Resounding Footnotes

Understanding the Pre-Romantics Through the Footer

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No one champions the label "pre-romantic," yet it seems to be the accepted nomenclature to refer to poets such as Cowper, Goldsmith, Collins, and Gray. When the Macmillan Casebook Series published its installment to catalogue "those poets," the ones who weren't yet Romantics but had ceased to be identifiable as Augustan, they settled with the title *Pre-Romanticism in English Poetry of the Eighteenth Century*. If you try a Wikipedia search for this era of poets, you will be sorely disappointed; but the trusty *Encyclopedia Britannica* has them entered as "Pre-Romanticism, cultural movement in Europe from about the 1740s onward that preceded and presaged the artistic movement known as Romanticism" (Encyclopedia Britannica Online). Although the folks at the *Encyclopedia Britannica* may be an exception to the rule, it is my belief that few scholars would disagree with Northrop Frye when he says: "Not only did the 'pre-romantics' not know that the Romantic movement was going to succeed them, but there has probably never been a case on record of a poet's having regarded a later poet's work as the fulfillment of his own" (Frye 144). Although pre-Romantic is the preferred term, my sense is that within the 18th century community its use is rather disingenuous, and merely to indicate "those poets" who are neither claimed by the Augustan nor Romantic canon.

The indifference of the scholarly community to coming up with a more suitable name for this group of poets should bring into question the value of era nomenclature. When bestowing a title upon a selection of poets, what is qualitatively suggested? Or are labels such as Romantic or Augustan purely gestural and contain no real intellectual content? Frye is certainly skeptical of the usefulness

of era nomenclature, although he does move to adopt the "age of sensibility" as an ultimately less offensive name than "pre-romanticism" (Frye 145). What then is its use?

Labels after all can be highly problematic metaphysical entities when they suggest and lead to the creation of unity where little exists. Let us use for an example Wordsworth, Blake, and Edgar Allen Poe, who are vastly different poets, yet have all found their way into the Romantic canon. It must strike some as odd that even though Wordsworth and Blake lived in the same area at the same time and knew many of the same people, and Poe was separated from them by an ocean and a generation, all share the denomination "romantic" despite poetry that is palpably dissimilar. Time and physical space of course prohibit Romantics from being a physical group of poets, and each poet's eccentricities and situation should dissuade us from believing that they worked to the same end, at least not to any end with enough specificity to compose meaningful unity. Also problematic is the idea of origins that era nomenclatures seem to promote. When exactly did the Romantic Period start and stop?[1] Some individual works are certainly seminal to a period, but who were its progenitors and at what point does a collection of eccentricities constitute a new era? It seems to me to be the case that the only answer to these origin issues is to accept that there is an inexhaustible multiplicity of histories,

[1] Each of these periods as I discuss them will be in relation to their literary, and particularly their poetic movements. There is no doubt that these era nomenclatures extend outside of poetry into other arts and social activity, and that there may be productive ground in exploring the ways in which non literary facets such as painting and music relate to the discussion that follows. However, such an all-encompassing project is far too ambitious for an honors thesis, or most likely, even a single book, and I have therefore narrowed my use of era nomenclature to refer to literary periods.

aesthetic regimes, and critical lenses. By highlighting the tensions within the "Romantic" label, I do not wish to declare it impotent, but rather take a sympathetic look at the nomenclature and think about the philosophical problems I will encounter as I offer a revision for how we think of pre-romanticism.

For I agree (in part) with Frye's opinion that, regarding the proper label for pre-Romanticism, "I do not care about terminology, only about the appreciation for an extraordinarily interesting period of English Literature" (Frye 145). As an end and a sentiment, I couldn't agree more, and would like to adopt Frye's concern about the "appreciation for an extraordinarily interesting period of English Literature" to be the measure of success for the nomenclature I propose. Where Frye and I differ, is our perception of just how much our *appreciation* for the period is at stake when the era is subjected to improper nomenclature.

Nomenclature, as a method of construal within the literary-historical imagination, can never be "true" or "false," "fact," or "fiction," but rather is subject to the evaluative claims "good" and "bad" and its many derivatives such as efficient/inefficient, generative/stifling, beneficial/harmful etc. All in all, nomenclature is a matter of construal, and "good" nomenclatures should be allowed and encouraged to exist simultaneously to generate the greatest number of histories through dialectic and their own unique construction. Bad nomenclature, while not false, places an oppressively low ceiling that stunts our growth towards better understandings, histories, and ultimately a greater appreciation of the period of literature that the nomenclature denotes.

Pre-Romanticism is a good example of bad nomenclature. The term "pre-Romanticism" is suggestive of a movement working and creating for the future. In contemporary scholarship, one of the key tenets of the pre-Romantic era was the notion of sensibility and sentiment, which conventional 18th century scholarship asserts functioned as an intermediate that had by then pushed off the Augustan diving block, but had not yet pressed its fingers against Romanticism's opposite wall. Frye notes in a metaphor that is perhaps better than mine that "Our students are thus graduated with a vague notion that the age of sensibility [Frye's own nomenclative revision to "pre-Romanticism"] was the time when poetry moved from a reptilian Classicism, all cold and dry reason, to a mammalian Romanticism, all warm and wet feeling" (Frye 144). Although Frye was writing in the fifties, as an undergraduate student myself, I can attest to the relevance of Frye's lament even today. The term "pre-Romanticism" has locked our focus forward to how the pre-romantics contributed to the creation of Romanticism at the expense of the fascinating projects of those poets we call "pre."

Worse than the critical injustice to which our nomenclature has subjected these poets may be the ways in which our impatience to move from the Augustans to the Romantics has resulted in a skewed understanding of sentiment as a precursor to Romanticism. Sentiment *is* in fact a precursor to Romanticism, but also, and perhaps more productively and historically honest, it is a postcursor to Augustanism. Although critics tend to view sentiment as a tool of the left, integral to the creation of liberal cornerstones like "The Declaration of the Rights of Man," sentiment suffers a fundamentally conservative hangover from the Augustan era's

poetics and the coinciding rise in English empiricist epistemology. I will argue that while sentiment did in fact play a crucial role in the development of Romanticism, it did so as an adversary and not just as an aid. Through the adoption of the term "post-Augustan" as the new era nomenclature, we will free ourselves as 18th century scholars from the critical mindset of "overlooking" that "pre-Romantic" construal provides us.

As we wait for the dizziness of our inept nomenclature to wear off, it will be helpful to our understanding of this era for us to look outside the canon at the poetical works of Joseph Fawcett—poet, dissenting minister, Jacobin, participant in the Johnson circle, and friend and influence to many such as Hazlitt, Godwin, Wordsworth and others. Fawcett will inform our understanding of post-Augustanism not because of his introduction of any paradigm changing innovation, but for his participation in the post-Augustan departure from the strictures of Augustan poetic convention, and for the failures of his success to work through the problems of conservative sentiment in order to make space for liberal political reform. Through an analysis of Fawcett's logically successful yet horribly ineffective response to Augustanism, the post-Augustan rebellion against Augustan poetic convention will develop a saliency to make the *act* of rebellion itself a worthy and sufficient universal thread to unify a significant group of 18th century poets as post-Augustans.

Joseph Fawcett has been the subject of only a handful of articles (and to scrounge this handful you must include all scholarship from the time of his death over 200 years ago to the present), and has been little more than a footnote in

literary history. Talented, but constantly outperformed by his peers, he has failed to make his way into the pages of history, yet his acquaintances and his own trumped accomplishments are, like a footnote, insufficient for the main body but worthy of remark. My decision to focus on the contributions of Fawcett rather than a more canonical figure that contributed to the post-Augustan rebellion such as Samuel Johnson or Cowper is primarily to avoid certain nomenclative pitfalls. First, by limiting myself to Fawcett and his participation in the left-leaning Joseph Johnson circle Jacobins, I'm sidestepping era nomenclature's tendency to create unity where none exists. It is important to note that while my prescription of "post-Augustan" to describe an era of poets does in fact extend beyond the boundaries of Fawcett's milieu, it is only the activity of rebellion that is shared, while the innovations themselves that make them interesting are particular not only to the milieus of the poets, but to the individual poets themselves. Failing to maintain the complexity of individuals and letting their contributions succumb to the flattening effects of generalizations is antithetical to preserving our "appreciation" for a fascinating era of writers.

Second, by working outside of the canon, we provide ourselves with a vantage point that is unclouded by our critical expectations from previous nomenclature and our retrospective understanding of the progression of literary and historical influence. As I mentioned, I'm interested in Fawcett for the "failure of his success." Although figures as important as Hazlitt and Godwin have claimed Fawcett as an important teacher and influence, there is no significant evidence that his ideas were taken up by later generations; by all accounts, his "successful" post-

Augustan innovations stopped with him. Despite Fawcett's relegation to a footnote to the 18th century, his personal eccentric response within the post-Augustan poetic exodus will provide 18th century scholarship with greater definition of a sorely overlooked and misnamed era whose canonized poets have thus far failed to provide.

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Introduction to the Significance of the Augustan Critical Disputes

Critical scholarship of the post-Augustan period, the era between, and stretching into, the Augustan and Romantic eras is generally seen as, in the words of Northrop Frye, "a period of reaction against Pope and anticipation of Wordsworth" (144). Despite Frye's reduction of our critical understanding of the post-Augustan age, the eighteenth century was indeed notable for its marked critical disputes over poetic convention, and for Alexander Pope, who quite literally was an industry of criticism in and of himself. Pope, whose prolific literary career began early in his life, would frequently engage writers in critical skirmishes, and had no qualms with taking up an anonymous pen to quibble on behalf of himself when it suited his aims. For instance, an anonymous critique of Ambrose Philips' collection of Eclogues appeared in *The Guardian* elevating and comparing Philips' worst lines to the clearly superior pastoral verse of a "Mr. Pope." The sarcasm in this critique is entirely transparent as the author chides Mr. Pope for having "fallen into the same Error with Virgil... His Names are borrow'd from Theocritus and Virgil, which are improper to the Scene of his Pastorals" (*Guardian* 40 p. 1).[2] The author of this article, few were surprised to learn, was Alexander Pope himself, and the praises of Phillips' barely veiled attacks against his attempt to reinvigorate the pastoral by choosing contemporary shepherds as his subjects rather than the rarified Classical shepherds of the Greeks and Romans. It is precisely this attention to Classicism and

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[2] The joke resides in Theocritus and Virgil being widely regarded as masters of the pastoral; Theocritus is additionally regarded as the originator of Greek Bucolic poetry.

scholarship that Pope encourages in *Guardian* 40 that becomes a cornerstone for

Augustan poetics. No longer sarcastic, Pope writes that as "easie as Pastoral Writing

may seem, … it requires great Reading, both of the Ancients and Moderns, to be a

Master of it" (Guardian 40 p. 2). In order to compose a successful pastoral, the poet

must be able to derive the unspoken rules that go into the making of the ideal

pastoral as demonstrated by the ancients. "The first Rule of Pastoral," Pope states in

order to qualify his primary critical qualm with Phillips, is "that its Idea should be

taken from the Manners of the Golden Age, and the Moral form'd upon the

Representation of Innocence; 'tis therefore plain that any Deviations from that

Design degrade a Poem from being true Pastoral" (1). What offends Pope most is

Philips' transgression against ancient precedent in his search for new poetic content

as he experiences with modern shepherds and their unrefined tongues. Also

contained within this "first rule" is the moralization of the pastoral scene as a space

where an idealization of the past as the mythical "Golden Age" is achievable. Pope's

faith in pastoral's ability to "represent innocence" is the product of a reemerged

Renaissance attitude towards a rural past that is less obstructing to morality due to

its idealized, albeit false, simplicity. The Augustan poet who could successfully draw

upon the essence of this purity and communicate it through verse was not merely

fulfilling the aesthetic role of an artist, but performing his moral duty to his fellow

man by unearthing a more natural morality capable of guiding him through a more

complicated and morally dubious age. To the Augustan, Philips' transgression is

greater than purely aesthetic; it contains a moral element to it as well. It is precisely

this convergence of natural morality with aesthetic discourse that will give the

rebellion against Augustan poetic convention the weight it requires to formulate a unifying project with enough saliency to garner the title "post-Augustan."

In order to make sense of this moral aesthetic we must first shift our attention to the sentimental, and ultimately to empirical ideas that sustained them. Although the word sentiment did not achieve popularity until "sometime in the 1740's," the philosophical tenets underlying the epistemological core of sentiment had already reached their height of fashion through the empiricist revolutions in philosophy and science (Brissenden 14). Their developments as the dominant epistemological modes for much of the 18th century is not only concurrent with post-Augustan aesthetic debates, but inextricable from them. Both Augustan Classicism and sentiment converge on the issue of natural morality, thereby resulting in a conservative moral discourse that dramatically shaped 18th century literature. It will come to be seen that Augustan Classicism acted as the womb for a "reason-centric" sentiment, which as it parted ways with the classicism of its progenitor to take on a liberalized "feeling-centric" form, was unable to shake its genetic disposition as an epistemological mode founded in an idea of natural morality that is fundamentally conservative in its maintenance of the moral/aesthetic status quo.

After examining the mutual convergence of sentiment and the Augustan critical debates on the issue of natural morality, we will shift our attention to the moral-political ramifications of their split as sentiment becomes increasingly feeling oriented and to the poetic and critical responses to the anxiety conservative poetics wrought upon a specific circle of post-Augustan poets in the later part of the century

known as the Joseph Johnson Circle. Concluding these responses will be an analysis

of the solutions to conservative sentiment posed by Wordsworth and Coleridge in

the *Lyrical Ballads*, which creates a space for liberal thought by severing ties with

the conservatism inherent in sentiment. Taking the time to understand both the

before and after of post-Augustanism will give us a framework with which to

develop a unifying "post-Augustan project" into a meaningful designation that is

separate, yet connected and equal in magnitude, to its Romantic and Augustan

nomenclative monoliths on either side. It is my hope to defeat the temporal and

teleological "post" in "post-Augustan," yet maintain it for its historicity, the tension it

encapsulates, and the contemporaneous understanding the term gives us of such a

remarkable period in English literature.

Empiricism, Sentiment, and Natural Morality

To this day, the nature and meaning of sentiment remain inconclusive within

18th century studies. As a word, it has traveled a meteoric trajectory—entering into

public popularity in a glorified blaze, only to quickly find itself pulled apart by the

atmosphere and obliterated to a fragment of its former self. There is no doubt that

the semantic instability of this term has contributed to the difficulty modern

scholarship has had defining it; it simply refuses to sit still. Scholarly consensus has

however settled upon the Empirical revolution as a starting point, or watershed

from which the philosophical ideas backing sentiment were formulated.[3] While

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[3] As is true with any concept worth its weight, there are an inexhaustible number of histories that can be attached to sensibility. My focus will be on the philosophical, and particularly epistemological, beginnings of sentiment, as it was known in the 18th century. Janet Todd in *Sensibility: An Introduction* provides succinct and

empiricists such as John Locke and Sir Isaac Newton began to rise in popularity by

the end of the 17th century and moved into the first half of the 18th century, the

English began to understand their natural surroundings as reasonable and ordered

posits of God's divine plan, and themselves as equipped archaeologists, capable of

both uncovering and discerning even the most ethereal ethical and aesthetic

problems using their God-given senses and reason faculties. As the moral and the

empirical began to meld into the sentimental, sentiment began to mean, in the

words of Janet Todd's *Sensibility: An Introduction*: "a thought, often an elevated one,

influenced by emotion, a combining of heart with head or an emotional impulse

leading to an opinion or a principle" (Todd 7). R.J. Brissenden in his book *Virtue in*

Distress settles on a similar formulation of sentiment, borrowing from Hume the

term "reasonable feelings" (Brissenden 54). Using either Todd or Brissenden's

definitions, sentiment contains a balance of skilled sensitivity and innate certitude; a

sentimental man or woman must make both an accurate evaluation of an object or

situation using the senses, and trust the infallibility of their feelings to process the

information from their senses appropriately. In brief, this is what Todd means by

"sense" and "sensibility," and Brissenden by "reason" and "feeling."[4]

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informative histories of sensibility, including philosophical, political, gender,
economic, and critical histories.

[4] While "skillful sensitivity" and "innate certitude" are fairly faithful truncations of
the concepts underlying "sense" and "sensibility," "sense" does not correlate one for
one with "reason." Although Brissenden's usage of "reason" aligns with Todd's
"sense," it is important to note that they are congruent, but not necessarily
equivalent. Brissenden derives from Hume, Hutcheson, and Shaftsbury, his
definition of reason to be a "chain of argument and induction" (53). Although
"induction" closely aligns with Todd's "sense," Brissenden's addition of "chains of
argument" creates a technical distinction between "reason" and "sense." Because of
their congruity, each respective author can harmoniously use their respective words

Both Brissenden and Todd understand the popularization of English empiricism as providing the primary philosophical foundation for sensibility. While the former chooses to begin his history with Locke's 1690 *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* and the latter a few years earlier with Newton's 1687 *Principia Mathematica*, both critics ultimately arrive at compatible formulations of the changes in English thought towards epistemology and the natural world. Todd cites Newtonian Physics as a major contributor to the developing relationship of 18th century man to nature. Todd summarizes this relationship explaining how

> "As [Newton's] mechanical construction of the universe
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> controlled by rational laws became largely accepted in
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> the first half of the eighteenth century, ethics and
>
> aesthetics no longer seemed to require heaven as
>
> necessary validation. Nature itself, first the vastness of
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> space and then the sublimity of earth, became an
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> expression of God through which finite people could
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> approach the infinite and understand both beauty and
>
> morality. Natural laws declared God's beneficence, and
>
> in the *Principia Mathematica* order and harmony were
>
> proved universal principles; from them ethics and
>
> aesthetics could to some extent be deduced" (Todd 23).

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to refer to make similar claims, but the definitional differences are worth noting. I will from this point forward favor "Todd's" terms for the purpose of pairing the language of my commentary with that of the sources I am evoking.

Newton's ordering of the universe proffered a hopeful outlook on the possibility of

humanity to perceive God through the divine laws lingering in his natural works.

With God still present amongst his works, all one needed to do is "sense" the divine

essence within the object of contemplation and derive from it even God's most

ethereal laws such as ethics and aesthetics. With Newton, the world had become a

map, one only had to have senses refined enough to read it.

The universe now a place rife with potential for discovery of divine

principles, sense emerged as a dominant facet in the epistemological mode as

empirical developments took place in the philosophy of mind. John Locke, famous

for his popularization of the concept of the mind as "white paper" (more frequently

referred to as "tabula rasa"), proposed an epistemological model that relied on

sense to collect the raw materials from which the mind is formed. The foundation of

human understanding is "Experience," Locke says, "in that, all our knowledge is

founded; and from that it ultimately derives itself. Our observation employ'd either

about *external, sensible objects; or about the internal operations of our mind… is that*

which supplies our Understandings with all the materials of thinking'" (Locke 476). In

Locke's formulation, the observer intakes experience through the senses, and uses

this information to print the content of experience on the "white page" of the mind.

In order to populate the mind with the fruit of experience, Locke insists that "[God]

hath furnished man with those faculties which will serve for the sufficient discovery

of all things requisite to the end of such a being" (Locke 399). To Locke and an 18th

century England immersed in Christian culture, it goes without questioning that God

has adequately equipped man to act according to His benevolent plan; following the empiricist revolution, sense provided exactly this tool.

Not only was God's benevolence assumed, but so too was the inherent goodness of man—a belief that ultimately lies at the heart of sensibility. Brissenden concurs with Steven Marcus that "One of the deepest and most pervasive fantasies of the age was the assumption that man is innately benevolent, or, at least, that he is not innately malevolent" (Brissenden 21).[5] Following the same logic that Locke used to furnish man with his senses, he and other empiricists also came to have a hand in the propagation and development of this fantasy. Citing once again God's benevolence and infallibility as his premise, Locke holds onto a single innateness stating that not only has "[God] imprinted on the minds of men an idea of himself, but that he hath plainly stamped there, in fair characters, all that men ought to know or believe of him; all that they ought to do in obedience to his will and that he hath given them a will and affections conformable to it" (396). Equally as unwilling to propose a philosophy of mind that is unable to sense God's principles as he is to leave man without the ability to evaluate what he finds, Locke concedes pure sensationalism in order to assert that although the experiences the senses encounter are variable, the relationship of what one senses is fixed to an unfaltering objective morality. God has supplied man with not only the sense required to uncover His trace in the natural world, but the sensibility to evaluate this sensory input in accordance with his divine plan.

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[5] Of course, it goes without saying that as popular as the idea of man's innate benevolence was, this belief did not go entirely unchallenged. There existed even notable writers such as Thomas Hobbes, Pierre Bayle, Jonathan Swift, Bernard de Mandeville, and Marquis de Sade who opposed this fantasy from the beginning.

What the empiricist philosopher and the sentimental man or woman share is a common pursuit of natural laws; both have faith in the ability of the senses to discover what is true, and has always been true, since God or nature first established the ordered and reasonable laws that govern the universe and those who inhabit it. With a keen sense and an unencumbered mind, all human beings are capable of making these discoveries for themselves and deciphering and acting upon them according to God's benevolent ends. Due to the innateness of this moral reasoning faculty, the 18th century was dominated by an image of man as fundamentally good.

This was not to say that despite the 18th century fantasy of the benevolent man that man was thought to *act* benevolently. Accompanying this fantasy was "an extremely pessimistic idea about the nature of the world and society" (Brissenden 29). We can see this pessimism in our previous example of Pope and Augustanism's penchant for a classical revival that would bring to the senses of the modern reader a simpler society, less distracted by the more numerous vices of the 18th century. Although coinciding with the 18th century fantasy of man's proclivity for good was a remarkable increase in public acts of benevolence such as the establishment of foundling and poor hospitals by wealthy individuals for the public benefit, man was still the same crime and violence ridden species that he has been for all of history (Brissenden 81). The solution offered by both the Augustans and the sentimentalists for overcoming the perverting effects of society is to rely on the senses to sift through experience to find traces of God's moral direction.

As will become more apparent when this explication of sentiment is applied to the aesthetic debate between the Augustans and post-Augustans, this shared

empirical method of uncovering truth is fundamentally conservative due to its allegiance to a rigid notion of natural morality as the one and only means to fulfilling man's obligations to God and society. When we put Pope's notorious proclamation in his *Essay on Man* that "whatever is, is right" in the context of his distaste for the moral condition of temporary society and his adherence to Neoclassicism, we understand that what he really means to say is "what *was*, is right" (69). Absent from the dominant 18th century narrative was the belief that it could have been *man's* adherence to a defunct morality that lead him astray rather than his postlapsarian divergence from a perfect morality. Instead, the Augustans urge an adherence to a Classically established morality as an conservative effort to regain an idealized Golden Age. Because of sentiment's philosophical commitment to natural morality, any discourse on morality must take place in, and be justified by the past, thereby making sentiment a fundamentally conservative epistemological mode.

The Unsurprising Surprise of the Conservatism of Pope's "Essay on Criticism"

Throughout the 18th century, the balance between sense and sensibility in the common epistemological mode sees significant changes, but its Empiricist foundation remains the same. During the latter two decades of the 17th century as these ideas were introduced into the Augustan Age of Reason, the balance between sense and sensibility was tilted heavily in favor of the former. In the Augustan age as Newton and Locke are writing, "sense" is the "fat kid" on the teeter-totter, while the weight of slender "sensibility" is hardly registered. As the century progresses and feeling bulks up, reason becomes the one who dangles from the opposite side of the fulcrum. Locke seems to anticipate this balancing act between sense and sensibility

when he notes the subtle yet significant differences between the logical forms: "the

infinitely wise God hath made it so; and therefore it is best" and "I think it best and

therefore God hath made it so" (Locke 398-9). Locke, siding with the former (and

accusing "Romanists" of the later), relies on man's sense of God's natural works to

find out what is right, rather than falling into what he considers logical fallacy by

prescribing what is right, and then saying it was God who made it that way.

Conventional scholarship on sentiment has established that during the later

part of the century, a "disproportionate weight eventually came to be placed on the

feelings—on sensibility at the expense of sense" (Brissenden 24). Brissenden cites

numerous examples of late century preference of feelings, the most poignant of

which is Clarissa's justification to her parents for her right to choose the course of

her life: "Principles that *are* in my mind; that I *found* there; implanted, no doubt, by

the first gracious Planter: which therefore *impel* me... to act up to them... to the best

of my judgment... let others act as they will by *me*" (Richardson qtd, in Brissenden

25). Clarissa's insistence on her infallible subjectivity is exemplary of late century

sentiment as it fulfills the very logical fallacy Locke proselytized against. Where this

teeter-totter analogy gains its usefulness is when sentiment is thought of as the

teeter-totter. Like a teeter-totter, sentiment requires the weight of both reason and

feeling; an inequality of weight can be managed, but without a body on either side,

the teeter-totter ceases to operate at all. As feeling-oriented as reason becomes in

the later part of the century, sense is still relied upon as the mechanism to "find" the

innate principles of sensibility. Clarissa knows she is right because she feels she is

right; and she knows her feelings are just because God made them so, but she must

possess a keen enough sense to do the looking herself. Although sentiment as it approaches the height of its popularity produces characters such as Richardson's Clarissa who resemble Locke's Romanists, sensibility remains as the legitimizer of sense, regardless of how logically dubious the justification might be.

The initial shift from Augustanism to Post-Augustanism was marked by significant aesthetic conflict between the old and what became the new, and the never. These disagreements centered on the proper subjects of poetry, and by extension the moral danger of these aesthetic departures from Classical precedent. In 1711 Pope, the man who Matthew Arnold later sardonically recognized as the "splendid high priest, of our age of prose and reason," published his poem "Essay on Criticism," outlining the proper ways in which one was to properly engage in both critical and creative poetic activity (Arnold 21). Pope's aesthetic manifesto in heroic couplets featured recommendations ranging from the proper subjects of poetry, to the proper usage of select rhetorical devices, to the ways in which a critic can best maintain a dignified reputation. This essay was not simply an *ars poetica* for Pope's own writing, but an aesthetic philosophy that would come to define an age.

Pope in his "Essay on Criticism" argues for a neoclassicism that is transparently conservative. Inscribed within the term "Neoclassicism" itself is the conservation of the values of the past through their revival in the present. At the level of recommendation, Pope wants the poet to "Learn hence for Ancient *Rules* a just Esteem" additionally asserting that; "to copy Nature is to copy *them*" (Pope 6). This attention to Classicism is only the surface level at which the Augustan poets align; their Neoclassicism is indicative of a deeper moralizing project. Underneath

Neoclassicism's transparent conservatism is a moral conservatism that motivates the movement. With a philosophical background in sentiment already under our belts, our reading of Pope will require very little teasing in order to reveal the same empirical epistemology that underlies sentiment resides in Augustan poetic convention; knowing what sentiment looks like in relationship to empiricist epistemology, the didactic nature of his "Essay" will practically announce it.[6]

To initiate our analysis of Pope's "Essay," let us return to the second, unanalyzed, half of Pope's line: "Learn hence for Ancient *Rules* a just Esteem; / to copy Nature is to copy *them.*" "*Them*" being a reference to the Classical poets, the claim that copying nature is akin to copying the Classics shares the empirical belief in the discoverability of natural law. In fact, Pope makes it explicitly clear that this pursuit of natural law (particularly morality as we will see) is the project of the Augustans.[7] No ambiguity is left as to the origin of poetic convention: "Those RULES of old *discover'd*, not *devis'd*, / Are *Nature* still, but *Nature Methodiz'd*: / *Nature*, like *Monarchy*, is restrain'd / By the same Laws which first *herself* ordain'd" (6). This claim is profoundly conservative both in its no nonsense assertion of Classic poetic

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[6] Due to the segmented feel and didactic nature of Pope's poem "Essay on Criticism," I do not feel compelled to address the poem as it develops in its poetic arc. Our primary interest with Pope's "Essay" is as a highly influential manual of Augustan criticism and poetic convention. The directness with which Pope offers advice and criticism to the poet and critic justifies my mining of the poem for information.

[7] Unlike pre-romantic, post-Augustan, and Romantic, Augustan as both a stylistic label and as era nomenclature existed contemporaneously with the artists the term designates. As an adjective, the OED first recognizes the term as existing in 1595. As a reference to a literary "Augustan Age," the OED cites its first use in 1712, a year after Pope published his "Essay on Criticism." The contemporaneity of the term and more importantly the grouping with the poets justifies speaking in terms of a poetic project. Poets did in fact often associate in an us vs. them fashion. Not only are critics and poets put into general nameless us and them categories in "Essay," but Pope forms specific associations with other poets such as Dryden.

convention as nothing less than natural itself, and its analogy to a monarchic social

contract that seems to anticipate Edmund Burke's conservative hallmark *Reflections*

on the Revolution in France by almost 80 years. Not wanting to leave any source of

the natural uncovered, Pope makes the connection between nature, poetic

convention, and the divine himself:

> High on *Parnassus'* Top her *Sons* she show'd,
>
> And pointed out those arduous Paths they rode,
>
> Held from afar, aloft, th' Immortal Prize,
>
> And urg'd the rest by equal Steps to rise.
>
> From great *Examples* useful *Rules* were giv'n;
>
> She drew from *them* what they deriv'd from *Heav'n*. (6)

 Parnassus tantalizes the poet with "immortal Prize" (presumably ideal poetry, and

the eternal fame that comes from achieving it), and provides them with the

precedent of the Classics, who were shown by "Heaven" poetic means with which to

achieve it. In these lines, the Gods bestow upon the poets of antiquity the sensibility

and the sense required to traverse the "arduous Path" of poetic composition, and

"urg'd [future poets] by equal Steps to rise." Pope urges his contemporaries that if

they are to only stay true to the "path" or precedent set by the great classical

writers, who were shown this method of writing by the Gods, that they too can

achieve immortal works to the magnitude of Ovid's *Metamorphosis* or Virgil's

Aeneid.

Pope applies the same "reasonable God" logic as Locke in his development of

Empiricist epistemology to justify the strict adherence to Classical form. The

influence of the Empiricist's ordered world most pronounced as he praises

Classicism's connection and proximity to an "*Unerring Nature*, still divinely bright, /

Once *clear*, *unchang'd*, and *Universal Light*" (Pope 5). For the Augustan, and the

Empiricist alike, the natural world is ordered by universal and detectable principles.

Fortunately for Pope's man, he has also been supplied with sensibility; Pope tells us

that

> If we look more closely, we shall find
>
> Most have the *Seeds* of Judgment in their mind
>
> Nature affords at least a *glimm'ring Light*;
>
> The *Lines*, tho' touch'd but *faintly*, are drawn *right.* (3)

In addition to Pope's declaration of the innate sensibility is his acknowledgment of

the erring condition of man. Pope qualifies man's possession of judgment with a

metaphoric comparison to a seed that, while ever-present, must be nurtured and

grown.[8]

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[8] Also affecting the universality of Pope's seed metaphor is his use of the qualifier "most." Interpreting an absolute referent for "most" is impossible through the context of the poem. "Most" can be either in reference to most people possessing judgment while others do not, or most people possess seeds of judgment, while others such as poets posses fully sprouted judgment faculties. Pope is either making room for "reason-free" abhorations of human kind, or leaving room for the poets to distinguish themselves. It is my opinion that the poem suggests the latter interpretation, but the line is admittedly ambiguous. Regardless of which interpretation is held, if we are to take Pope's connection to the empiricists seriously, we can anticipate his commitment to a universalized sensibility. David Hume, while imagining a human being lacking sensibility, speaks fairly representatively as an empiricist when what he imagines is a creature "inverted, and directly opposite to those which prevail in the human species" (Hume 144). Such humans, if they are to be counted at all as "humans" under empiricist thought, are certainly such a negligible portion of the human race that they have little baring on arguments for innateness.

This image of an insufficiently nurtured sensibility is echoed in Pope's belief in the corrupting quality of 18th century society, and is what motivates him to elevate the social importance of both poet and critic to not only performing an aesthetic role in society, but a critical moral one as well. The "glimmering light" afforded by nature functions as a referent to both universal human sensibility, and to the poet, who is instructed that "lines, though touched but faintly, are drawn right." The way in which the poet is to imitate nature through "lines… touched but faintly" differs slightly from the poet on Parnassus; he is not only to imitate nature, but to enhance it and draw out what is essential within the object of contemplation.[9] Pope describes poetic prowess, or:

> True Wit is Nature to *Advantage* drest,
>
> What oft was *thought*, but ne'er so well *Exprest*;
>
> *Something*, whose *Truth* convinc'd at Sight we find,
>
> That gives us back the Image of our Mind. (15)

These lines serve as an excellent synopsis of the moral project of the Augustan poet. He is to use his senses to derive natural laws from his experience, and dress that raw experience of nature "to advantage" and present it as a salient truth that restores "the image of our minds." Pope's concern with morality gives us fair indication that the laws he is primarily concerned with in nature are moral laws,

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[9] Although Pope's poetics are for the most part relentlessly conservative, it would be unfair to present his idea of poetic convention as entirely rigid. Enhancements are not limited to nature, but apply also to poetic convention. It is within right of the modern poet to advance poetic convention as long as it is built soundly upon Classical principles. Pope encouradges the poet to "advance judgments of their own" and to "Regard not then if Wit be *Old* or *New,/* But blame the *False*, and value the *True* (32).

and that the "image of the mind" that he'd like to recuperate is that of man's innate benevolence. This position is confirmed by Pope's rallying of the critic as the defender of public morality, and his own actions as a critic against Phillips in *Guardian* to preserve the "Manners of the Golden Age, and the Moral form'd upon the Representation of innocence" (Pope 1). Pope informs the critic that it is necessary to "Learn then what *Morals* Criticks ought to show, / For 'tis but *half* a *Judge's Task*, to know" (Essay 26). Just as the poet can be a force for good, if he strays away from Classical precedent, he can become a corrupting force causing "Virgins [to] *smile* at what they *blush'd* before" (25). Pope puts forth an amusing scene where a critical dispute between poets and critics is conjured as an epic battle between good and evil: "Encourag'd thus, Wit's *Titans* brav'd the skies/ And the Press groan'd with Licenc'd *Blasphemies*-- / These Monsters, Critiks! With your Darts engage, / Here point your Thunder, and exaust your Rage" (25). While Pope's Miltonic depiction of critical disputes as an epic battle between good and evil may read as overblown, Pope's intensity should be read quite seriously. Augustanism's commitment to empiricism quite literally places the morality of society at stake in the critical disputes over Augustan Neoclassical poetic convention and those rebelling against it.

Pope's "Essay" is at once a critical historical document of Augustan poetics, and a specter that haunts the 18th century. As we will see with our discussion of the post-Augustans in the next chapter, the anxiety this "Essay" produced for those rebelling against Augustan poetic convention is formidable. Pope gave a highly moralized set of rules that either had to be followed or accounted for at the risk of

upsetting the delicate morality of English society. In great part due to Pope's influence, it became the duty of the poet to use his heightened sense and learned sensibility to derive from the object of his poetic contemplation its moral and aesthetic essence. His verse is meant to guide society back to an idealized past where fewer pressures existed to distract the moral being. The great poets of the ancient Greeks and Romans had spoken with the Gods, who provided them with a map, which they then translated and left for instruction to future generations of poets so they may rise as they once did.

The Augustans relied on a poetic that was fundamentally conservative not only for its fixation on Neoclassicism, but for its reliance on an empiricist epistemological mode. The morality that God intends for humanity is located in a past that must be connected with, analyzed, occasionally built upon, but ultimately preserved. This conservative notion of maintaining the structures of the past is the inevitable conclusion of an epistemological mode that relies on the search for innate morality.

3

The Post-Augustans: United in Dissent

When the empiricists made the world a place of ordered, universal, and

eternal principles, and man the archeologist equipped for their discovery, an

inherently conservative epistemological mode had become inscribed into 18th

century poetic composition and criticism. Although we have drawn a connection

between mid-century sentiment and the epistemology underlying Pope's "Essay,"

the primacy of reason over feeling, the reliance on scholarship, and simple

anachronistic fallacy, should discourage us from identifying what underlies

Augustan poetics as "sentiment." The Augustan stress on Neoclassicism places the

primary burden on learning and argumentation in a way that canonically

sentimental characters like Richardson's Clarissa do not. Reason, and particularly

reason's connection to the works of antiquity, is sensibility-like in that sensibility for

the Augustan remains to play the subtle but crucial role of moralizing the poet's

discoveries, but its function does not supplant precedent with feeling. The primacy

of reason over feeling—sense over sensibility—gives definition to the Augustan era,

what Matthew Arnold (among many others) called the "Age of Reason," whereas the

primacy of feeling in Sentimental literature gives definition to what critics

traditionally understand as quintessentially "Sentimental." Despite the underlying

epistemological mode that connects the "Age of Reason" with the "Age of

Sentiment," it would be irresponsibly reductive to conflate the two. The common

epistemological mode may be the philosophical and moral motivation for the critical

debates, but the shift from Augustan reason to post-Augustan sentiment is what is

sprang from it.[10]

The main focus of this chapter will be to imbue the critical disputes with

importance through an analysis of the moral/aesthetic crisis that follows an

important rupture in the epistemological mode. The critical disputes are not

sufficiently interesting grounds on which to base a nomenclature without being in

some way generative of their philosophical and historical situation. I will argue that

among the contributors to the development of sentiment must be added the post-

Augustan critical debates—to which sentiment can be viewed as an inadvertent

product. Aligning the post-Augustans with the rise of sentiment is not an unusual

move, however their contribution to the development of the epistemology

underlying it, is to my knowledge, an avenue that has yet to be explored.

Understanding the post-Augustan critical debates in the terms of an inadvertent

transformation of Augustan reason to post-Augustan sensibility through the pursuit

of new poetic content will illume the critical debates as a substantial common

denominator, sufficient in stature to unite an era of poets as "post-Augustan."

There is reassuring stability that comes with a nomenclature founded on

observable behavior that is not only clear in its designation, but designated based on

a historical distinction that was maintained by 18th century poets and critics.

Whether it be a standalone article published in a pamphlet or periodical, or as a

preface to a collection of poems and even the occasional poem itself, it is the act of

---

[10] In order to maintain this separation between the epistemological modes
underlying Augustan aesthetics and sentiment, I will henceforth refer to the former
as "Augustan reason" and the later as "sentiment."

rebellion that is the essentializing feature for my use of the term "post-Augustan."[11]

It is usually with a fair amount of ease that a reader can find the aesthetic theory,

defenses, and/or justification for a collection of poems. Although to fall under the

jurisdiction of "post-Augustan," a poet does not necessarily have to write directly or

publically in response to the Augustan monopoly on poetics, they usually did.

Pastoral, being a genre intimately tied to the classical past and fiercely

defended by Augustan critics, it is often a great place to sift for post-Augustan angst.

Even three quarters of a century after Pope attacked Philips for his modernization of

the pastoral in *Guardian 40*, there exists an immense amount of frustration and

anxiety towards the influence of the Augustans. Robert Southey, in his Preface to his

Eclogues, responds to the 18th century's confinement to classical pastoral a la Pope

when he complains in his preface: "No kind of poetry can boast of more illustrious

names or is more distinguished by the servile dullness of imitated nonsense.

Pastoral writers 'more silly than their sheep' have like their sheep gone on in the

same track on after another" (Southey 192). In his 1800 "Preface" to *Lyrical Ballads*,

Wordsworth makes a point of specifically mentioning the influence Pope has

maintained on poetic form even sixty years after his death (Wordsworth 11).

Although he has yet to be properly introduced here, Joseph Fawcett wrote and

published a particularly polemical poem called "The Art of Poetry" written in heroic

---

[11] Although I am just beginning to substantiate "post-Augustan" as productive
nomenclature, I ask that my readers take my application of the term to specific
figures prematurely seriously. A particular instance that I anticipate raising
eyebrows will be my designation of canonically Romantic poet William Wordsworth
as post-Augustan. Included in my explication of Wordsworth's post-Augustanism
will be a reconciliation of his work between the two canons, but for the time being, I
ask that my readers to not let this designation trouble them, if the source of this
trouble is a conflict between canons.

couplets mocking and complaining about the hold Pope's aesthetic—spelled out in his "Essay"—has on poetry even at the close of the 18th century. Despite each era's position at opposite ends of the century, Augustan aesthetics left a stain in English literary culture that poets had to fiercely contend with well after conventional scholarship recognizes the era to have "passed."

A second advantage redefining our era nomenclature as "post-Augustan" gives us is the opportunity to meaningfully organize these poets along similar stratifying lines that were recognized in the 18th century. So stratified were the Augustans from the post-Augustans that the former did not have to wait for literary scholars to assign nomenclature to their era: the term "Augustan," as I have mentioned earlier in a footnote, was in fact a designation for English Neoclassicist poets and critics that was used in the early 18th century (OED). Due to the period's linkage of the moral and the aesthetic, the aesthetic lines that were not be traversed were often drawn so clear that critical backlash could be easily anticipated. In 1726, when James Thomson published *Winter*, the first of his *Seasons,* his awareness of his departure from Augustan poetic convention allowed him to anticipate the charge of "heretic" that awaited him:

> "I am neither ignorant, nor concern'd, how much one
>
> may suffer in the Opinion of several Persons of great
>
> Gravity, and Character, by the Study, and Pursuit of
>
> Poetry. Altho' there may seem to be some Appearance
>
> of Reason for the present Contempt of it, as managed by
>
> the most part of our modern Writers; yet that any Man

should, seriously, declare against that Divine Art is,

really, amazing" (Thomson 8).

Defiant as he is, Thomson's dedication and preface is wrought with anxiety as he

anticipates a group of critics who he describes as: "These weak-sighted Gentlemen

cannot bear the strong Light of Poetry, and the finer, and more amusing, Scene of

Things it displays; but must Those, therefore, whom Heaven has blessed with the

discerning Eye shut it, to keep them company" (Thomson 10-1). Even as late as

Wordsworth's publication of the Preface to his 1800 edition of the *Lyrical Ballads*

these critical disputes continued to stratify poets on the basis of poetic convention.

Wordsworth distinguishes between his "Friends [who are] anxious for the success

of these poems from a belief, that if the views, with which they were composed were

indeed realized, a class of Poetry would be produced," and of the "reader" who will

censure him simply because he does not fulfill their internalized aesthetic

expectations laid out by "Donne and Cowley, or Dryden, or [last but certainly not

least] Pope" (Wordsworth 9; 12). While "post-Augustan" most certainly went

unused as a contemporary designation, the presence of an "Augustan" and the

understood critical boundaries that set them off, produced an attitude in those

dissenting that is reasonably seen as contemporarily post-Augustan.

Bertrand Bronson, who performs a stylistic analysis of seventeen of the

major poetic voices of the post-Augustan era in his article "Pre-Romantic or Post-

Augustan Mode?" notes that as Post-Augustans rebelled against the confines of

Augustan poetics, it was usually to do so on the grounds of desiring new poetic

content that was otherwise prohibited by the Augustan adherence to neoclassical

aesthetics (26). Primarily, the Augustans favored the adoption of generally more temperate or moderated poetic subjects such as idealized pastoral scenes in order to avoid overwhelming the senses of the reader.[12] In his "Essay," Pope specifically instructs the poet to "Avoid *Extreams,"* which by his estimation "nauseate all, and nothing can digest" (Pope 30). The Augustan's highly moderated verse is designed to demonstrate the poet's control of the poetic content often through careful lines and formal mastery. The result of this compositional aesthetic is the placement of emphasis on values admired by the Augustan poet such as heightened sense, learning, and reasoning.

The post-Augustan may have been united in their dissent against neoclassical confinement, but they were not unified in by an aesthetic like the Augustans were. An excellent demonstration of this disunity is available to us through a comparison of Wordsworth's poetics as described in "The Preface" to *Lyrical Ballads*, with Fawcett, whose "Art of Poetry" specifically decries Pope's prohibition on extremes. Intending to be understood as meaning the opposite, Fawcett facetiously writes:

"Yet heed not thou such critics' heated dreams,

Who rave of beauties born of burning themes;

While polish'd crowds, with chaster taste, require

---

[12] I do not mean to suggest that the Augustan never approached substantial or provocative subject matter. In fact, the heavy-handed satire of Pope's *Dunciad* certainly breaches the realm of what one may consider "extreme" subject matter. The ways in which satire was employed by the Augustan as a popularly accepted method of expressing extreme opinions or commentary is a fascinating topic that would necessarily require significant coverage if this thesis were to attempt the same explication of Augustan era nomenclature that it does for the post-Augustan. Unfortunately, it has fallen outside the scope of this paper to provide such a stylistic analysis for the Augustans. For a more nuanced treatment of Augustan poetics and style, please see Fraser's 1990 paper tellingly titled: "What is Augustan Poetry?"

>A placid song, and innocent of fire.
>
>Let others pant beneath the classic line,
>
>Where fierce Apollo's sultry glories shine;
>
>Thou hot Parnassus' sun-burnt summit quit,
>
>And woo the Muse that reigns o'er cooler wit;
>
>The Muse that, all Diana-like, retreats
>
>To shady founts that shun the summer-heats;
>
>Where a refreshing chilness reigns around,
>
>And not one gleam of warmth profanes the frigid
>
>ground (Fawcett 8). [13]

In these lines we can hear the post-Augustan discontent towards the stifling of

poetic subject matter at the hands of a neoclassical oppressor; however his

particular complaint about desiring to versify the extremities of emotion and

experience is a complaint particular to Fawcett, and is by no means representative

of the era. Wordsworth is in direct opposition to Fawcett's desire to write fiercely

impassioned poetry when he says, "The subject is indeed important! For the human

mind is capable of excitement without the application of gross and violent

stimulants; and he must have a very faint perception of its beauty and dignity who

does not know this" (Wordsworth 21). The fact that two poets, each acquainted and

familiar with each other's works, can possess aesthetics that are in direct opposition

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[13] The punctuation following "ground" has been effaced on the manuscript scans and is illegible. I chose to refrain from inserting either a period or an exclamation mark due to the equal likelihood of either one.

to one another is in no way unusual for the post-Augustans. [14] Bronson observes

that "What the poets were looking for was not so much a fresh poetical rhetoric that

could be prescriptively established—a dominating, authoritative idiom to supplant

the Augustan, —as a set of fresh topics to stimulate poetic invention and feeling"

(26). Although Fawcett diverges from Augustan influence with his "heated dreams,"

and Wordsworth by his preference for "low and rustic life," both poets are yearning

for the addition of new content and not necessarily the destruction of the old

(Wordsworth 14). Fawcett may be poking fun at the Augustan proclivity for

Classical allusions in the above stanza, but he is not averse to their (sincere)

deployment himself; Wordsworth may have rejected the high poetic register of the

Augustans, with which they "separate themselves from the sympathies of men," but

his preference for the more subtle scene is consciously maintained. The split that

characterizes the post-Augustans is not one of total rejection of its predecessors, but

a demand for freedom. The post-Augustans are united in their aesthetic disunity

through their dissatisfaction with the accessible poetic content available through

the Augustan aesthetic.

   While it was neither necessary nor desired that Augustan poetics be

completely discarded, the cords tethering the poet to neoclassicism had to be cut in

order to make room for new poetic content. Pope was entirely clear in his "Essay"

that cutting ties with Classicism would sever the connection to moral instruction of

the gods. Since the poet was still widely held as an important defender of morality,

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[14] Fawcett and Wordsworth were in fact acquaintances and familiar with each other's work. Wordsworth is quoted in a letter to Coleridge saying that "if it werent' for the Art of War I wouldn't have respected him as much *****" Details of Wordsworth and Fawcett's relationship will be detailed in the next chapter.

abolishing poetry's connection to morality was a price very few were willing to pay.

However, as the critical disputes tell us, this severance occurred and a new

safeguard of morality had to be obtained to replace the loss of classical precedent.

With Classical precedent no longer an acceptable means of justifying the sense's

connection to the moral instruction of God residing in sensibility, feeling was forced

to take up the slack. If we recall the empirical epistemology and the method of

justification outlined by Pope's "Essay," sense and reason were the primary modes

of investigation used by the Augustan, with Classical precedent as the lynchpin

holding it all together. A concentration on the classics was the primary activity of

the senses that Augustans used to keep rooted to the natural laws of God, making

adherence to Neoclassicism a particularly unforgiving aesthetic. Even though Pope

insisted that modern poets seek to advance and become better versions of the

Classical ancestors they looked too for guidance, all advancement was to be

thoroughly rooted in classical precedent, as it was the path to universal truth. The

issue for the post-Augustan had become how to liberate oneself from neoclassical

confinement without losing the poet's connection to morality.

The demand for new poetic content forced an epistemological shift from

sense to sensibility— from learning to feeling. Augustan reason had undergone a

liberalization into sentiment that provided an epistemological mode for both the

learned and unlearned 18th century man and woman. The sentimental writers may

have lost their Classical connection to God's morality, but Sterne's Yorick got his

snuffbox to "help [his] mind on to something better" (Sterne 48); Richardson's

Clarissa had God to imbue with certitude her decision to pursue Lovelace

(Richardson 311); and McKenzie's Ms. Walton could tread through life confidently since "her humanity was a feeling, not a principle" (McKenzie 32). Through sentiment's powerful emphasis on sensibility, sentiment liberated humanity's connection to God's natural laws as man now relied on his innate feelings to signal and justify moral action and evaluation.

Sentiment was neither the project nor intent of the post-Augustans, but a mode of thought and literary trend that in part derived from the post-Augustan search for poetic content. An epistemological change necessarily follows from severing one's ties to Augustan Classical precedent, but the resolution of the altered epistemological mode into sentiment does not. Sentiment was an extraordinarily influential and popular means of epistemological liberation, but it was only *an* answer. How a poet responded to this epistemological change is intensely personal and differs in accordance with the moral, historical, political, cultural, biological aspirations of the poet. What is shared is a philosophical and often moral need for the post-Augustan to respond with a solution. Augustanism without Classical precedent and nothing to replace would be merely a series of baseless meditations—a teeter-totter with only one rider.

Sentiment as an Adversary: Wordsworth and the Johnson Circle

Anyone anticipating my discussion on the Johnson circle would be right to question my connection of the post-Augustan to sentiment. After all, the Johnson circle being a group, comprised primary of English Jacobins from the later part of the century was meeting in a time where sentiment had become thoroughly unpopular. Brissenden tells us that as the century progressed sentiment went from

meaning "everything clever and agreeable" to an insult to designate a shallow and insincere person (Lady Bradshaigh qtd in Brissenden 17). With sentiment at its peak in the 1770s and comments such as Rousseau's Savoyard vicar, motto: "My judgment right or wrong, simply because it's mine," there is little wonder it began to take a fashionable turn for the worse (Rousseau qtd in Brissenden 25).[15] Although sentiment's departure from Classical precedent was a precipitant of the liberalization of Augustan Reason, it remained fundamentally conservative since it maintained an epistemological connection to Empiricism. Sentiment worked for some, but, to a late century radical group such as the Johnson circle, the inherent Conservatism in sentiment was unsuitable for the liberal reform they wanted to propose.

One such malcontent was Johnson circle affiliate William Wordsworth. Wordsworth is remarkable for the clarity with which he saw and understood the conservative epistemological mode underlying Augustanism and sentiment as an obstacle facing the establishment of a liberal poetics capable of serving man as a moral guide. Like every other post-Augustan, Wordsworth provided a unique solution suited towards his personal artistic vision; how he differs, is the influence of his vision as others adopted it. In the later part of the century while he was composing the *Lyrical Ballads*, Wordsworth associated with a particular group of

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[15] An overall skepticism towards some of the beliefs sentiment allowed the eighteenth century man or woman to hold did contribute to the fall of sentiment in the later part of the eighteenth century, but there are just as many histories to tell about how sentiment rose to popularity than there are about how it fell. Dissatisfaction with sentiment will be a topic that will be discussed in relation to Wordsworth, but a historical overview of sentiments devise is outside the scope of my thesis. For a more satisfactory explanation for the fall of sentiment see Brissenden's book *Virtue in Distress*.

radicals known as the Johnson circle. Wordsworth specifically mentions Coleridge, whose "opinions on the subject of poetry do almost entirely coincide with [his own] and composed five poems in the original 1797 edition" (Wordsworth 9). The *Lyrical Ballads* is not only a collaboration between these two men, but to some extent channels the concerns of a community. Wordsworth mentions several "Friends [who] are anxious for the success of these Poems from a belief, that if the views, with which they were composed were indeed realized, a class of Poetry would be produced, well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and not unimportant in the multiplicity and in the quality of its moral relations" (Wordsworth 10). This comment suggests Wordsworth is writing within a community that converges on aesthetics and their moral implications. His location, biography, and records of activity allows one to speculate that these anxious friends, are English radicals such as Godwin, Johnson, and his close friend and collaborator on the *Lyrical Ballads*, Samuel Taylor Coleridge. We know that in 1791 after leaving university, Wordsworth demonstrated an enthusiasm for liberal politics, and began seeking out London radicals and joining activist groups such as "The Society for Constitutional Information, which campaigned for Annual Parliaments, full male suffrage, and political rights for dissenters" (Barker 88). It was during this time in London that Wordsworth became acquainted with publisher Joseph Johnson, who was a known bastion for liberally minded thought and publication. Although prior publishing commitments got in the way, Wordsworth even favored Johnson to be the publisher for *Lyrical Ballads* (Barker 221). While a spirit of liberalism only provides a vague direction as to what may have motivated Wordsworth to react against the

Augustanism and sentiment, the fact that he did is clear and explicitly spelled out in his preface.

Like most post-Augustans, Wordsworth did not have a desire to dethrone existing poetical traditions, but rather construct his own according to his needs—taking what he liked from some and rejecting parts of others. Wordsworth is explicitly tolerant of aesthetics that differ from his own. Strong aesthetic opinions abound in "The Preface" and occasionally boarder on polemic, but he absolves himself from any intention to "interfere with other claims [aesthetic theories]," claiming that "I only wish to prefer a different claim of my own" (Wordsworth 24-5). These claims Wordsworth wishes to diverge from seem to be the waning sentimental tradition, and the lingering anxiety of the Augustans. Like the Augustan, Wordsworth adopts the rural scene for its ability to create a space where "our elementary feelings exist in a state of greater simplicity," yet the rural life he selects is not the Classical shepherds of the Golden age, but the "low and rustic life" of contemporary English countrymen and women (Wordsworth 14). Wordsworth stresses on many occasions that he would like to keep "the reader in the company of flesh and blood," as opposed to idealized neoclassic scenes (Wordsworth 24). Wordsworth believed that Augustan poetic preferences for high poetic and rhetorical diction was really just a means to "indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression in order to furnish food for fickle tastes and fickle appetites of their own creation," resulting in the poet "[separating] themselves from the sympathies of man" (Wordsworth 15). Unlike Pope, who saw these poetic conventions as gifts from the Gods, Wordsworth saw them as empty artifice; he

shared their penchant for the simplicity of scene, but disagreed with their use of

astute Classicism to determine acceptable poetic content.

Wordsworth also has a strained relationship with poetic elements coming

from the sentimental tradition, which by the time he was writing the lyrical ballads,

had already fallen out of public favor. Wordsworth aligns with the emphasis that the

sentimental writers put on feeling, but he too, like many of his contemporaries, find

this emphasis to be excessive: "For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of

powerful feelings; but though this be true, Poems to which any value can be

attached, were never produced on any variety of subjects but by a man who being

possessed of more than usual organic sensibility had also thought long and deeply"

(Wordsworth 17). Wordsworth validates the importance of feelings, but unlike the

sentimentalist, where feeling was sufficient to validate a poetic relationship

between poet and poetic subject, the emotion has to be arbitrated by significant and

profound thought to be of poetic value. Wordsworth underscores the importance of

thought when he points out the breakdown of Johnson's satirical analogy between

the lines:

> I put my hat upon my head,
>
> And walk'd into the Strand,
>
> And there I met another man
>
> Whose hat was in his hand. (Wordsworth 42)

and

> These pretty Babes with hand in hand
>
> Went wandering up and down;

> But never more they saw the Man
>
> Approaching from the Town. (Wordsworth 42)

Although these two stanzas are similar in meter, language, and syntax, Samuel

Johnson's satire (the first stanza) is far inferior to the second due to the

impossibility that these lines "can *lead* to any thing interesting" because the

"contemptible…*matter* expressed in [his] stanza" (43). Under the sentimental

epistemological mode, any poetic object that sufficiently evoked the sensibility

would have been sufficient material for a poem. Like many in his day, Wordsworth

is skeptical of this trend in sentimental poetry, and asserts that any sense that

evokes the poet's sensibility is not the proper subject of a poem; the scene or object

must also be capable of provoking thought.

Wordsworth succinctly sums up the poet's relationship with the poetic

subject, asserting that "feeling therein developed gives importance to the action and

situation and not the action and situation to the feeling" (20-1). Embedded within

this slight departure from sentiment is a radically new epistemological mode that

shucks the conservative connection to natural morality, and instates a flexible poetic

that exposes the poet to new potential poetic content, and frees him from a

historical moral discourse that reliance on consultation with precedents of the past.

Wordsworth describes the poet's evocation of the poetic object as all-important, and

not the poetic object's provocation of feeling as the sentimental poet would have us

believe. What seems like a subtle reversal in focus is once again a polar shift in

poetic agency that resides in the redistribution of the empirical sensibility.

Recalling the previous chapter on Augustan reason and sentiment, it was the poet who uncovered what was essential and universally true within the subject. The empirical epistemology underlying sentiment and Augustan reason contained a sensibility that was linked to natural law, decipherable through the senses, and justifiable by either precedent in the case of the former, or feelings regarding the latter. Acknowledging that the importance of the object of observation is not within the object but within the poet perceiving it fixes the universal principle to the relationship of the sense of the object and the feelings it provokes within the person. Man is no longer the imitator of God's art, but the creator himself.

It is upon this foundation that the *Lyrical Ballads* was composed. The poetic observer expresses the universal principles within him as nature coaxes them out. When the narrator catches himself in "Nightingale" proclaiming to a "'Most musical, most melancholy' Bird" he stops himself and questions:

> A melancholy Bird? O idle thought!
>
> In nature there is nothing melancholy.'
>
> --But some night-wandering Man, whose heart was
>
> pierc'd
>
> With the remembrance of a grievous wrong,
>
> Or slow distemper or neglected love,
>
> (And so, poor Wretch! Fill'd all things with himself
>
> And made all gentle sounds tell back the tale

Of his own sorrows. (Coleridge 41)[16]

Coleridge denies the residence of the melancholic essence to be within the poetic

subject (the nightingale in this case), the poetic subject and the mediation of the

feeling through thoughts and experience instead provoke the feelings, placing the

poet as responsible for the melancholy. There is no melancholy to be found in a bird

according to Coleridge, only the recognition of the melancholy within the self for the

poet to evoke through his observation of the nightingale. The wandering man in this

poem is not only the artist, but the art itself.

The seemingly subtle change in the epistemological mode has enormous

effects on how the poet relates the poem's wandering man to the world. If this were

to be a poem written by an Augustan or a sentimental poet, it would look very

different. An Augustan sensing a melancholic nightingale would see Philomel, and

the melancholy induced by her unreconcilable annihilation at the hands of Tiresias;

the sentimental poet would also see the melancholic nightingale, but the poet would

most likely enter into a profound sympathetic relationship with the bird, possibly

signaled by, or resulting in tears or some other physiological demonstration of a

sentimental experience. The differing epistemological modes underlying each

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[16] Due to the general nature of this discussion, I will choose only a few of
innumerable examples of how this internalization of sensibility effects the
epistemological mode of the poet. My decision to use a poem by Coleridge rather
than Wordsworth was primarily motivated by the strength of the example and the
expediency with which it can be explicated. As Wordsworth makes a special point to
note the near symmetry of his and Coleridge's poetics, and his approval of the poem
as fitting with the collection as a whole, I see no harm in using Coleridge's verse for
the purposes of demonstrating romantic epistemology. One can perform analysis to
similar, if not identical results within a Wordsworth poem. If the reader would care
to attempt an epistemological analysis his or herself, may I recommend paying
special attention to the relationship of the man and the yew tree in Wordsworth's
"Lines Left Upon a Seat in a Yew-tree."

tradition not only inform how the poems should be read, but how they are written—

each hypothetical narrator experiencing a distinct relationship to the world and its

mediation through experience and thought.

Now that we have Wordsworth's revision of epistemology in the *Lyrical*

Ballads grounded in the context of verse, let us return to Wordsworth's most

complete description of his new epistemology, which I will quote in its entirety:

> For our continued influxes of feeling are modified and
>
> directed by our thoughts, which are indeed the
>
> representatives of all our past feelings; and as by
>
> contemplating the relationship of these general
>
> representatives to each other, we discover what is
>
> really important to men, so by the repetition and
>
> continuance of this act feelings connected with
>
> important subjects will be nourished, till at length, if we
>
> be originally possessed of much organic sensibility, such
>
> habits of mind will be produced that by obeying blindly
>
> and mechanically the impulses of those habits we shall
>
> describe objects and utter sentiments of such a nature
>
> and in such connection with each other, that the
>
> understanding of the being to whom we address
>
> ourselves, if he be in a healthful state of association,
>
> must necessarily be in some degree enlightened, his

taste exalted, and his affections ameliorated.

(Wordsworth 17-18)

Wordsworth's decision to reconcile his break from previous traditions by providing,

in his "Preface," an explication of the mind as it relates to morality of society is

indicative of his cognizance of the epistemological project he has engaged.

Wordsworth begins this passage with a general acceptance of an empirical

sensibility that relies on "continued influxes of feeling," and its modification and

mediation through "thought" to compose the mind, which he understands as a

conglomeration of "all our past feelings." It is within the mind, or "the relationship of

these general representatives [feelings or moral sentiments] to each other," that we

discover the universal principles, or what is "important to men." By containing the

poetic sensibility (or the romantic equivalent to sensibility) within relationship of

feeling and thought that occurs in the mind, Wordsworth is able to redirect the

import of the principles to be on modern man rather than on God and natural law,

which reside in the past. This internalizing move disconnects the means of poetic

and moral justification from the conservative empiricism that dominated the

century. I believe that it is Wordsworth's redirection of poetics to be created by, and

suited for, the needs of contemporary man that provokes his claim to have

formulated "a species of poetry" that in its "nature [is] well adapted to interest

mankind permanently, and likewise important in the multiplicity and quality of its

moral relations" (Wordsworth 52). By eliminating the need to rationalize one's art

with the past, Wordsworth sees himself as freeing the poet to compose with the

form and content capable of serving the current needs of men. Rather, he rejects

than anachronistic verse whose subservience to classical precedent or to a static

nature established by God, is unsuited and alienating to modern man due to its

reliance on Classical precedent or to a prescribed nature established by God.

Wordsworth's epistemology obtains remarkable moral and aesthetic flexibility,

because poetry exists within the relationship of the thoughts and the feelings it is

capable of producing within the person. Experience is still introduced into the mind

through man's senses that are subject to the ever-changing world, and so the moral

problems that poetry is able to provide for are necessarily the moral problems of

the present. Wordsworth proudly declares, "the human imagination is sufficient to

produce such changes even in our physical nature as might almost appear

miraculous" (42). Through a simple yet profound internalization of sensibility,

Wordsworth broke the tie to conservatism that plagued his liberal milieu, and

established a poetics in which liberal reform is accountable to the issues of the

present and can be addressed without the unfavorable discourse of the past.

Following the logic of his poetics into the political sphere, under this new

epistemological mode, no longer must Burke's insistence on hegemonic power as

"energies [that] always existed in nature" hold, but new and unprecedented

philosophies of the Johnson circle such as Godwin's philosophical anarchism can

begin to take root (Burke loc. 2684).[17]

However prescient, revolutionary, and brilliant Wordsworth's contribution

to the post-Augustan critical debates, it is vital we acknowledge him as providing

---

[17] I leave this as what is hopefully an enticing gesture towards a supplemental study on the real political ramifications of the Wordsworthian epistemological restructuring.

only *one* solution to a specific critical dissatisfaction held by an individual, and to an extent, his liberal milieu. Wordsworth did not fulfill a "post-Augustan," goal, but only his own— creating a moral, aesthetic, and critical space that suited his own need for new poetic content. Concurrent, preceding, and following Wordsworth is every other post-Augustan who did the same, but to their own specialized situations and desires. We think of Wordsworth as a Romantic, because he *is* a Romantic; hindsight tells us that his liberation of the epistemological mode through the internalization of sensibility was heartily adopted and became a corner stone for English Romanticism; but before Wordsworth's solution was adopted, he was a post-Augustan. By understanding him as such, we can see how the lingering anxiety of the Augustans and a dissatisfaction with the sentimental solution propelled Wordsworth into his revolutionary contribution to the development of Romanticism. Post-Augustan therefore becomes not only indicative of the past and present, but of the avante garde pursuits and progressive aspirations of these poets and the futures they imagined. It is my hope that now we have placed a rough pre and post-cursor to the post-Augustans, that our analysis of the successful failures of Joseph Fawcett in his exuberant attempt to establish a liberal politic within a conservative mode will both breath life into the post-Augustan nomenclature and become enlivened by it.

4

Resounding Footnotes

When one thinks of footnotes, one thinks of something belonging in the margins— something that is not suited for the body of the work, but is worth remarking on nevertheless. A footnote is often a clarifying point, a supplement to the main content that gives it definition. Born in the year 1758; educated at the Daventry Theological Academy; marrying Charlotte French, the daughter of his former schoolmaster; taking a lectureship as a dissenting minister at the Old Jewry meeting-house in London; ending it 10 years later to lease a farm in Aldenham; and dying in solitude on January 24th, 1804— Joseph Fawcett is in every way a "footnote" to the exciting period of British history in which he lived (DNB). Happening upon a climate of intellectual fervor, Fawcett was talented enough to keep the company of some of the greatest thinkers of the age, but unable to avoid being outshone by them. He was a popular dissenting minister, but he never achieved the renown of his friend and fellow dissenter Joseph Priestley. Fawcett was the author of two books of poetry, although unlike the poems of his acquaintance William Wordsworth, they received little attention before disappearing almost completely from memory. Even to modern critics, Fawcett has primarily been a footnote to other, more canonical, topics. Fawcett once again is subordinated to the Wordsworth monolith in Arthur Beatty's 1933 article "Joseph Fawcett, The Art of War: Its Relation to The Early Development of William Wordsworth," [18] and again

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[18] Although the content of Beatty's article has very little to do with the development of Wordsworth, this misnomer—most likely intended to legitimize writing about a

used as fodder for Brian Folker's anti protoliberal argument in the most recent full

length critical piece on Fawcett, "A Huge Colossal Constable: Liberalism and

International Law in Joseph Fawcett's The Art of War." Mary Favret in *War at a*

Distance gives Fawcett perhaps the most substantial treatment of any recent critic,

although her interest in him is primarily for his recognition of the domestic effects

of war.

Fawcett also first came to my own attention in a footnote. While working on

another project on war narratives, I stumbled upon Fawcett's poem "War Elegy."

Nearing the end of *Poems* and not being all too sorry to be nearly through with

Fawcett's exclamation filled and generally mediocre verse, I stumbled upon the line:

"Come, kill the mother who her child has kill'd*"

And the footnote accompanying the asterisk:

 * The poor woman, having lost her husband in the war,

and having implored relief at several doors in vain, in

the town of Liverpool, in a fit of desperation, took her

child (about three years old) in the public street, and

dashed its head against the wall. (Poems 248)

I had spent the previous summer in the British Library and National Archives

digging through piles upon piles of medical records, journals, letters, court martials,

novels, poems, and any scrap of paper I could find that might narrate the brutal

experience of war in the 18th century. When I found this, I was floored; I thought:

"Whoa! Nobody writes this." I had thought I had found something truly different:

fringe character as Fawcett— all the more furthers my assertion that Fawcett finds
himself overshadowed by his more talented cohorts.

the early signs of the biographical war narratives that dominate modern media

representations of war. Working through his poetry I found out that I was wrong

about finding someone "extraordinary"; instead, I realized that I had found

something just as interesting—someone who was "extra *ordinary*."

During the time at which Fawcett penned the above line, poets were

struggling against the old school of Augustan classical rigidity in a quest for new

legitimate poetic content. There is no doubt that Fawcett was aware of this conflict

and was both involved in and affected by it. With Johnson's press, he published a

poem under the assumed name Sir Simon Swan called "The Art of Poetry," which

criticized the frigidity and lack of passion that, to Fawcett, typified Augustan poetic

standards. Fawcett's poem is preachy, unprodigious, and perhaps an unwitting

confirmation of the very criticism he was railing against, but its content indicates

the author's perception of an emerging liberalism aiming to rethink the structuring

of society. Fawcett could sense the fertility of the political landscape, and like

Godwin and their other radical friends dreaming of a better Europe, he dreamed

along with them and put forth his own philosophies into the world. Although

Fawcett's literary career, when it shined at all, was lackluster, he serves as a

footnote to aid the modern 18th century anglophile in sharpening the definition of a

particularly nebulous transition in English thought.

The section that follows will be dedicated to locating and connecting Fawcett

to the changing attitudes and accompanying religious, political, and poetic milieus of

the pre-Romantic/post-Augustan age. What has thus far been a fairly linear thesis,

will now take a slight digression in the argument to provide some supplementary

biographical information to guide the reader through the following close reading of his "magnum opus" "The Art of War." It is my goal to, through Fawcett, breathe life into our discussion of the generativity of the post-Augustan era, and in return, unveil his failed success to use poetry to create a space for liberal reform in the 1790s as the incredible feat of post-Augustan creativity that it was. Wordsworth was driven by the residual tension of the post-Augustan critical disputes, and with the drive, revolutionized poetry; when we look to Wordsworth, we look so that may appreciate the works left to us by a man of unrivaled genius who recognized the problematic conservatism inherent to the Augustan and sentimental epistemological modes.

What is it then that we get when we look to Fawcett? What we will see is a poet motivated by his love for man and hatred for war, dancing a complicated dance with the epistemological legacy of the post-Augustans as he tries to stabilize liberal reform within a fundamentally conservative epistemological mode. It may be that no future generation of poets was there to pick up where Fawcett left off, but perhaps it was for the better; his attempt to instill a liberal politic within a fundamentally conservative epistemological mode is cumbersome, complicated, and as Folker concludes, ultimately the progenitor of further violence. However, for the 18th century scholar, Fawcett's position on the margins of literary relevance and historical existence gives him a singularly post-Augustan flair within the century's canon as we watch his poetic invention rise, fizzle and nearly disappear. Understanding an era of poets united by their yearning to break from aesthetic confinement and do something different takes more than reading to the main body

narrative of the movers and shakers of the literary world; too often does their inventiveness or genius cause our critical concentration to falter on the present and preference their progressive innovations. Understanding the post-Augustan era requires a look at those works that were motivated by the precipitant tension of the critical disputes yet for whatever reason, never lived much of a life outside of the era that produced them. Understanding the post-Augustans, is ultimately is a project of resounding footnotes.

Fawcett and the Church

As a footnote in the Universalist upheaval in the late 18th century, Fawcett was best known by his contemporaries. Beginning as a Presbyterian minister, *The Gentleman's Magazine* recognized Fawcett as "much distinguished" in his sermonic abilities, and *The Times* claimed that Fawcett drew to the Old Jewry, "the largest and most genteel London audience that ever assembled in a dissenting place of worship (*Gentleman's Magazine* qtd in Beatty 231; *The Times* qtd in DNB). It was as an occasional patron to Fawcett's Sunday lectures that William Wordsworth became acquainted with Fawcett. While visiting an acquaintance in London, Wordsworth said that during these visits he would "[take] that opportunity (Mr. N. being a dissenter) of going to hear Fawcett, who was an able and eloquent man" (Beatty 233). Not only was he a popular lecturer, but like Joseph Priestley, Anna Laetia Barbauld, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and many other notable figures of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Fawcett was one of those to make the switch to Unitarianism during the turn of the century. However, rather than becoming the spokesman for Unitarianism like his friend and former classmate Joseph Priestley,

Fawcett has become a footnote to the universalist upheaval in the later part of the 18th century.

Fawcett and Friends

Fawcett was also a footnote to a prodigious circle of friends and cohorts. His name presents itself as a blip on the indexes of a number of collected writings, memoirs, and journals of late 18th century intellectuals. Usually, what these more famous figures have to say about our man are extraordinary yet contained to only a handful of mentions. William Hazlitt responding to the news of Fawcett's death called him "the first person of literary eminence, whom I had then known; and the conversations I had with him on taste and philosophy, (for his taste was as refined as his powers of reasoning were profound and subtle), gave me a delight, such as I can never feel again" (Beatty 232-3 quoting *Life of Holcroft*). Whether these accolades were the product of a fleeting nostalgic eulogy, or a truly sincere and sustained opinion about Fawcett's genius cannot be known, but the tendency of his friends to lift him up in praise only to quickly set him down, never to be touched on again, is the general way Fawcett is treated in these memoirs. Even William Godwin, who claims to have been profoundly influenced by Fawcett, has proportionally less to say about him for how integral to his intellectual development he claims him to be. Outstripping even Hazlitt's praises, Godwin claims not only that "Mr. Fawcett's modes of thinking made a great impression upon me, as he was almost the first man I had ever been acquainted with, who carried with him the semblance of original genius," but that he was the first of "four principal oral instructors to whom I feel my mind indebted for improvement" (Paul 17). A look into Godwin's journals indicates

that this profound declaration may in fact have been sincere. Godwin recorded

meeting with Fawcett over 100 times from 1788 when he began his diary, to

Fawcett's death in 1804 (Diary).[19] Still, despite his declaimed influence, further

mentions of Fawcett in Godwin's collected writings and his biographies are no more

than nominal acknowledgments. While we are rarely made privy to the content of

these meetings, if we are to believe Godwin's claim of Fawcett's influence, whatever

the two discussed was in some way meaningful to Godwin's intellectual

development.

The last of Fawcett's relationships I will mention here is his connection to his

publisher Joseph Johnson.[20] Johnson was a great connectorof people, known for his

discussion-based dinners, which brought into contact an impressive number of the

period's greatest and most diverse minds including, but in no way limited to,

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[19] Godwin's journals are useful tools for confirming his encounters with people and his whereabouts, but limited in the details of these encounters. A journal entry generally contains only the last names of those he met with that day, the venue in which they met, and on occasion the general topics that were discussed such as "constitutions & religion" (21 June 1793). These journals seem to be accurate records of Godwin's important and planned encounters, but deriving other information from them usually requires cross checking with other documents or large assumptive leaps.

[20] With the exception of a set of six sermons titled "An humble attempt to form a system of conjugal morality…" published by C. Wheeler in 1787, a lost set of sermons called "An Humble Attempt to form a System of Political Divinity" published by a Mr. Cadell, and a smattering of single sermons printed by various publishers Johnson was the primary publisher of Fawcett's sermonic and poetic output. Beginning in 1795, Johnson published two hefty volumes of "Sermons delivered at the Sunday-evening lecture, for the winter season, at the Old Jewry" and Fawcett's first published poem "The Art of War." Two years later, Johnson printed Fawcett's "The Art of Poetry" written under the pseudonym Sir Simon Swan, followed by 1798's reissue and revision of both "The Art of Poetry" and "The Art of War" retitled "Civilised War" in a book of poetry titled *Poems*. Additionally, I would like to note that there exists another collection of poems called "War Elegies" that I have been unable to gain access to during the course of my research.

Godwin, Wollstonecraft, Blake, Barbauld, Malthus, Paine, Southey, and Wordsworth

(Diary). Unfortunately, whether or not Fawcett attended any of these dinners cannot

be determined with absolute certainty. Since Johnson's records of those attending

his dinners have either been lost, or never existed to begin with, the majority of

what we know about who was in attendance comes from Godwin's diaries. Godwin

never records Fawcett as being present at one of Johnson's dinners, although this

omission in no way indicates Fawcett's absence from these dinners, seeing that

Godwin by no means attended even a majority of Johnson's weekly dinners.

The motive and opportunity for Fawcett and Johnson to have met are

certainly both there. Fawcett and Godwin were regular dining partners, and the

frequency of their meetings suggests a strong friendship. By 1795—the year

Johnson became Fawcett's publisher—Fawcett had given up his lectureship at the

Old Jewry and had moved with his wife Charlotte to a "farm called Edge Grove, near

Aldenham, Hertfordshire," roughly 20 miles from Godwin's London residence

(DNB). Despite the distance, Godwin's diary records meeting Fawcett in London at

least 74 times between 1795 and 1801—the years Fawcett was publishing under

Johnson.[21] Seeing that the two men had reason to meet, that Fawcett was not

geographically prohibited from attending Johnson's dinners, and that good word

was most likely put in by good friends of Johnson and regular attendees of the

dinners such as Godwin and Hazlitt, it seems likely that he would have been invited

at least once. Regardless of his physical presence at the dinners, Godwin's diary

shows us that Fawcett certainly benefited from the associations that Johnson is

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[21] I am by no means insinuating that Fawcett met with Johnson each time he came to
London, but rather that his move to the country did not remove him from London.

famous for developing. Godwin records in his diary several meetings without Joseph

Johnson, but with known participants of the Johnson circle such as John Thelwall,

George Dyer, John Fenwick, James Marshall, and Thomas Holcroft. The mystery and

the difficulty in precisely locating Fawcett's associations is appropriate because it

highlights how Fawcett has become a footnote to his prodigious acquaintances who

have outshone him.

Fawcett, Wordsworth, and Literary History

Fawcett is best remembered as a footnote to literary history. William

Wordsworth has kept him alive for his devotees as the "chief… inspiration" for the

deluded Solitary in Book 2 of "The Excursion" (Wordsworth qtd in Beatty 233).

Although they don't appear to have been anything more than acquaintances during

their lives, Wordsworth has become one of the most central figures to our memory

of Fawcett. Today we remember Joseph Fawcett as the radical preacher and avid

supporter of the French Revolution, who fled to isolation to cope with the intense

disappointment he felt at the failure of the French revolution. This less than

flattering account is the story that is provided to us by Wordsworth, and it is

generally the story that has endured.

Fortunately for Fawcett, it is almost certainly the case that Wordsworth was

not faithfully portraying Fawcett in his Solitary, but neither did he claim to.

Fawcett's likeness to the solitary did not become commonly known until years after

the poem's publication (Adams 520). The anonymity of the Solitary within the poem

indicates to the reader that "type" of person the Solitary represented was to be paid

greater attention than the particular sitter from which the solitary was created. It

can be assumed that these liberals, disillusioned with the French Revolution were

common enough that the Solitary would have been a recognizable character. In a

letter to Wordsworth, Coleridge suggested that he "write a poem, in blank verse'…

addressed to those who, in consequence of the complete failure of the French

Revolution, have thrown up all hopes of the amelioration of mankind, and are

sinking into an almost epicurean selfishness" (Letter 290 qtd in Brissenden p. 67).

Whether or not this correspondence provoked the inspiration for Wordsworth's

Solitary, the Solitary Wordsworth *did* compose took exactly this form, and dragged

the memory of Fawcett along with it.

Just as Fawcett is a footnote to those interested in all things Wordsworth, the

Solitary is a footnote to the two travelers in the poem. The Author and the

Wanderer, after "Checking the finer spirits that refuse / To flow when purposes are

lightly changed" decide on a whim to diverge from their journey and pay the Solitary

a visit (Excursion p. 206). In the same way that their detour to visit the solitary is a

footnote to their larger excursion, the Solitary himself is treated as a footnote to the

sensibilities of the Author and the Wanderer. After all, the Solitary possesses no

intrinsic qualities or remarkable abilities that make him worth visiting. Before the

two characters even reach the Solitary's hermitage, the Wanderer (who is

previously acquainted with the Solitary) spends pages heaping abuses on his

character. The most representative—but by no means the most caustic— of

Wordsworth's abuses might be his commentary on the Solitary's propensity to pair

"the cause of Christ and civil liberty" from the pulpit, which he describes as an

"Intoxicating service! I might say/ A happy service; for he was sincere/ as vanity and

fondness for applause,/ And new shapeless wishes, would allow" (p. 87). In just these five lines, Wordsworth discredits the Solitary as a liberal sophist whose character and philosophies are delusional products of his vanity: disconnected from any serious intellectual consideration or genuine concern for the betterment of society. The nature of the visit to the Solitary is not to seek the company of someone they admire, but to dine their heightened senses on a delicacy few can appreciate.

In addition to creating a scene for the two travelers to flaunt their sensibilities, Wordsworth uses the Solitary as an opportunity to take potshots at the Solitary and the liberalism that he has, by this time, grown notorious for opposing. Wordsworth pushes the Solitary and his liberal beliefs to the margins of social and intellectual relevance by frequently tossing him into an unsympathetic liminal state in order to undermine his social and historical significance. Not only do the two travelers marginalize the Solitary by presenting the sole merit of their visit to be the demonstration of their own refined sensibilities, but upon reaching his hermitage, they observe a funeral dirge and assume the Solitary to be the mourned (p. 98). Although the travelers have mistaken his funeral for another's, this is only the first time the Solitary will be mistaken as dead by the unconcerned travelers. Once again, we will find the travelers nonchalantly presuming the Solitary dead after he gets himself lost in the woods before a storm. This time, rather than walking in on the two travelers exploring the contents of his house, he is discovered with the same air of mater-of-factness "Lying full three parts buried among tufts / Of health-plant, under and above him strewn / ... Snug as a child that hides itself in sport (p. 307). His night in the woods does eventually cause his health to fade, and over the course

of a few weeks the Solitary finally fulfills the expectations of the travelers and dies

(p. 316). The two travelers' tendencies to make off-the-cuff assumptions of his death

every time he is not directly in front of their eyes turns the Solitary into a persistent

joke made at the expense of the insubstantiality of his person and, by extension, his

ideology. The inability of the Solitary to maintain the spotlight, or even a grip on

existence itself within the book that carries his name, relegates him to a marginality

beyond that of a footnote. It is as if Wordsworth presents the Solitary as no more

than an ungrammatical sentence deserving only of the attention required to strike

him from the page.

Wordsworth's need to push the Solitary outside the margin of relevance is

readily explainable to any reader familiar with Wordsworth's politics at the time he

was writing "The Excursion." By the time of the first publication of "The Excursion"

in 1814, Wordsworth had transformed from the young liberal strongly in support of

the French Revolution, to a staunch Burkean conservative.[22] English conservatives

of the day frequently engaged liberals in written wars over political ideology with

the hope that the ideological ripples of the French revolution could be contained in

France. With Napoleon on his continental crusade to establish French law all across

Europe, this threat was certainly real. Conservative periodicals such as the *Anti-*

Jacobin produced frequent criticism and satire directed at liberals and liberal

ideology. James Gillray's 1798 caricature "The New Morality" depicts a raucous

horde of liberals clad in the *bonnet rouge* of the sans-culottes and disseminating

liberal propaganda under three pedestalled women labeled "Justice,"

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[22] For more on Wordsworth's transformation from liberalism to conservatism see Saylor's "Wordsworth's Prudent Conservatism."

"Philanthropy," and "Sensibility" and looking like anything but the ideals they represent (see Brissenden 63). With the conservative government of England watching the growth of liberalism at home and abroad, it is not surprising that Wordsworth uses the Solitary as an opportunity to partake in the liberal bashing of the early 19th century.

Joseph Fawcett and the Post-Augustan Problem

Obtaining information about Fawcett's political, social, and cultural allegiances are useful in so much as they clue the reader in on the general direction that a politically motivated poem such as "The Art of War" might take. Although expectations such as these can be subverted, Fawcett's interest in liberalism, his participation in aesthetic disputes, and his background in biblical and dissenting traditions, provides us with foreknowledge of potentially relevant terms and arguments. Similar to how understanding Fawcett's milieus provides direction for the reader, recognizing Fawcett as a post-Augustan gives us instruction on at least one productive way to read him: thanks to our revision and explication of the era's nomenclature, his connection to aesthetic dissent beckons us to keep a readerly eye on Fawcett's response to the post-Augustan epistemological problem.

This epistemological "problem" may not expose itself as, or even be, a problem for any given post-Augustan poet. Approaching the era's epistemological crisis as a challenge, in the way that Wordsworth did, is not only inessential to a poet's post-Augustanism, but also unusual. Seldom does a poet write with the primary intent to change the aesthetic direction of their era; more often than not, a poet's decision to adhere to a particular style stops at their recognition of what is

available yet suited to their liking. Rather than each poet reinventing the wheel,

many poets adopt existing literary fashions, and take as their poetic impetuous

whatever social, cultural, personal, political, or biographical content interests them.

In other words, a poet does not usually become a sentimental writer (to use one of

many possible examples) in order to find a means to fill the moral void left by a

departure from Augustan Classical precedent; more often than not, they adopt it so

they may pursue another facet of poetry that excites them. However, once they have

formulated their style in relation to an existing tradition, they have adopted a

certain set of problems and assumptions that must be dealt with in their verse. As

we will come to understand through a close reading that traces the logic Fawcett

develops in order to propose his moral/liberal solution to eliminating war, his

adherence to a sentimental epistemology seems to go entirely unquestioned despite

how inhospitable it is to his liberal ideas.

  Our revision of post-Augustanism is helpful to aid us as readers and to

understand these poets in relation to an era, but ultimately, for an era united by its

diversity, it is the eccentricities that compose their diversity that define the post-

Augustans. As Bronson discovered, no single poet can represent the post- Augustan

age. What these poets do have in common is dissatisfaction with the limitations of

the Augustan adherence to classical precedent that propels them to invention. The

following close reading of Fawcett's "The Art of War" will give us an image of *one*

poet's eccentricities as he grapples with the weight of his ideas and wrestles them

through his unique post-Augustan problem.

5

Joseph Fawcett's "The Art of War"

The Preface of his 1798 book *Poems* makes known Fawcett's desire to be received as a poet of social conscience. In it he claims that his "first poetical effort was neither a simple attempt to amuse the fancy nor to amuse the heart, but an indignant endeavor to tear away the splendid disguise… to throw over the most odious and deformed of all practices by which the annals of what is called civilized society have been disgraced" (*Poems* vii-viii). The "first poetical effort" that Fawcett refers to in his preface is his long poem "The Art of War." Fawcett's self-identification as a war poet implies war's primacy in his poetry and prose sermons despite its proportionally small representation there. History has granted Fawcett's wish to be remembered—that is when he is remembered at all—as a war poet. Even his friends and contemporaries saw him as such. William Wordsworth notes "The Art of War" as "having a good deal of merit, and made me think more about him than I should otherwise have done" (Beatty 233-244).

"The Art of War," published in 1795 and later revised, retitled, and republished in 1798 as "Civilised War," is Fawcett's manifesto decrying Europe's barbarous justifications of war as a civilized and honorable endeavor. Fawcett unequivocally rejects the premise that war is different or more justifiable than murder: war is not the grand event of pomp and glory that a culture of nationalistic pride has made it to be, but gross murder on a nationwide scale, little more than a "hideous monster… [dressed]/in so soft a name" (ll. 498-99). If any distinction is to be made between war and murder, it is that war is a greater abomination, since

historically it is a calculated event where soldiers fight for the interests of others,

and are not motivated by an intrinsic passion, or their own domestic betterment.

Politically, Fawcett understands war as a product of plutocratic, or otherwise

top down, organization where the rich either provoke or hire the personally

disinvested poor to fight their battles for them: It is "you alone,/ Sons of Refinement,

sons of Science, you!/ Convicted stand of murder's cruel crime" (ll. 688-90). In

effect, war is not fought with "furious…unenlightened love" coming from

internalized, albeit misguided, passions, but with the "Truth-covering Sophistry" of

nationalism provoked by the plutocrats who stand to benefit (l. 676; 686). It is to

end this brand of manipulative slaughter that Fawcett proposes a reason-based

revolution coupled with an interim period of strong international law (l. 1133).[23]

For Fawcett, the achievement of a sustainable peace should not involve national

celebrations and parades, but rather a universally felt "deep scarlet shame" for the

atrocities man has committed (l. 403). The idea is that if all people were to respond

to murder with "horror" like "the first man" instead of with nationalistic pride like

the 18th century soldier, war—or murder at a large-scale, systematized and

impersonal level—would be unsustainable.

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[23] Fawcett's predilection for personifying rather than defining abstract concepts such as reason make providing a quick and textually justified explication of his meaning of the word "reason" an impossible task. While I insist on developing Fawcett's argument using his own terms and will therefore continue to use Fawcett's word, "reason", it is necessary for the purposes of analytic precision to define "reason" and "reason-based" for the reader as being equivalent to the sentimental epistemological mode as we discussed it in a previous section. Fawcett's reason *does* eventually make a slight but notable specification not covered by our general overview of sentiment, but for the time being equating reason with sentiment will suffice.

Brian Folker, in his article "A 'huge colossal constable': Liberalism and International Law in Joseph Fawcett's 'The Art of War'," enunciates a critical obstacle for Fawcett's sentimental perpetual peace.[24] He notes that historical time becomes problematic for Fawcett, as it fails to present a precedent of man as a peaceful, warless, being. Even Fawcett sees human history as "Records of Carnage, Chronicles of Blood!" when looking back through the annals of history (l. 410). For Fawcett to suggest that humanity, under its own volition, can rid itself of war, it is essential that he separate war from human nature.

Recognizing the intricate development of Fawcett's reason-based revolution is essential to understanding how the poem's internal logic adheres to reason and law as its method for achieving perpetual peace.[25] Fawcett founds a favorable ontology of human nature that excludes war by proposing a conjectural history of

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[24] Folker's claims extend beyond what I have represented in this paper. In his article, Folker also takes issue with Fawcett's proto liberal homogenization of the state, claiming that Fawcett's advocacy of violence administered by a strong body of international law will inevitably result in more violence. Partly because Folker cannot identify where Fawcett locates the precedent within human history to suggest reason once governed man, Folker concludes: "Both history and Reason emergent in history prove inadequate anchors for the progressive dynamic that Fawcett hopes to identify" (Folker 8). Although I will be locating this precedent in the poem and thereby creating tension between Folker's and my readings of "Art of War," I will be leaving this tension largely unaddressed. Since Folker's critique is primarily centered on the stability of Fawcett's liberal ideology, while my analysis treats the development of his ideas within the text, I see no essential overlap in our arguments that requires further address. Therefor, my only response to Folker will be to offer an alternative reading.

[25] It is interesting to note that Fawcett published "The Art of War" the same year as Immanuel Kant published his essay "Perpetual Peace." Although the solutions posed in each work differ enough to discourage a serious linkage between their philosophies, it is remarkable that each writer was engaged in the same project at the same time. It is the shared interest that Fawcett and Kant have in a warless society that has provoked me to borrow the title of Kant's essay to describe Fawcett's project.

the Genesis 4 Cain and Abel fratricide, that provide his readers with Adam as a moral exemplar of man foreign to murder. Using biblical history and the logic of the fall, Fawcett melds both prehistory and history to form an ontological foundation that locates a biblical historical precedent for a humanity governed by reason. By eradicating war from man's nature, Fawcett scrubs away the critical impurity that would otherwise prevent reason from connecting man to his peaceful nature. Fawcett's understanding of reason as capable of overcoming the severe perversion of his 18th century world provokes him to supply a part moral, part proto-liberal solution to the globalized madness that Fawcett believes to be the heart of war.

The Logic of the Fall

If Fawcett is to justify his faith in reason as a means of achieving a sustainable peace, a precedent must be located within history that shows war as an inessential element of human nature. Fawcett turns to what I will call "the logic of the fall" to provide the premise on which he predicates his ontology.

The first two stanzas of the poem are dedicated to an apostrophe on God's creative prowess over humans due to his unrivaled invention of life. Specifically it is God's creation of life, the animating force, that Fawcett is in awe of when he formulates the counterintuitive claim that there is, "in the dull worm/ More brilliant workmanship, than all the domes/ Proud swelling, and with pomp of pillars dress'd,/ And all the witty engines, human Craft/ Hath e'er constructed!" (ll. 16-20). The use of "dull" as an adjective for the "more brilliant" worm, and "swelling" and "pomp" as visual descriptors for the lesser marvels of human architecture casts these lines as counterintuitive assertions that subvert judgment based on outward

appearances, and disambiguate his praises by directing them to the inward value of all living things, regardless of outward appearance.

It follows from his praise of organic life that murder is the treading out of God's wondrous creation, every one a disaster that cannot be undone in the terrestrial world: "ere I end [a life], what I with ease,/ Can end, but not with all my power renew…?" (ll. 25-6). By questioning his right to alter God's creation, Fawcett is promoting an implicit God/Human hierarchical binary, which Christian philosophy extends into analogous natural/artificial, and flawless/flawed binaries. The logic of these hierarchies structures the first two stanzas, and is responsible for Fawcett's praise of God's "Eminent work" over the works of man, which only "emulate" God's superior creation (l. 13; 15). These lines assume that creations made by the hands of man are artificial and flawed recreations of the perfect and natural, original creations of God. A properly sentimental moment, Fawcett's narrator pauses with his foot above the worm and asks what "will justify th' inflection of my foot," thereby asking us to engage our senses and let the unrivaled artistry of God move our sensibilities (l. 28).

The subordination of humans to God establishes the necessary precondition for Fawcett's rendition of the Cain and Abel fratricide story, which begins the third stanza. The logic of the fall requires loss: particularly a superior condition to *fall from* and an inferior condition to *fall to*. The logic of the fall is simple: that which is closest to God in moral and temporal proximity is the most virtuous. Fawcett uses the logic of the fall within the early pages of "The Art of War" in order to write a brief conjectural history that appropriates for his poem a favorable ontological

foundation for human nature and the human condition. As if controlling the

variables in a scientific experiment, Fawcett posits a history that depicts a moment

just prior to Cain's murderous act in order to capture human nature while it is

untarnished by war. Fawcett begins his version of the fratricide as such:

> When the first man found his first murder'd son,
>
> Stretch'd bruis'd and breathless on the gory ground,
>
> At whose unnatural end, to nature new,
>
> Blood's eldest cry to heav'n, pale Fancy paints
>
> Eclipse and earthquake, groanings under ground (ll. 39-
>
> 43)

In these lines, Fawcett goes to great lengths to emphasize the alien nature of the first

murder with his frequent usage of binaried words such as "first," "new," and

"unnatural." The rhetoric embodied in this word choice is quite plainly the logic of

the fall as it emphasizes how the introduction of a previously unthinkable action

fundamentally degrades both person and place. In addition to his language,

Fawcett's signaling of Cain's crime through an animated and afflicted Earth is

reminiscent of Milton's description of the fall of Adam and Even in "Book IX" of

Paradise Lost. When God comes to question Adam and Eve in "Book IX," God's

punishments are followed by various cataclysmic events on the Earth and

eventually provoke the declaration of a "new created World" (Milton 522). Fawcett's

mediation of Cain's murder of Abel through Milton suggests that following the first

fall is a second fall that also permanently altered the natural world and human

condition, pushing man further away from God towards the perverted postlapsarian

world. Fawcett inscribes the logic of the fall within in his version of the fratricide to emphasize further loss and separation from God.

The Establishment of a Pre-Cainite Ontology

With the logic of the fall lingering backstage to remind us that which is close to God is most natural, Fawcett utilizes the considerable gaps the sparse Old Testament verse of Genesis 4 leaves for biblical exegesis in order to form his own conjectural history. In the King James Version (the translation Fawcett was familiar with and quotes in his sermons), Genesis 4 contains the story of the sons of Adam and Eve who both make offerings to God: Cain offers "the fruit of the ground" and Abel, the "firstling of his flock" of sheep (4: 2-3). Abel's offering pleases God, while Cain's does not. Cain later slays his brother in a field and is cursed. His punishment is to suffer eternally as a "fugitive and vagabond" of the Earth, which henceforth no longer "yields unto [Cain] her strength" (4: 12). Genesis 4 is also the first biblical acknowledgment of revenge and the fear of retributive war. Cain is doomed to be forever hunted and to bear a mark, which serves as a warning to whoever kills him that "vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold" (4: 15). As a result of Cain's curse, enmity extends beyond the relationship of the serpent and the woman (one of God's punishments for Eve after the first fall in Genesis 3:15), and into mankind's relationships with one another. Following from the curse is the establishment of the first city built by Cain and his progeny: the city of Enoch (4: 17). Cain's flight and the construction of Enoch creates a spatial separation between humanity and God, as Cain must leave the "presence of the LORD" to dwell in the land of Nod (4: 16).

It is this moment in *The Bible*, which I will call "the second fall," that signals

the beginning of human history. These final curses and the murder that brought

them about produced the fully fallen world on which the human condition and

human history are built. The estrangement of humans from God and the Earth

produced a fundamental change in the human condition that renders the experience

of being human after the second fall irreconcilable with the experience of humanity

before it. No longer is God an anthropomorphic presence where Adam and Eve can

hear "the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, he has

become a God characterized by distance and reverential fear (Genesis 3: 8). God's

cursing of Cain is not the last time in *The Bible* that God takes on anthropomorphic

features and speaks directly with humans, but it is the last time it is done so with

such a high degree of familiarity. In Exodus 3 (one of the next times God

communicates with man), God manifests as a burning bush and must identify

himself to Moses as "God thy father" (3: 6). Upon God introducing himself by name,

Moses "hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God" (3: 6). Then, when tasked

with communicating his conversation with God to his fellow Israelites, Moses

expresses the strangeness of this encounter when he asks God: "When I come unto

the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me

unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? What shall I say unto them" (3:

6, 13)? Moses's experience of reverential fear and relational distance upon

encountering God as well as his general concerns about validating his experience to

his community shows just how much the world has changed as a result of the

second fall. God no longer guides mankind through the trials and tribulations that

arise from the experience of being human, but works vicariously through prophets whose credibility and success is threatened by their stature and mortality.[26]

Fawcett's mediation of the Cain and Abel fratricide through Milton and the logic of the fall provokes a reading of Genesis 4 as a second fall of man. Milton's pairing of human and geographic catastrophe emphasizes the creation of a new world and a new human that inhabits it. Man, however tainted from his first fall, receives his final punishments and the rules that govern both Earth and man become what they are today. If one is to take biblical history seriously (as Fawcett and much of 18th century England would have), it is in this moment in which man and Earth are truly born, and history begins. Succinctly put, all time and events before the second fall must be evaluated apart from the rest of human history since

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[26] It must be said that the relational history between God and man that spans the entire Bible is more complicated and rich than the brief account of anthropomorphic presence transformed to the occasional vicarious presence through prophets offered at this point in my thesis. One significant aspect of this relationship that is being temporarily overlooked is the effect of Jesus Christ on God's relationship with man. Fawcett was certainly writing in an age where popular theology had long since adopted the presence of Jesus (the son of God in Christian theology) as a means of bridging the gap between God and humanity. Fawcett himself identifies the appearance of Jesus as the legitimizing force that allows the distance between man and God to be compensated for. Fawcett preaches in reference to Jesus that "till [Christian morality] is *reduced to practice*, we are not certain that it can be done" (Charity 9). In other words, Fawcett believes it is the physical closure of distance between Jesus and humans that reclaims the possibility of receiving the moral instruction of God once enjoyed by humanity, but lost after the second fall. For Fawcett however, the effect Jesus had on closing the distance between God and humanity was neither entirely lasting nor complete, hence Fawcett's claim in the same sermon that "The *first* step which the Christian religion takes to accomplish the reformation of the world, is to remove the veil which had long concealed the face of Duty" (Charity 4). Exploring the ramifications of Jesus on the moral duty of Christians in Fawcett's political and religious philosophy is an endeavor I will undertake in the next chapter of my thesis. Here, I only hope to persuade that there is a perceivable change in the way the KJV presents the experience of humans before and after the second fall. Just how vast and the precise nature of this change will be thoroughly discussed in the next chapter.

the prehistoric humans (Adam, Eve, Cain, and Abel) were subject to an entirely

different relationship to God and the earth than humanity after the second fall.

It would seem that Fawcett's adoption of a murder to begin his human

history would be problematic for the establishment of an ontology of human nature

that does not include war. If modern man emerges from the first murder, then what

precedent is there for man to be seen as inherently peaceful? A strict non-

conjectural reading of Genesis 4 would in fact begin history with Cain's flight to Nod

and his construction of the first city as a means of avoiding reciprocal violence for

the crime he has committed. One can imagine that the city of Nod—populated with

the hunted Cain, and his fallen and murderous progeny—might not be too different

from Fawcett's descriptions of 18th century fortified towns that "Fear her forts

erects/ O'er all the public, all the private, world. / Which way we look, fortifications

talk / Of man in danger from his fellow-man; / Of man 'gainst man forever on his

guard" (ll. 1189-93). Fawcett overcomes this problematic reading by providing a

brief conjectural history reminding us of the "missing years" of Adam through his

discovery of the his son's body. By beginning the stanza with the temporal "when"

and signaling the Miltonic cataclysms marking the fall only *after* Adam's discovery of

the murder, produces in history a period of time where man was free from the

burden of murder. Man's discovery of murder signals the fall not his acting upon,

thereby making murder external to man. Fawcett in effect begins history just before

the second fall and creates a new moral precedent, what I will call the pre-Cainite

precedent: the historical repositioning of prehistoric Adam as a natural man within

history for the purposes of accommodating a hopeful ontology of human nature that does not contain warfare as an essential element.

In Fawcett's conjectural history, Adam is in possession of a prehistoric paradigm produced by the first fall. The logic of the fall would have us understand that since Adam has not committed the act of murder, he is closer to God, and thereby more natural. In Fawcett's conjectural history, until the moment of Adam's discovery of "his first murdered son," he is psychologically free from the knowledge of the final distancing of God from man and is unaware of the feuding and exponential escalation of the mark that Cain and his progeny must bear (l. 39). With one son dead and the other ruined, Adam's appearance on the scene of the murder in "The Art of War" makes him the sole (mentioned) representative of the generation formed by the first fall. It seems by assigning action to Adam beyond begetting "a new son Seth," Fawcett is reminding us that there still exists an exemplar of a more natural morality within the records of history (Genesis 4:25). Cain and his progeny may have brought murder into the world, but his presence is not what begins Fawcett's version of human history—Adam's is.

Moving beyond Adam's physical presence at the scene of the murder and to his response, there can be no doubt that Fawcett intends us to prefer the moral superiority of those governed by pre-Cainite morality, to modern man's perverse reaction, typified by the soldier. The juxtaposition of Adam's prehistoric repulsion to the murder with the nationalistic response of Fawcett's late 18th century contemporaries depicts Adam's reaction as more moral, or at the very least, more sane than the contemporary soldier. Adam identifies the murder as

> That most inhuman and most monstrous deed,--
>
> Of stormiest passion born, with wildness done,
>
> And first-seen, swift-seiz'd weapon, when no eye
>
> Witness'd its horror, (ll. 59-62)

while Fawcett's contemporary soldier understands war's murder as

> Provok'd and spurr'd by the inspiring thought,
>
> 'All eyes shall see me!' Gracefully perform'd
>
> With beauteous instruments from whose bright face
>
> The beams of day rebound gay blazing back;
>
> With no infuriate look, no quaking nerve,
>
> But with sedate unruffled feature done! (ll. 72-77).

When looking at Adam and the contemporary soldier, we are intended to compare the horror of the one with the pride of the other, and to see their differences as the historical degradation of fallen man. Since Fawcett believes that the moral weight of a "culpable community" at war is no different— or certainly no less perverse—than "a single culprit" who commits a murder, his juxtaposition of the prehistoric and historic attitudes become an abridged history of war (l. 1164, 1166). Adam's return to the historical scene through Fawcett's conjectural history supplies him with a framework to establish the pre-Cainite precedent's favorable ontology of human nature for the purposes of anchoring his belief in its peaceful tendencies in biblical history.

A Philosophy of Reason Couched in Pre-Cainite Morality

Fawcett's ontology of human nature will provide the moral precedent he needs to begin the development of his plan for perpetual peace. Identifying what he sees as a world fraught with "demoniac, worse than dog-star madness/ 'Mong *all* your nations, in *each age,*" Fawcett relies on reason as the historic means possessed by contemporary man to connect with the prehistoric, or pre-Cainite morality demonstrated by Adam. For Fawcett, madness and the perversion of reason are one and the same. Madness and war form a feedback loop in the "Art of War" where madness is both the product and producer of war, while war is reciprocally the product and producer of madness. The degree to which the poem's world is engulfed by madness reveals the motivation for Fawcett's call for prehistoric morality. By using the logic of the fall to produce war induced "madness" as the unnatural half of the natural/unnatural binary, Fawcett is able to offer Reason's ability to connect the individual to pre-Cainite morality as its antidote. [27]

Throughout the poem, Reason is attached to a variety of moral and mental faculties that serve as numerous and generally obtuse descriptors for reason. For instance, Fawcett connects reason and virtue through a flighty appositive that provides only the bluntest definition for Fawcett's understanding of reason. In a brief aside that yearns for the ideals of "lib'ral Europe" that war prevents from ever being, Fawcett longs for a vision:

> Where moral glories strike Conception's eye;
>
> Where peaceful laurels court Ambition's hand;

---

[27] Reason is capitalized in instances where personification has turned it into a proper noun, or when it is capitalized in the text itself. Reason spelled in the lower case is referring to the abstract concept. This will be the rule for all similar instances of personification.

> Where Reason's, Virtue's victories, invite
>
> Th' aspiring breast; and thousand varied joys
>
> Make life delightful and its calms endear! (ll. 471-5)

 From this passage we can get a sense by their shared victories that "Reason" is associated with "Virtue," and that this "victory" invites those engaging reason to the "thousand varied joys" that enlightened Europe is purported to have.

The section where reason is associated with mercy is interesting for our purposes because in it, Fawcett recycles the "prehistoric meets historic" motif we saw in the Adam section (ll. 39-79) as a means of connecting reason to prehistoric morality. Recalling Fawcett's juxtaposition of Adam with the contemporary soldier, we can see parallels in both the structure and content:

> [The soldier's] barb'rous ethics know no moral worth
>
> Save military might. To his rude view
>
> Victory is virtue. Piously he tells
>
> His triumphs as his titles to the sky. (ll. 614-17)

> ...--But, where
>
> Fair Mercy mixes in the fight, 'tis proof
>
> Reason is in the field; Reason, that reads
>
> The error of the scene, and just to judge
>
> Its impious acts, rebukes the busy sword. (ll. 628-30)

Reason (represented by the second quotation) has taken the place of Adam as the "natural" personified reactor, whereas the contemporary soldier (represented by

the first quotation) remains the purveyor of "unnatural" perversion. Both Adam and "Reason" are struck by the horror of murder, while the contemporary soldier revels in its fame and perverted virtue. Each reaction is connected by their moral evaluation of the scene. Fawcett uses "pious" to describe the soldier's celebration of his fame, and "impious" to describe Reason's judgment of the scene. This forms an antonymic relationship between the two accounts that hinges on the use of both the affirmative and negative forms of piety. This relationship is very nearly the same reproduction of the logic of the fall as Adam's "astonishment," and his contemporary soldier's "inspiring thought,/ "All eyes shall see me" in the third stanza (ll. 45, 73-4)[28].

Personified Reason then goes on to make her first and only speech in "The Art of War," which she addresses to a soldier in battle:

> "She whispers audible—'What dost thou here?
>
> Is this a fair and honest scene around thee,
>
> That shrinks not from the beam of piercing Truth?
>
> Is this thy post of duty? Wert thou
>
> Made to be the savior or the foe of life?' (ll. 649-54)

---

[28] The difference in reaction between Adam and personified Reason is the former's "astonishment" compared to the latter's "rebuke." Both descriptions contain the same negative assessment of the situation, but the shock value differs between them. This difference derives from Adam's status as a prehistoric man, and Reason inhabiting a historic man. Adam is of course shocked by the action because of its novelty, but Reason, as modern man's means of connection to pre-Cainite morality, cannot be shocked by war, only repulsed. Adam is a pre-Cainite being, while the soldier who Reason has overtaken is a historic man and cannot physically return to pre-Cainite morality, and therefore must connect to it using reason.

The speech emphasizes the same general content of the life apostrophe that preceded the original "pre historic meets historic" motif in the Adam section, asking the soldier "If what is urg'd as reason for the act, Will justify th' infliction of [his] foot." As we have already discussed, "The Art of War" begins with an apostrophe that celebrates life, and establishes the necessary binaries for the logic of the fall. The above quotation—which is the second part of Reason's two-part speech— repeats both the question of humanity's right to end life, and the natural/unnatural binary that forms the foundation of the logic of the fall. Reason's overarching question is one of purpose: "what dost thou here?" The question of purpose is then reiterated as purpose bestowed by intelligent design in Reason's final: "Wert thou / made to be the savior or the foe of life?" By combining the question of life with the question of intelligent design, Reason ushers in the logic of the fall through the natural/unnatural binary. Reason then answers this rhetorical question in the inaugural words of her speech: "Man / Was meant to cherish not to butcher man" (ll. 639-40). Once the logic of the fall is identified as an undercurrent in this passage, Reason's judgment begins to seem natural, while the judgment of the contemporary soldier becomes its fallen perversion.

It is precisely the perversion of reason that the soldier demonstrates, and the need to historically circumvent it that sets the stage that prompts Fawcett to call upon pre-Cainite morality as its solution. Fawcett envisions the world as a place where war has perverted humanity and human ingenuity to the point of inducing an unrelenting and universal condition of madness. Madness is described in the same stanza as both "demoniac, worse than dog-star madness/ 'Mong *all* your nations, in

each age hath foam'd," and as "deep scarlet shame/ on Reason's redden'd cheek, bidding burn on/ Thro' rolling ages, an establish'd blush!/ protracted tragedy! As long as deep! Whose unspent horror thro' all time hath spun/ The tale of blood! (ll. 366-7; 402-5). Here, both madness and offended reason are said to be unrelenting universal conditions. Just as madness is universal and seemingly ageless, the cheek of Reason is in a constant state of offence, signaled by her "establish'd blush." Nevertheless, Fawcett's choice of metaphors suggests ever-blushing Reason and dog-star madness are temporary perversions of the natural world. When Fawcett refers to the "dog-star," he is referring to the star Sirius, who in folklore is thought to cause madness in dogs, and feverish behavior in humans during the hottest summer months. Although we can't be certain what exactly is "worse" about Fawcett's "worse than dog-star madness," the fact that Fawcett is writing the "Art of War" with the hope of humanity achieving perpetual peace, allows us to extend the metaphor and imagine a day when these dog days are over. Similarly, Fawcett chooses blushing—a temporary physical reaction— as the indicator of offense. In addition to their conditional status, both dog-star madness and Reason's blush imply the logic of the fall since they are secondary states requiring an original to deviate from. The "dog-star" requires a sane world to shine its madness upon, while similarly Reason must have begun with a pale complexion for her face to hold a blush.

It is no coincidence that madness and offended Reason take identical positions as war in the natural/ unnatural dichotomy produced by the logic of the fall. In Fawcett's view, madness and the perversion of reason are one and the same given that they are independently and simultaneously the products and producers

of war. For instance, war's perversion of music transforms it from a soothing and

uplifting "aetherial magic!" always meant for "the gentlest ends," into a "spur to

reconcile/ The death devoted victim to the knife" (ll. 208; 210; 240-1). Fawcett

provides music as an example for how war perverts human ingenuity and can

transform it into a mechanism that evokes madness. Likewise, in his stanza

discussing the perversion of music, Fawcett demonstrates the inverse effect as

madness provokes the defiled maid Music to war:

> "But where will profanation stay,--E'en thee,
>
> O heavenly Harmony! Their press hath seiz'd
>
> With impious gripe! Reluctant, struggling maid,
>
> Sprung from the silent sphere! With wild affright
>
> Thou finds't thee fallen on a frantic orb.
>
> Outrageous wrest! Perversion most perverse!
>
> Misapplication monstrous! Horror, say,
>
> When bristles most thine hair; when, wild with woe,
>
> In anguish Madness laughs, or, on his way,
>
> And at his work accurst, when Murder sings?"
>
> (ll. 222-231)

The literal act, or "Misapplication monstrous" that Fawcett refers to in this passage

is the use of music in battle and during nationalistic celebrations of war such as the

one he heartily criticizes in the stanza beginning on line 250. Fawcett also makes

rhetorical use of this section to offer an example for his claim that humanity uses

"nature's gifts,/ Given but for good, made instruments of ill" (ll. 170-1)! In this

passage, Music as "heavenly Harmony" enters the world as a maid, and then is despoiled by the madness of fallen humanity. If Fawcett is not suggesting war's ruination of personified music when he speaks of her as a "struggling maid," "seiz'd with impious gripe," and "fallen on a frantic orb," then he is at least describing her unwilling capture and perversion to serve war's purposes. It is not music that can accommodate war, but war that forcefully takes Music. Fawcett, in one of his finest poetic moments, conjures a scene of awkwardness where he arms the maiden Music for battle:

> Humanity, misled to iron scenes,
>
> Who to unmartial softness else might melt;
>
> Tune her to stone, and give her strength to stab!
>
> To send its blood back to Fear's bleaching cheek,
>
> Unwarm'd by virtue's into valour's heat,
>
> And to a wild and drunken daring drive her,
>
> By sound's mechanic spur! (ll. 234-40)

Music is the victim of fallen humanity and has not fallen on her own accord. Grammatically, Music is on the receiving end of the action when the narrative voice barks the orders: "tune her to stone," "give her strength to stab," and "to a wild and drunken daring drive her." Each of these actions is being done to her by war, and is contrary to her nature. Her involvement in battle is unwilling and frantic as "wild and drunken daring drive" suggests. As a product of madness with the ability to "mislead to iron scenes, who to unmartial softness else might melt," Music has been

transformed by war from an aid to humanity, into both a product and producer of madness.

In addition to converting human ingenuity from natural to unnatural, war has a severe corrupting effect on the psychological constitution of human beings, both martial and domestic. Fawcett imagines the European soldier as threatened with no loss and standing nothing to gain, and therefore terrified in the midst of battle. That is until "Confusion cures his fear; brave he become/ When noise hath made him mad; and laurels then, But not before, Disorder's hero reaps" (799-801). This is a dramatically different image of the soldier than the fame-seeking braggart that Fawcett uses to compare with Adam and Reason. The imagined soldier in this section is initially emotionally sane, responding to mortal peril with fear, but as the battle persists and his terror mounts, the soldier's sanity lapses into madness—the purchase of his bravery.

This terror-bought bravery does not come without a cost; it destroys the soldier's ability to live as a functioning being. Fawcett uses the popular period trope of the wandering soldier "outcast…/ from civil life's accommodated couch, From military glory's fancied bed,/ And left to lose the light at once without/ A soldier's solace, and a man's support" to show war's transformation of the soldier from a natural being to something hardly recognizable as life (ll. 842-6). Not only is the soldier socially isolated, but once he returns to domestic life, he begins to fear the natural and gradual decay of health and his body— "his horny frame unstringing sickness dreads" (l. 828). His madness has left him addled forever. The soldier desires a fame that he has been denied in battle, and begins to envy his fallen

comrades. With war over, and eternal glory lost, he imagines the natural decay of the body where "Sickness, slow, silent enemy, assails/ Her pining victim; cheerlessly consum'd;/ And envying whom the sword's keen fury cuts" (ll. 832-5). Due to the trauma of war, the soldier is so engulfed in madness that he becomes a creature foreign to nature; he fears life and its natural death, and envies those who die prematurely in battle.

Fawcett does not miss that war's maddening effects extend beyond the battlefield and into the domestic sphere. He follows his stanza on the warrior's fall into madness by directly stating: "Nor to the field is the dire rage confin'd… Those whom these leave behind at home, they leave/ In undiminsh'd plenty there to dwell" (ll. 847; 850-1). Anyone who has read "The Art of War" will be able to recall one its more memorable scenes where the widowed Harriet's frenzied nationalistic mourning of her young husband Henry's premature death in battle. She too has been driven mad by a similar conflict of responsibilities. While she recognizes the financial and familial hardships that she and her "dear lovely boy" will endure the rest of their lives, war's madness instructs her that contrary to all her emotions, "A British warrior's widow should not weep" (l. 353; 339). Clearly damaged psychologically, as she exits the scene she "laughs and wildly leaps along/ With tresses all untied" (l. 360-1).

Madness is both the product and producer of war— war, the product and producer of madness. Fawcett believing madness to be as pervasive and all encompassing as he does, it follows that he seek an unclouded system of morality in the naturalness and sanity of Adam. If the 18th century men and woman could only

regain control of their senses, and free their ensnared sensibilities from the madness that permeates society, humanity would realize war as the unthinkable destruction of God's creation that it is. By establishing a connection to the sentimental tradition of "reasonable feelings," sensibility's connection to pre-Cainite morality allows Fawcett to return to a time before humanity was under the spell of war and madness's feedback loop.

Reason Resides Within the Individual

While the formation of a favorable ontology anchored in a pre-Cainite precedent philosophically allows Fawcett to locate Reason within the individual, the personification of Reason, and other abstract concepts, often causes them to appear in physical space. Through the spatial relationship between these personified concepts, we can glean a sense of which concept relates to the social world. These concepts can occupy a range of space from the metaphysical punctuation based ownership of "Reason's, Virtue's victory," to the physical personification of Reason and Mercy in the battlefield. The differing and interacting spatial relationships of Reason, Law, and barbarism are the essential physicalized abstractions for locating reason within the individual and eventually, for Fawcett's liberal proposal of powerful international law.

Beginning with an examination of reason in isolation, we will return to our example of personified Reason giving a speech on life and duty to the soldier; however, this time we return to discuss spatial location. In this passage, Reason occupies the internal space of an individual's conscience, either existing within or manifesting physically outside the soldier and speaking to him while he rests,

drowning out in the "din of battle," and appearing as sleepless guilt in "the dead of night" (l. 648; 631; 637). While this section effectively establishes a spatial connection to the individual, the permanence of Reason's residence with the individual remains in question due to its description as "re-appear[ing]." In this section we have no way of precisely identifying whether Reason's presence is ebbing and flowing, or disappearing and returning all together.

When Reason's spatial location is thought of in the context of the poem's sections on barbarism, reason begins to manifest its location and nature as a permanent, but fluctuating mental fixture that I conceptualize as a "moral organ." Following the conceptual schema of a mental organ, I will contend that reason, for Fawcett, is like sensibility, most accurately thought of as a moral organ that is innately and universally present, requires development, and can become vestigial.

Fawcett's passages depicting barbarian transformations clarify the sense in which reason is a moral organ that can range from being either highly developed such as in the sentimental man or woman, or vestigial as it is in the barbarian. Reason's presence or absence within an individual stands as one of the primary factors that differentiates a civilized man from a barbarian. Fawcett does suggest that barbarism is influenced by geographic location when he takes for granted that those in the "wild Indian's war" are barbaric, but he also leaves room for the possibility that a barbarian can become civilized if they activate their vestigial reason (l. 414):

> Afflicted wisdom weeps that forms erect,
>
> Which might be men, should be no more than brutes;

But, being what they are, she marvels not

That furious thus each other they devour. (l. 439-42)

Fawcett describes barbarians by the "narrow prison of their love"; he admires their intensity compared to the Europeans, who fight their wars with "sluggish step," "nor flaming love," but he does not see barbarians as valuing higher human virtues, like love, at any level larger than their tribe (l. 426; 784, 783). The fact that "afflicted wisdom" can reconcile the violence of the barbarians and no offended reason haunts them in their sleep, suggests that barbarians lack the pre-Cainite sensibility to inform them what is right or wrong. Still, this passage has wisdom weeping at the lost potential of these brutes that "*might* be men," the meaning of which has both an affirmation and negation of the "humanness" of the barbarian. The hopeful interpretation of "might be men" acknowledges that for there to be lost potential, there must be potential to begin with. As barbaric war is the cause of wisdom's affliction and weeping, and reason is Fawcett's solution for war, this "potential" for the barbarian seems to be the reclamation of reason. Fawcett does not offer an explanation for how a barbarian might reactivate his vestigial reason and become civilized, but one can speculate that religious conversion in which the barbarian gains contact with pre Cainite sensibility might have something to do with it. As for the second more pessimistic interpretation, the lack of surprise Wisdom shows towards the barbarians devouring each other would seem to suggest those who "*might* be men" are just erect forms that physically resemble men, but bare no relation to man. Using the poem alone, this ambiguity is impossible to reconcile, but which interpretation we choose has little bearing on my argument: if we decide on

the first then all men posses reason as a moral mental organ, albeit in different

stages of development; or if we favor the second, then the barbarians lacking reason

are not men at all and are thereby exempt from the universalist claim. Although it

has taken us an age to derive, Fawcett provides man a sentimental epistemological

mode that is within all men, activated by the senses, morally validated by the

sensibility, and differing from sentiment as I have previously defined it only in that

peaceful Adam is the precedent to which our feelings connect.[29]

Sentiment as the Producer of Fawcett's Politics

Fawcett locates meaningful and sustainable peace within the hope that

"Reason" will one day "Mount thine immortal throne, and sway the world!" (l. 1242;

1257). Now that human nature possesses an ontology that is independent of war,

and a sentimental "reason" with which man can guide himself towards a pre-Cainite

morality where full-scale war is impossible, Fawcett has laid in the hands of man all

the tools he needs to create sustainable peace. Fawcett does not stop with reason

though; he also proposes international law in order to check the "Giant Injustice[s]"

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[29] The implications of Fawcett's selection of Adam as his moral precedent to which his sentimental epistemological theory connects to has far-ranging implications regarding Fawcett's views on human nature. Due to the near singularity of the poem's argument, these views are underrepresented in "The Art of War." One of the most notable ramifications of his choosing a once fallen man as his exemplar for natural morality is his commitment to a postlapsarian conceptualization of human nature. A reading of Fawcett's poems that feature Fawcettian virgins such as his "Elegy IV" are highly revelatory of his understanding of man as teetering precariously on virtue's precipice. Although born virtuous, his virgins, especially when subjected to the public gaze, must either fall from their virginal state of moral purity, or perish physically as a being too good for this earth. The finer points of Fawcettian morality are indeed important when attempting to explicate his politics to their fullness, however, since our investigation primarily involves following the logic of Fawcett's liberalism so that we may understand him in terms of the productivity of the post-Augustan critical disputes, I will leave this fascinating investigation for another time.

of states (l. 1143). The relationship between law and reason subordinates law to reason as a "feeble regent in young Reason's room" Making law a temporary replacement of reason (l. 1133). Reason, Fawcett states, requires the supplement of law because it is "Too young as yet to reign" (l. 1134). Since law is serving as a stand-in to check the "giant injustices" that Fawcett one day imagines reason will end, law must act as the politicization of reason. However, instead of justice taking place at reason's preventative individual level, law maintains order in an external politicized "court" using a giant "Michael-sword," thereby creating a punitive system of justice (l. 1170; 1178). Therefore, Law's relationship to Reason and the individual is one of external political projection—occupying a space that is at the external, or intrapersonal level.

Law's occupation of the intrapersonal space puts it into direct contact with an opposing force, madness. Madness, which we have previously defined as the systematized perversion of reason, also exists at this intrapersonal level. When Fawcett speaks about the insanity of celebrating war for its glory, he describes mankind as being overrun by "dogstar madness" (l. 366). The "dogstar" is of course referring to the celestial star Sirius, which in popular folklore, causes abnormal animal behavior. Madness, while a globalized phenomenon, breaches individual space to form a nemesis relationship to reason through its connection to barbarism. Lines 970 to 1075 feature a barbarian transformation in reverse, from Civilized to Barbarian, where as madness represses the sensibility of the civilized man to the point that he becomes a barbarian. Originally, when this man contemplates murder, he understands it as "a deed so dire, / ON the first motion of the mind that way, /

The wretch whom strong temptation draws towards it, / shrink from his thought" (l. 970-3). In other words, madness is the nemesis of reason because madness causes reason to "recoil," and as we know, recoiling reason has as its progeny war (l. 984). Fawcett proposes law to serve as a temporary counter to madness in order to quell it at the intrapersonal level.

Fawcett recognizes that because madness has a recoiling effect on reason that stretches itself into the individual space, strong international law will be an insufficient solution for establishing a sustainable peace. Although law has reason as a young partner at the individual space, law in and of itself does not have the ability to extend into the individual space like madness has, it may only function as an external enforcer of morality. Fawcett's image of peace is that of "the anvil," or the achievement of a moral state so secure in pre-Cainite morality that all soldiers may surrender their weapons to the blacksmith, and hang their heads in "stunn'd... astonishment" at the horrific perversion of Reason at the hands of madness (Beatty 2; Fawcett l. 45). It is madness's ability to extend itself into both individual and intrapersonal spaces that ultimately provokes Fawcett's liberal proposition to supplement reason with a strong international law.

When the spatial relationships between reason, madness, law, and barbarism are properly understood, Fawcett's mediation of "The Art of War" through his sentimental epistemological mode can be used to produce its own liberalism. These relationships are complicated as Fawcett's poem both embraces and is burdened by a sentimental epistemological mode. Needing to connect man to his state of nature yet ascribing to his postlapsarian existence, Fawcett takes advantage of the ample

room for conjecture offered by the Old Testament KJV verse, and establishes Adam

as the natural man, foreign to war, to anchor man to his peaceful nature. Fawcett's

belief seems to be that if he can awaken the senses of English society to the lunacy of

war and the cultural practices around it, then the universally residing pre-Cainite

sensibility will return man to his natural, peaceful state. In the meantime, in order to

combat madness's perversion of reason, Fawcett recommends international law to

strong-arm society into correct moral behavior.

The issue for Fawcett is never "Is sentimental epistemology effective for

promoting liberal political reform?" but rather " How does one wrestle liberalism

into a conservative epistemological mode?" As a sentimental poet writing well after

sentiment had peaked in popularity, his participation in the post-Augustan critical

disputes had nothing to do with the invention of a radically new style, however, the

epistemological problems he adopted were largely responsible for the composition

of "The Art of War." Throughout the entire poem, Fawcett is responding to a unique

set of ontological and epistemological questions that originate in post-Augustanism

yet are entirely his own.

For Fawcett's sentimental epistemology, he must establish a natural man for

the sensibility to connect to. Imagine how different the poem would be if Fawcett

were to make the same liberal proposal using a Wordsworthean epistemology. No

longer would Fawcett make the complex set of maneuvers to establish Adam as a

natural man; he would instead rely on the internalized relationship between

thought and feeling, and have no need to state a precedent for man's past as a

peaceful creature. Even if Fawcett were to maintain all of his aesthetic

characteristics and make only an epistemological change, the poem would be unrecognizable as its generative impetus would have disappeared. Under an Augustan epistemology, the sheer novelty of Fawcett's liberal poetic content would most likely be irreconcilable with Classical precedent, and Fawcett's poem would never have emerged in the first place. Fawcett needs freedom from Augustan poetic confinement—that he finds this freedom in a largely sentimental style is consequential, but part of a longer story that we may never be able to tell.

6

Conclusion: Summation, Creation; Annihilation, Rebirth

The influence of the English Empiricists was profound, endowing English poets with a conservative epistemology that flowed as a dominant undercurrent throughout an entire century of poetry. The world now ordered by natural law, the job of the Augustan poet became to reconnect man to his benevolent nature. If the poet were to mediate the world through the example left by the works of antiquity in his own verse, his heightened senses and proclivity for reason could be used to guide man through the moral haze of the 18th century. To relinquish one's connection to the poetic precedents of the Classics was therefore more than an aesthetic transgression, it was a moral slight against society. Those poets who felt suffocated by the grip the Augustans maintained on poetic convention broke from Classical precedent and became the post-Augustans. The emergence of the post-Augustans was not a jailbreak, but a century long stream of poets rejecting their individual subjugation to Augustan aesthetics in an effort to claim new poetic content. The sometime fierce engagement of the Augustan and post-Augustan in critical disputes produced an "us vs. them" stratification within the 18th century literary world that justifies the counteractionary image of these poets within my "post-Augustan" revision of the pre-Romantic era nomenclature.

Concluding a revision of the post-Augustans as a counteractionary movement, however, would be telling only one third of the story. As the "pre-Romantic" nomenclature was partially right in suggesting, the post-Augustans also played an important role in bringing about the development of English

Romanticism. Wordsworth and Coleridge's *Lyrical Ballads*, in addition to becoming a seminal piece of the Romantic canon, is quintessentially post-Augustan. Wordsworth's "Preface" responds to the same stifled feeling and general dissatisfaction with the lingering influence of Augustan and Sentimental poetics and their conservative epistemologies. Although Wordsworth's epistemological revision countered other post-Augustan poetics and became a cornerstone of what we identify today as Romantic poetry, the set of problems he contended with is the same the set that motivated post-Augustanism. The "Preface" walks us through Wordsworth's solution to maintaining the moral guidance poetry offers man, while making room to pursue ulterior poetic subjects that he is convinced will perform that duty even better. The "post" in "post-Augustan" is therefore not only reacting, but progressive in the same way that in music nomenclature, the "post" in "post-punk" is not indicative of reactionary tension with a previous generation, but suggestive of a new era that was boosted by its predecessor into new artistic territory; the "post" in "post-Augustan" also encapsulates the avant garde.

We have been guided through the final third of the post-Augustan nomenclature by Fawcett. The "Art of War" begins to unfold a meaningful present for the post-Augustan that neither relies on the reaction or progression to any other era, but is a substantial unifying project in and of itself. By observing the post-Augustans through the footer, we can observe the profound poetic impetus that the post-Augustan critical dissent created for its poets. Unlike Wordsworth, who acknowledged the problematic epistemology underlying much of the 18th century's poetic fashions, Fawcett embraced an existing sentimental style. Working within it,

Fawcett was motivated by the tension emerging from a conservative epistemological mode attempting to communicate liberal subject matter, which resulted in the fascinating series of intricate maneuvers that became his "Art of War." The relationship of the poet to the tension of the moral rupture that arose from the post-Augustan break from Augustan Classicism is entirely dependent upon the individual artistic goals of the poet. When we understand the project of the post-Augustan in the terms of the residual problems stemming from the critical disputes, the remarkable diversity that Bronson identifies as definitive of the era begins to make sense; no common style can be found among the post-Augustans because it was precisely a freedom to explore new ways of writing poetry they sought. What these poets do share is the need to respond to a moral crisis that followed them as they departed from Augustan poetic convention; how each poet responds is up to them.

Annihilation, Rebirth

Now that we have fashioned "post-Augustan" nomenclature into a productive critical lens, it is time we begin to dismantle it. It is my belief that if we are to share in Northrop Frye's appreciation of this "extraordinarily interesting period of English Literature," then it is ultimately an appreciation of the poets, studied on their own terms, that will lead us to the best understanding of their era. As their critics, we must first learn how to read these poets, and effective nomenclature that provides us with useful construals of their work is one of many steps in that learning process. It is crucial for a group of poets defined by their diversity that once we have learned how to read them, it is time to forget, and let the poets speak for themselves. If we

lose the trees to the forest, what we have before us in an unmanageable mass of green.

Joseph Fawcett has served as the first tree in our project of defining a forest. The aerial view I offer of the relationship between morality, aesthetics, and epistemology in 18th century poetics is useful only in so much as we begin to specify and complicate it out of existence. I would not only like to concede to any well founded accusation that the critical lens I have offered through my nomenclative revision of the pre-Romantics is simplified and incomplete, but to encourage these accusations and the rigorous pursuit of further revision. Fawcett has shown us the tremendous creative potential pent up within the moral tensions underlying post-Augustan critical dissent, and his imaginative struggle with his conservative epistemology begs us to ask ourselves: "Where else do the products of this tension reside?"

That they reside in entirely different relationships to each poet's artistic mission is certain, and can be best excavated through rigorous close readings that pay special attention to the eccentricities that are produced by their reconciliation of the epistemological moral crisis. As for other writers fed by similar political and epistemological veins, we must ask ourselves what the conservatism underlying sentiment produced within their work. Some of the 18th century's most influential liberal thought was mediated through the conservatism at the heart of sentiment. Brissenden reminds us of the sentimental roots of liberal documents such as "The Declaration of the Rights of Man," which to his count is largely responsible for the formulation of "fifty two" similar declarations, including our own Declaration of

Independence (Brissenden 58). Taking a step outside of literature, what then has

been the effect of the post-Augustans on the formulation of our own societies, and

by extension, the ways in which our own lives are structured around political

institutions? Understanding the tensions produced from this nugget of conservatism

that has inscribed itself into an age known for the verdant growth of liberalism

might be revelatory not only? of 18th century man, but of man as he lives today.

      Understanding the post-Augustans through the footer allows us to take a step

back from the main narrative that, from our 21st century vantage point, often seems

to want strike out on a teleological path. Historical accomplishments certainly build

on one another, and we can have no real understanding of history if we ignore the

forward march that is often paraded by those who have taken their place in an era's

canon. Looking at the works of characters on the margins of historical relevance

such as Joseph Fawcett provides the critic not only with a litmus test for an era, but

with an additional lens to halt the forward march of history so that we may get a

clearer look at the contemporaneity of those more influential figures around them.

There still remains much to be learned from the dominant narrative of the 18th

century canon, but the story of the present is a story best told by resounding

footnotes.

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