarcely ruffled the surface of the argument.

Having made this essential division in Part One, Burke turns to a long consideration of the violent motions of sublimity. We will bypass these for the moment to consider more extensively the still pleasures of beauty, disappointing though that stillness may be. The movements of beauty are mild, and the stillnesses of pleasure, while not stagnant, nowhere have the potency of the sublime or the stability of the grand structures encountered in Part Two. The images of beauty are those of the swan or the peacock (95), while those of terror are those of the ox, the bull, the lion, and the tiger (65). The merely useful horse vanishes in contrast with Job's sublime steed, *whose neck is cloathed with thunder, the glory of whose nostrils is terrible, who swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage, neither believeth that it is the sound of the trumpet* (65-6; see 96). The violent motions of the sublime in Part Two thus overshadow the quieter motions of the beautiful in Part Three. While this overshadowing served Burke's rhetorical and aesthetic purposes admirably, it somewhat obscures the gradual acceleration in the movements of the mind that interest me.

When the definition of beauty towards which Part Three has been working its way finally arrives, it is disappointingly

placid, yet wholly adequate to the examples it must comprise: "we must conclude that beauty is, for the greater part, some quality in bodies, acting mechanically upon the human mind by the intervention of the senses" (112). Having shown that beauty is not dependent on, though it may well be compatible with, proportion, fitness, or perfection, Burke enumerates "The real cause of BEAUTY," turning from principles to objects, and asserting, usefully, that beautiful objects are small, smooth, gradually varied, delicate, and fair and mildly colored (112-17). It is in this context that Burke employs the phrase in the title of this paper—a phrase notable for its stillness rather than its mobility, potency, or stability: "In this description I have before me the idea of a dove; it agrees very well with most of the conditions of beauty. It is smooth and downy; its parts are (to use that expression) melted into one another; you are presented with no sudden protuberance through the whole, and yet the whole is continually changing" (115). He lingers over the lines of the dove, omitting its wings and its volatility altogether. He has brought an image of a dove to mind, but the image does not stir. Nor does it "move" or "turn" the mind in which it sits. Like most of the images of beauty, this one emphasizes the "configurations" of natural bodies, at the expense of their "motions."

The few motions that belong to beauty are relaxing, like those of a cradle or a carriage, with implications for the class structure and social landscape of Burke's era. The sense of beauty is, as we have seen, subjected to a widening movement, but the widening of the sensations in these examples cannot reach very far down the social scale, or, it would seem, very deeply into the mind:

Most people must have observed the sort of sense they have had, on being swiftly drawn in an easy coach, on a smooth turf, with gradual ascents and declivities. This will give a better idea of the beautiful, and point out its probable cause better than anything else. On the contrary; when one is hurried over a rough, rocky, broken road, the pain felt by these sudden inequalities shews why similar sights, feelings, and sounds, are so contrary to beauty. (155)

It seems possible to conclude that the more the body is put into actual motion, the more superficial will be the effects on

the mind. Furthermore, this beautiful motion, like almost everything else that is beautiful, has been highly (but not widely) socialized. If beauty is conventional, and it is, it is a restricted convention. The beautiful motions that are brought to the Augustan mind come through company, but company so refined as to filter out or mitigate motion. Those few and rare objects, natural, artistic, or social, that convey a sense of beauty—the dove, the peacock, the carriage ride, etc.—convey it only to minds that have moved in circles exclusive enough to have encountered them, either on private or exotic ground, or on certain highly refined pages. They all set us down very nearly where they found us, but before they can do so, we have to know where to find them, and, what is more, to have access to those places (i. e. private estates) where they are likely to be found. The components of refinement, scarcity, society, sympathy, and convention even in the natural bodies that bring beauty to mind may be said to moderate their dynamics, social as well as psychological.

Incidentally, that novelty of which a little was heard in conjunction with curiosity and indifference (and nothing in conjunction with the sublime) has some part in our attraction to beauty, which is "extremely rare and uncommon. The beautiful strikes us as much by its novelty as the deformed itself" (103). But the novelty of beauty is a function of its rarity, and beauty supplies few of the extreme and exotic particulars that Burke is so resourceful in introducing in his examination of the sublime. Beauty comes to us in coaches and such highly socialized and ready to hand (if that hand is sufficiently elegant) examples as the snuff box (104).

We return now to Part Two and the more violent motions of the sublime, which are not so much unsocial as anti-social. Whereas beauty "sets us down very nearly where it found us," as if we had stepped gracefully down from an elegant coach, pain is much more violent, more lasting, in a word, more moving: "For when we have suffered from any violent emotion, the mind naturally continues in something like the same condition, after the cause which first produced it has ceased to operate." Just as the "tossing of the sea remains after the storm," the mind takes much longer to subside (35). It subsides, for the sake of the argument of Part One, into indifference rather than pleasure. In Part Two, however, we begin to notice a wariness of those objects, natural or artificial,

that impart too much motion to the mind, together with an inspection of ways to control it.

Part Two begins with astonishment, the sublime alternative to indifference and "that state of the soul, in which all its motions are suspended," but only momentarily, as in that state "the great power of the sublime...anticipates our reasonings, and hurries us on by an irresistible force" (57). Burke proceeds to terror and obscurity, citing passages from *Paradise Lost* as examples of obscurity, one of the essential properties of the sublime. It is not so much a capacity for obscurity as an inability to achieve the clarity of painting that makes language so effective, and perhaps dangerous, a vehicle for conveying the sublime. The extreme particular Burke adduces as an example, Milton's description of Death in Book II of *Paradise Lost* (like most of the others that matter, "misquoted"—see n5, above) is "dark, uncertain, confused, terrible, and sublime to the last degree" (59). The shape ("If shape it might be called that shape had none") does not move, but the "uncertainty of strokes and colouring" imparts to this verbal portrait a far greater power to move the audience than any painting could achieve. In reading a passage equally obscure and sublime, the portrait of Satan, the "mind is hurried out of itself, by a croud of great and confused images; which affect because they are crouded and confused" (62). In these examples it would seem as if "configuration" has fused with "motion"—a device available primarily in language.

The most numerous and impressive images of movement, however, are reserved for the consideration of power, which derives its capacity to move the mind from its essential connection with pain. This connection is full of implications for Burke's politics as well as his aesthetics; it is implicit in two of the executions we have had occasion to inspect, and explicit in the third: "But pain is always inflicted by a power in some way superior, because we never submit to pain willingly. So that strength, violence, pain and terror, are ideas that rush in upon the mind together" (65)—the rushing is illustrated by the comparison, mentioned above, of an ox to a bull, and a dog to a wolf (65-7). Burke insists on the ferocity of the latter of each pair, and on the subjection of the former to our will. But surely the instinctive speed and forceful motions, neither subject to the will of those who fear, describe, or even see them, are significant components of these examples. The contrast, already mentioned, of the draft horse to the

Joban horse "*who swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage*" is drawn from here as well (65-6).

When Burke turns, too briefly, to the means by which the other organs of sensation apprehend sublimity, all of his examples, as by now we should expect, import an element of motion: "The noise of vast cataracts, raging storms, thunder, or artillery, awakes a great and awful sensation in the mind, though we can observe no nicety or artifice in those sorts of music. The shouting of multitudes has a similar effect" (82). The sounds of violent nature in motion and of humans multiplied beyond sociability into "multitudes" convey terror through the ears. And since sound itself depends on motion, both suddenness and intermission can create something of the same effect (83).

The terror attendant on "the natural cries of all animals" might also be attributed, in part, to several kinds of motion—the fleet and furtive motions of those who emit them, as well as the moving of the sounds from unseen and fearful regions to the ears of the hearer (84). Beautiful sounds, however, move smoothly, quietly, and without quick transitions, suggesting melancholy (122), while smells and tastes are incapable of producing grand sensations because they do not require or suggest any movement worthy of consideration (85). And having mentioned the movements of other animals in Burke's bestiary, we must add toads and spiders, which are "merely odious" (86), partly, we may assume, because of the "motions," as well as the "configurations," of their bodies.

The sublime is, then, those shouting multitudes notwithstanding, far less social, a little more cerebral, and much more moving than the beautiful. It is, by the definition we have seen, more elaborate and its images more stirring than the beautiful. Burke provides examples that produce movements in our own minds, introducing complexities, understatement, and intricacies of their own. Those drawn from nature, the bull, the wolf, the ocean, and some others I have not mentioned, have movements of their own that bring other movements to mind in unexceptional ways. But the executions, to which we now return, invite an elaboration that takes into account considerations introduced in the placid sections on beauty. All these examples stand, or rather stir, in suggestive contrast to the idea of the dove. The sublime draws its power from the body, which is more responsive to pains than pleasures, and conveys this susceptibility directly to the mind.

The body, as the site of terror, is radically unsocial. Neither pains nor terrors are susceptible to the widening movement that spreads pleasures and beauties across a culture. Pain goes deep; pleasure goes wide.

As we have seen, beautiful objects have a propensity to widen their effects through a coterie, a function of the social dynamics (or rather stabilities) of the era as much as the logical requirements of Burke's essay. This widening movement, drawn from the very important concept of sympathy, reenforces the sociability of beauty. Sympathy also contributes, though with significant differences (and similar circumscription), to the multiplication of the sublime. If a carriage does not hold a crowd, neither does a mob attend the theater. Yet when an audience leaves a theater to join a mob at an execution, presumably the object it moves toward will produce a "greater" response only in the diminished, statistical sense of that adjective. Finally, one does not step into a rotunda or visit Stonehenge, as we are about to do, in a crowd. The narrow circles in which these sensations oblige the mind to move impart social stability to both sensations and ideas, rendering both the beautiful and the sublime, though I have tried to resist this conclusion, political.

Burke's discussion of power and its terrors moves steadily toward the contemplation of the power of the Deity, as indeed the role of Providence in the quotation with which we began might have suggested. Neither motion nor shape is imputed to this entity, which shapes and moves everything else. This acknowledgment might be supplemented by references to theology on the one hand and psychobiography or politics on the other, not to refute, but to extend the current investigation. I choose only to mention that Burke confirms this section with scriptural passages on the shaking of the earth and the turning of rocks into waters, both standing and a fountain (69). "Thus we have traced power through its several gradations unto the highest of all, where our imagination is finally lost" (70). This "power" inserted various properties into various objects, some of them more moving than others. For reasons that Burke saw no need to go into, the most moving qualities seem to have been imparted to objects designed to produce terror. Here, again, we find the theological and the political impinging on the aesthetic and the psychological. But the design, both Burke's and his creator's, is more beneficent and intricate than we might have guessed. It seems to have

been arranged to bring the mind, finally, to firmness and stability, if not to rest.

The sublimity that architecture brings to mind is durable and substantial, based on "configuration" rather than "movement," and on magnitude achieved by effort and duration.⁷ Structures seem to retain and ennoble the effort that went into them, combining the forces of labor with the force of gravity, and, in the examples that Burke employs, keeping them in balance through centuries. Architecture, the most humanistic of the arts, imparts powerful movement to the mind of the beholder, enabling that mind to partake of the magnitude, stability, and design of the object before it. The mind is moved, that is to say, by the immobility of the stone. That Burke was not in the least susceptible to the power of Gothic architecture is generally known, well understood, and perhaps somewhat disappointing. For him, as for Addison (*Spectator* #415, which Burke himself cites), it is the perpetual motion of the rotunda, not the vertical flights of the Gothic arch, that are sublime:

For in a rotund, whether it be a building or a plantation, you can no where fix a boundary; turn which way you will, the same object still seems to continue, and the imagination has no rest. But the parts must be uniform as well as circularly disposed, to give this figure its full force. (75)

The structure imparts force to the mind, and the mind is put into motion, enlarging, continuing, controlled, refined, and grand motion. The well aligned blocks of architecture unite the motions of the mind with the configurations of bodies. That the blocks of architecture have been assembled with great skill and effort, and centuries ago, increases both the power and the value of the movements they bring to mind. This is not a matter of casting stumbling blocks before the imagination to slow down its erratic movements, but of placing hewn blocks carefully, so that the mind may contemplate them steadily.

⁷ For comments on the moral significance of architecture in Augustan humanism, with special reference to Burke, see Paul Fussell, "The City of Life and the City of Literature," in *The Rhetorical World of Augustan Humanism: Ethics and Imagery from Swift to Burke* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 171-210, esp. 202-10.

In discussing "Difficulty," nearly the last of the properties of objects likely to produce the sublime, Burke turns to an extreme particular of stunning immobility—Stonehenge. Stonehenge comes to Burke's mind as neither the mysteriously political symbol it was for Dryden (in "To my Honour'd Friend, Dr Charleton") nor the profoundly mythic one it was for Thomas Hardy (in *Jude the Obscure*). Good Newtonian that he was, Burke directs our attention to the energy required to move its members into position and the force that holds them there: "those huge rude masses of stone, set on end, and piled each on other, turn the mind on the immense force necessary for such a work" (77). Notice that in this figure the mind is not "hurried," but "turned," an acknowledgement, I suggest, of the forces, natural and human, embedded in this structure of rocks, and thence communicated to the mind that beholds them. That so much energy was expended with "rudeness" rather than "dexterity" enhances the effect of the sublime, partly because it was done so long ago, and partly because it was done with ingenuity and brute strength, rather than engineering, whether Roman or European. The efforts that those who constructed Stonehenge, whoever they might have been, combine with the forces now so manifestly arrested by it to "turn" the reader's mind in ways, and at a speed, that will do it good.

Part Four, on the causes of pain and fear, which is generally acknowledged to be the least satisfactory section of the *Enquiry*, begins by supporting its restriction to secondary causes: "So that when I speak of cause, and efficient cause, I only mean, certain affections of the mind, that cause certain changes in the body; or certain powers and properties in bodies, that work a change in the mind" (130). This section certainly does less justice to the causes of movement than the preceding parts have done to its effects. Thus Burke supplies an analogy that confirms the naturalness, innateness, universality, and predictability of the connections between the mind and the body and the external objects that provoke its passions, likening his explanation to one that accounts only for the secondary causes of the "motion of a body falling to the ground" or "the effects of bodies striking one another by the common laws of percussion." Just as these explanations stop short of the final cause, he will "not endeavour to explain how motion itself is communicated" (130).

It was, of course, Newton who successfully brought his mind to the motion of falling bodies and who comprehended the movements of the universe. Burke pays ample tribute to every part of that explanation except the failed effort to establish a final cause ("I think it leaves us with as many difficulties as it found us"—129). The phenomenon of "bodies striking one another" had been looked into, on the other, more detached hand, by David Hume at the billiard table; in this instance the connections between cause and effect were by no means so certain. Burke, however, was after movements of neither certainty nor skepticism. He could depend on his own mind and body and the mind and body of every attentive reader to verify the motions in question, and acknowledge the difficulties in arresting them for study: "It is no small bar in the way of our enquiry into the cause of our passions, that the occasion of many of them are given, and that their governing motions are communicated at a time when we have not capacity to reflect on them" (130—association, he adds, makes the task even more difficult). Burke was content to verify the movements of the mind, and to demonstrate and classify them, without arriving at a final explanation of their causes.

Innocent though he was of any idea of an unconscious state, Burke's careful reliance on his own mental experience provided him with one example of motion which serves as a useful reminder of just how straightforward the connections were that he assumed between mind and body. The transfer of motion across these connections would be direct, clear, and undistorted. Later readers will, of necessity, suggest various more complicated mechanisms at work in this instance, and thus be unable to interpret it only as an instance of muscular suddenness:

And I have often experienced, and so have a thousand others; that on the first inclining towards sleep, we have been suddenly awakened with a most violent start; and that this start was generally preceded by a sort of dream of our falling down a precipice; whence does this strange motion arise; but from the too sudden relaxation of the body, which by some mechanism in nature restores itself by as quick and vigorous an exertion of the contracting power of the muscles? (148).

We now have alternate, perhaps more satisfactory and doubtless more disturbing, explanations of this and other movements of the mind. I turn from them and this moving dream to the example, too long withheld, of Thomas Campanella, whose mind and body illuminate, confirm, and complicate yet again the movements that have here been brought to mind.

Burke summoned the "celebrated physiognomist" out of the pages of Jacob Spon's *Recherches Curieuses d' Antiquite* (1683) as an observant mimic. When Campanella "had a mind to penetrate into the inclinations of those he had to deal with, he composed his face, his gesture, and his whole body, as nearly as he could into the exact similitude of the person he intended to examine; and then carefully observed what turn of mind he seemed to acquire by this change" (133). Other theorists turn to LeBrun's *Les passions de l' ame* or Diderot's *Le Paradoxe sur le comedien* to explain or investigate this phenomenon.⁴ Burke, instead, inspected the movements of his own mind, and seems to have expected his reader to do likewise:

I have often observed, that on mimicking the looks and gestures, of angry, or placid, or frighted, or daring men, I have involuntarily found my mind turned to that passion whose appearance I endeavoured to imitate; nay, I am convinced it is hard to avoid it; though one strove to separate the passion from its correspondent gestures. Our minds and bodies are so closely and intimately connected, that one is incapable of pain or pleasure without the other. (133)

Burke then turns, in one of the *Enquiry's* most ingenious moves, to Campanella under torture, where this physiognomist was able to sever the connections between his own body and his mind and to defy the movements one imparted to the other. A Dominican, an empiricist, and, so it was charged, a revolutionary, he was imprisoned at Naples and tortured: "Campanella...could so abstract his attention from any sufferings of his body, that he was able to endure the rack itself without much pain" (133). If Burke's explanation of Campa-

⁴ The first was delivered in 1668 and published in 1698 and frequently thereafter; the second was written by 1773, but not published until 1830.

nella's ability to suffer unmoved is not very satisfactory, it joins a long, and continuing, line of unsatisfactory contentings with the mind-body problem. The example, eminently humanistic in several exact senses of that word, moves the reader's mind in ways that Burke thought would be good for it.

I have confined myself to the psychodynamics in the pages of the *Enquiry*, in hopes that others will pursue this topic throughout the rest of the period designated in the title of this new journal, and perhaps beyond those dates. Those who consider the phenomenon from its origins will have to start with Democritus and contend with Plato's distrust of all disturbances of the soul and all motion this side of the cosmos. Aristotle's sharp eye for biology, cause, and telos revealed all sorts of motion, internal and external, to him. He undertook to arrest the motions of the mind in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, to control them (by way of syllogism) in the *Organon*, to define and exploit them in the *Rhetorica*, and to employ them in the *Poetics*. He contends with motion most extensively, if not most effectively, in the *De anima*, whence it was carried over into the scholasticism of Aquinas, where the connections between the will and the movements of the mind became, as they remain, a great problem.

Those who look into Longinus, whoever he may have been, will want to consider the title of his work, its figures of transport, scattering, and uplift, its images of the echo, the whirlwind and lightning, the spur and the curb, and its appreciation of the speed and force of Demosthenes and the winged horses of Phaeton.⁹ The most intriguing early investigator of motion and mind is Thomas Hobbes, especially in chapter 6 of *Leviathan* and all through the (insufficiently regarded) *Human Nature*, with its vivid figure of a foot-race of

⁹ These and other elements are mentioned, in passing, in an exercise in appreciation and adjustment between Suzanne Guerlac and Frances Ferguson: "Longinus and the Subject of the Sublime," and "A Commentary on Suzanne Guerlac's 'Longinus and the Subject of the Sublime,'" *New Literary History* 16 (1985): 275-97. The discussion of the ways in which the sublime challenges the stability of the self imparts an unwarranted extension to the movements of (and in) the mind, as if the circulatory system—itsself an anachronism in Longinus—extended beyond the epidermis. Neil Hertz's frequently cited "A Reading of Longinus" incites the mind to move between Longinus's citations; first published in French in 1973, it is most recently accessible in his *The End of the Line: Essays on Psychoanalysis and the Sublime* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 1-20.

the passions.¹⁰ Addison and Hume will offer salutary clarifications, most of them in need of just the kind of modifications that Burke has supplied.

Motion may, for all I know, have already been traced through the rarefied atmosphere of French rationalism, or sifted out of the densities of German idealism and transcendence. Those brave souls who pursue the topic into the metaphysics of the *Critiques* will have to contend with Kant's refusings of what the empiricists had carefully discriminated, not to mention the *Neuer Lehrbegriff der Bewegung und Ruhe* (1758) and his view "that motion is a real interaction of substances in space and time and not the actualization of a rational possibility."¹¹ It may well be that Kant's uncoerced aesthetics neither require nor permit motion—the dynamics of nature in the Third Critique elude the human mind, while those of aesthetics must be rendered independent of the body.¹²

If Frances Ferguson is right, that "the formalist project not only failed to save empiricism, it also failed to see that empiricism itself (or what is seen as contingency in some accounts, social determination in others, and the inability of language to remain self-identical in still others) was bound to be disabling for it" (Ferguson, *Solitude*, vii), then the motions that were brought to the empirical mind must constitute an unjustly overlooked refinement of that no longer appreciated-ism. Before anyone else leaps off the idealist bandwagon to cast "hirsself" under the wheels of the post-modernist juggernaut, perhaps this refinement of empiricism should be reconsidered.

I do not expect that this investigation will draw energy from or impart it to the "middle class's struggle for political hegemony," nor surrender without a struggle of its own to the immobilities of functionalism as set forth in Terry Eagleton's

¹⁰ See the discussion of Aristotle and Hobbes in my *Certain, Lively Episodes: The Articulation of Passion in Eighteenth-Century Prose* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990), 31-8, 69-72, and the sources cited therein.

¹¹ Caygill, 210, discussing the *New Exposition of the First Principles of Metaphysical Knowledge* (1755).

¹² Frances Ferguson, *Solitude and the Sublime*, 71-4, 81. Ferguson has discussed Burke's later distrust of the sublime and the extent to which "property" participates in his aesthetics in "Legislating the Sublime" in *Studies in Eighteenth-Century British Art and Aesthetics*, ed. Ralph Cohen, Publications from the Clark Library Professorship, 9 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 128-47, esp. 134-8.

The Ideology of the Aesthetic.¹³ Eagleton's emphasis on empiricism and physiology is certainly correct, and strikingly put, but he insists on a labor, rather than a dynamic, theory of the sublime.

Peter De Bolla's text purports to be intrigued with "transport," modifications of power, and the instability of the subject. But it is so seduced by its own discursivity, so "knowing about its own horizon, its own speaking seeing, its own trajectory and its own excess," that it registers no movement other than its own.¹⁴

A better understanding of the psychodynamics of empiricism will not rescue formalism (as who would want to), but it may well reinvigorate empiricism, complicate and authenticate contingency, and loosen the bonds of social determination. Before the materiality of language takes over completely from the materiality of mind (which itself took over from the materiality of material), perhaps we should look again at the means by which all of these entities were once invigorated. Once the "tablet of experience" (Ferguson, *Solitude*, 2) is seen as a means of retaining the traces of motion, empiricism, as I think I have shown, develops new complications and plausibilities. These complications and plausibilities are embedded in most of the examples Edmund Burke selected to put before the mind of his reader.

¹³ (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990); the pertinent chapter is "The Law of the Heart: Shakesbury, Hume, Burke," 31-69; the middle class struggles on 3, and *passim*. Something of the inertness of Eagleton's system may be seen in his discussion of the "self-disseminatory power" of natural rights: "if there are indeed metaphysical rights, then they enter this dense somatic space as dispersed and non-identical—like 'rays of light which pierce into a dense medium'" (57—the system, though never the discussion, of "Free Particulars," 13-30, is similarly inert). Before aesthetics are wholly consigned to one or another political economy, the intricacies of Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), as set forth in Caygill, 85-98, should be consulted.

¹⁴ *The Discourse of the Sublime: Readings in History, Aesthetics and the Subject* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell), 1989, 23; see also 37 and 65.