Oliver Feltham

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Preface

You seem so alone, where are you writing from? I do not know – isn't that why we do genealogy? Yet the irony, if we believe Foucault, is that genealogy does not grant us return passage to our roots or an original self but takes us elsewhere and then elsewhere again. Nietzsche opens the preface to *The Genealogy of Morality* with the dislocation of self from the standpoint of knowledge. If one chooses the way of knowledge – and genealogy is such a way – the promise is that one may arrive at some determination of the locus of speech – in the present case, speech about political action, here and now – but in actual fact that determination will turn out to be one more dislocation. If that is the case, there is no point in surrounding oneself, like a scholar, in an image of community, far less a community oriented towards an ideal consensus concerning the meaning of a philosophical work, a consensus it can never achieve through the very means it employs to reach that end: polite dispute and distinction.

This book continues the investigation begun in *Anatomy of Failure*. Concepts from the latter – models of political action, disjunct contexts, equivocal actions, the action zone – have been taken forwards and employed in a diagonal reading of some of David Hume's works, those works being taken on their own as one index of the age. In turn, this procedure has generated further concepts: faction as a configuration of appearance, a topology of passion as the reception-zone for action, envelopes, vortexes, hylomorphic functionalism. This diagonal reading entails a process of extrapolation anchored both in Hume's texts, in the tensions within and between those texts, and in the extrapolations already engaged with regard to Locke, Hobbes, and the Leveller agitators.

Why extrapolate? Why create a virtual Hume? On the basis of a hypothesis: let's grant that the original petition on the part of the New Model Army

in the spring of 1647 constituted an event in Alain Badiou's terms and that the subsequent emergence of a new political subject and Leveller agitator model of political action constituted the first enquiries in a transformative praxis that explored the consequences of that event for English politics. If Badiou's conceptual framework holds, that transformative praxis is infinite. It may splinter, slow down, diminish in its intensity to the point of extinction, even suffer exhaustion, and yet it can also be reborn intact far from its original situation. It just so happens that we can detect negative signs of the insistence of the Leveller agitator praxis as a generic truth procedure within eighteenth-century philosophy – a kind of disavowed substrate – in the continuing disqualification of the religious-political phenomenon of enthusiasm. Hence the interpretative wager of the book: presume consistent what Hume himself dismisses as inconsistent – democratic enthusiasm. Search for elements of its consistency within the very work that attempts to disqualify it as a countermodel of political action. Play Hume against himself and write from that play, inside that equivocity, not beyond or above it, for in the thinking of action one always begins *in medias res*, in stupefaction before the bare unbound event: the origin of empiricism.

Part I

Passions

Chapter One

From Torrents to Patterns

Under wheel-rim and hide grit crackles axle turns whip flickers over horse-back, and dark velvet sways between cabin and window, and the voyager can no longer think how to make time pass pushing his knuckles down into leather upholstery to shift his weight, impatient to arrive at the coast for deliverance when he is thrown forward, horses and coach stopped. He levers himself up grey light flushes in servant's clothes are handed to him wig taken and he is lifted out onto the road and his friend Edward hurries him through wet grass shells scrunching underfoot to a small skiff – sire, keep your head down, sire, call me sir. He huddles against the gunwale.

—"Going fishing are we my lord?", heads craned down at him from a dark boat, drawn up alongside.
—"Me? I serve Sir Edward."
—"Fancy that! A Sir and his servant going fishing. Welcome to the Swale, it's a lovely day for it!"
—"Where are the nets then? Where's your bait?" exclaimed another, "This is a strange set-up. It smells, doesn't it men?"
—"It smells like bloody Papists, that's what it does, papist lords off to France, with their silver. Sorry to disappoint sirs, no fishing for you today!"
—"Pull them on-board. Let's take them to market and see what price we get!"

Boat commandeered, designs undone, the disrobed king was sat down amongst nets and hooks and pots of bait, and ferried back to the shore he had just fled, and years later, well before I came to this conjecture, Hume thought to grasp the whole of the event, occurring on the eve of revolution, in a sentence:

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> While every one from principle, interest, or animosity, turned his back on the unhappy king, who had abandoned his own cause, the unwelcome news arrived, that he had been seized by the populace at Feversham, as he was making his escape in disguise; that he had been much abused, till he was known; but that the gentry had then interposed and protected him, though they still refused to consent to his escape.[1] (HEVI, 518)

And then the consequence: "This intelligence threw all parties into confusion."

'All parties thrown into confusion'? That is not right by my count. What about David Hume? He knows enough to keep writing his sentences. What kind of event would throw a historian into confusion? And what of the other parties, the fishermen at Faversham or the intervening gentry, once they had seen more of the discovered king, with the hindsight of a week or two, would they have stayed confused? But in the moment itself, I think I would join Hume and all other parties in stupefaction: the king in disguise and such amateur disguise he was seized by fishermen and then uncovered by gentry? To what party could one belong to not be confused by this sudden end, by this capture in a fisherman's boat, by the abrupt evacuation of power, even if it had been wished for?

Sympathy for downfall lands us in confusion.

In volume 5 of *The History of England*, during an earlier revolution, the people capture another Stuart king. Cornet Barnet Joyce, tailor by profession, recently elected agitator and representative of his regiment's desires and grievances to the general council of the New Model Army, arrives at Holdenby on 3 June 1647 at the head of five hundred horse, marches into the presence of King Charles Stuart and tells him that he must

> "go along with him". "Whither?" asked Charles, and Joyce said "To the army". . . . By what warrant? asked the king. Joyce pointed to the soldiers, whom he brought along. . . . Resistance was vain. The king, after protracting the time as long as he could, went into his coach; and was safely conducted to the army, who were hastening to their rendezvous at Triplo-Heath near Cambridge. (HEV, 496–97)

And the consequence: "The parliament, informed of this event by their commissioners, were thrown into the utmost consternation." Stupefaction strikes parliament, king and even General Fairfax, and in Hume's record of such events, he admits that some such events remain 'unaccountable'. Hume's account of the revolutionary years, of the republic and the restoration, is replete with moments of astonishment, amazement and disorder. To account for the credulity of the people in the 1678 Popish plot, an "event which would otherwise appear prodigious and altogether inexplicable", he claims we must suppose a disposition in men's minds in which "reason and argu-

ment and common sense and common humanity lost all influence over them", a supposition quite extreme for a scientist of human nature (HEVI, 333). But then Hume has now become a historian and is led to write even of moments of complete frozen panic in which no issue is present and one cannot even act to save oneself; "Seeing every prospect blasted, faction triumphant, the discontented populace enflamed to a degree of fury, [the king's adherents] utterly despaired of success, in a cause, to whose ruin friends and enemies seemed equally to conspire" (HEV, 369).

TORRENTS

The two volumes on the house of Stuart were the first that Hume wrote of his *History* after decades of essays and a treatise that he thought all had forgotten. These were the books that finally established his reputation as a man of letters. They tell a story of ruin, conflict, deception and conspiracy, of unhappy kings versus a furious, incontinent and enthusiastic populace, everyone turning his or her back on a king at one moment or another out of principle, animosity or interest. As historian and reader find out, the epoch of revolution and restoration is made up not of two massive determinate events but of thousands of events that turn from determinate to indeterminate and turn again from order to confusion – "So violent was the democratical, enthusiastic spirit diffused throughout the nation that a total confusion of all rank and order was justly to be apprehended" (HEV, 361, 386). Perhaps as readers, in sympathy with the historian's task, our hope is to glimpse and grasp the rise of order, albeit still indeterminate, from old but determinate confusion, to make sense out of events, to account for what appears unaccountable, but this ever-delayed hope is eventually deferred by Hume to the afterlives of the 1688 revolution (HEV, 361). Throughout the two Stuart volumes, nineteen times by my count, Hume stages an unhappy king, or one of his acolytes, or perhaps a moderate judge or member of parliament, "borne down by the torrent of popular prejudices" (HEV, 113). Each time "the torrent, he saw, ran too strong to be controuled", the torrent "ran so high", it was "violent and irresistible", or "fierce and strong" such that "efforts were fruitless", "defence . . . would be entirely ineffectual", no one "daring to oppose it".[2] Torrent is the collective noun Hume employs to refer to an accumulation of prejudices; elsewhere, he uses the terms "national prejudice", "general passion", "general inclinations and opinions" or "popular prejudice" and quite frequently "popular torrent".[3]

Yet there is a rival term indexing the contagion of passion, one whose count triples that of 'torrent', a term alloying delusion, action and the divine, and it is 'enthusiasm'.[4] In explaining the origin and distinction of the Independents in the long parliament, Hume claims these were times "when the

enthusiastic spirit met with . . . honour and encouragement" (HEV, 441).
Hume diagnoses "National discontent, communicated to a desperate enthu-
siast" behind the soldier Felton's assassination attempt on the Duke of Buck-
ingham (HEV, 203). When assessing the mismatch between Charles I's tem-
per and his times, he allows that "above all, the spirit of enthusiasm, being
universally diffused, disappointed all the views of human prudence, and
disturbed the operation of every motive, which usually influences society"
(HEV, 221). And it is "In the debates of the commons" in 1629 that Hume
detects "so early some sparks of that enthusiastic fire, which afterwards set
the whole nation in combustion" (HEV, 213). In speaking of the religious
puritans' opposition to the hierarchy of the established church, Hume re-
marks,

> [The new sectaries'] unsurmountable passion, disguised to themselves, as well
> as to others, under the appearance of holy fervours, was well qualified to make
> proselytes, and to seize the minds of the ignorant multitude. And one furious
> enthusiast was able, by his active industry, to surmount the indolent efforts of
> many sober and reasonable antagonists. (HEV, 285)

In a similar fashion to 'torrents', 'enthusiasm' is a broad category that Hume
uses for phenomena in which an intense passion is rapidly communicated to
a mass of people. In its basic form, the passion arises within a religious
believer who, without priest, church or ceremony, believes himself to be in
"immediate intercourse and communication with heaven" and thus author-
ized to act in line with such communication in complete indifference to the
jurisdiction of any terrestrial authority (HEV, 441).

In the *Treatise of Human Nature*, Hume claims to introduce the experi-
mental method into the sphere of morality and human action. In his *Essays,
Moral and Political*, he sets out and practices a 'science of politics'. If such
claims and practices are to hold true, then when he writes his *History of
Britain*, any historical episode in which 'the operation of every motive which
usually influences society' is 'disturbed' must nevertheless be analyzed and
explained: the social scientist cannot remain stupefied in front of the un-
bound event.[5]

During his analysis of faction in the *Essays*, Hume allows that factions
organized around persons "may seem unaccountable" in that there are no
evident reasons why "men should attach themselves so strongly to persons,
with whom they are no wise acquainted, whom perhaps they never saw, and
from whom they never received, nor can ever hope of any favour" (PE, 39).
He takes one step further when it comes to faction organized around princi-
ples: "Parties from principle, especially abstract speculative principle, are
known only to modern times, and are, perhaps, the most extraordinary and
unaccountable phenomenon, that has yet appeared in human affairs" (PE,

36). This is curious: the phenomena which appear 'unaccountable' to Hume as social scientist and amaze Hume as historian are all related to faction and to generalized passion. Indeed, at the most naïve level, is there not a flagrant contradiction between Hume's early theory of the passions as developed in the *Treatise* when it stipulates a "natural esteem for the rich and powerful" and certain experiences of the civil war he later encounters and traces in his *History*, experiences in which any such esteem vanished to be generally replaced by envy, distrust, hatred and eventually contempt? Cromwell himself had no automatic esteem for the rich and powerful. He was a master of its inversion:

> He would not allow his soldiers to perplex their heads with those subtleties of fighting on the king's authority against his own person, and of obeying his majesty's commands signified by both houses of parliament: he plainly told them, that if he met the king in battle, he would fire a pistol in his face as readily as against any other man. (HEVI, 57)

Faced with such unnatural loss of esteem for the powerful, with popular torrents of prejudice, powers of enthusiasm in parliament and its army, confronting the unaccountable factions of person and principle, and its obverse, the frequent occasions on which notables, in the heat of the event, were reported to have turned their backs on both principle and person to the point that Hume is led to question their private virtue, is it the case that the historian can only pathologize such collective phenomena under the catchall headings of 'contagion', 'zealotry', 'bigotry', 'prejudice' and 'fanaticism' – terms ubiquitous in the two Stuart volumes – laying the blame uniquely on the interference of religion in politics (PE, 46; HEV, 64)?[6] Is Hume not merely antipathetic but blind to the thinking at stake in the democratic enthusiasm of the Levellers, which he is so quick to dismiss as a malady of belief ending in total confusion of all rank and order?

Our answer must be adamant: Hume does not pathologize; he begins and yet does not complete a scientific account of pathology and political passion. If he did not abandon the project of the treatise, if he expanded his experimental science of human nature throughout the *Essays* and the *History*, then we should be able to explain with his own concepts the phenomena he registers as occurring during the civil war and the restoration, however seemingly unaccountable, however disturbed 'the operation of every motive, which usually influences society'. Should what appears as a torrent, as turning events, as disorder to an unhappy king, appear the same way to the historian (HEV, 543)? Did the historian momentarily identify with and so become the unhappy king? What is it that binds events together? What works of habit allow the fabrication of a history?

It is the case, within the 'Stuart' volumes of Hume's *History*, amidst the torrents of prejudice, amidst the turning of events, over and through a thousand pages, that patterns do emerge, such as a pattern of faction, in particular a Manichean split, an exclusive dichotomy into an 'us' and a 'them' between whom each and every one is compelled to choose, even the historians who follow decades and centuries afterwards. Twinned motifs of decline and rise repeat themselves to add up to a pattern of inversion which itself doubles into a pattern of cyclical return. And finally, there is an ever-recurrent pattern of conspiracy, plot, rumour and deception.

A PATTERN OF FACTION

Faction is at first a derogatory epithet, a commonplace used by philosophers to name what they see as the most ancient malady of politics, and Hume does not hesitate to use this term as frequently as twice a chapter as shorthand for the blind divisive conflict that marked the Stuart epoch. In his earlier *Essays*, the term had been taken beyond the adjectival to attain almost the status of a concept, factional conflict over the justness of the new constitution being the main object of his first nine political essays published in 1741. But what concerns us here are the patterns of appearance that bind the events recorded in his history of the Stuart era: patterns of inveterate antagonism, enmity and demonization between parties; the absenting of any neutral ground; and the distortion of all judgement, judgement becoming in its very exercise antagonistic. "In every controversy between prince and people", Hume reports, "the question, however doubtful, had always been decided, by each party, in favour of its own pretensions" (HEV, 283). The identity and nature of agents is subject to distorted judgement: "No prince, so little enterprising and so inoffensive, was ever so much exposed to the opposite extremes of calumny and flattery, of character satire and panegyric," and in 1628, in "the remonstrance of the commons", the king's chief minister Buckingham "was represented as the cause of every national grievance, and as the great enemy of the public" (HEV, 121, 203). To belong to a faction is to be misrepresented in the satires of the other faction yet also misrepresented in panegyric by one's own faction, indeed: "faction . . . tends much to remove those great restraints, honour and shame; when men find, that no iniquity can lose them the applause of their own party, and no innocence secure them against the calumnies of the opposite" (HEVI, 438). Faction exaggerates and inflates a person's character as it does his or her intentions, as when Pym, popular leader of the Commons, in the first meetings of the long parliament in November 1640, attributes a grand design on the part of the king and his ministers, inferring from various incidents a "deliberate plan . . . of changing entirely the frame of government, and subverting the ancient laws and liberties of the

kingdom" (HEV, 287). Hume describes each faction as "wild", "violent", as animated by "fury", "furious rage", as "inflamed into rage", "inflamed into passion" and sunk in "inveterate hatred" and "mutual hatred" of the other faction.[7]

During certain conjunctures, one can find more than two factions at work: in late 1644, the Self-denying Ordinance momentarily splits the popular party in parliament and the city into many factions, and in a more lasting division, a few months later, the long parliament splits into the Presbyterians and the Independents; the latter party eventually allied with the officers of the New Model Army, an alliance that ends up in a triangular conflict between New Model Army agitators, army officers ('the Grandees') and parliament (HEV, 441–42). But the enduring and predominant organization of action in the Stuart era is into just two opposed parties: skirmishes between Whitehall and the inns of the court, between the populace and a few gentlemen in 1641, gave rise to derogatory names for each party – 'Roundheads' and 'Cavaliers' – and as Hume notes: "thus the nation, which was before sufficiently provided with religious as well as civil causes of quarrel, was also supplied with party-names, under which the factions might rendezvous and signalize their mutual hatred" (HEV, 363).

The massive presence of two exclusive factions is marked, again and again in the Stuart period, by the absence, or even the refusal, of any neutral ground: "But in the present distracted state of the nation, an equitable neutrality was almost impossible to be attained," and "thus extremes were everywhere affected, and the just medium was gradually deserted by all men" (HEVI, 421; HEV, 199). This gradual desertion is also experienced by some as a forced choice: "In proportion as the terror of the king's power diminished, the division between independent and presbyterian became every day more apparent; and the neuters found it, at last, requisite to seek shelter in one or the other faction" (HEV, 492).[8] Later on in this process of exclusive division, once the Manichean regulation of the political field is complete, any failure to immediately side with a faction may be seen as proof of belonging to the opposite faction. For instance, during the campaign for the Exclusion Bill, the Commons voted that anyone who advised the king against that bill was a papist and an enemy to be named and removed from the counsel of the king (HEVI, 397). Even Monk, the general behind the restoration, falls under suspicion "from the candor and tranquillity of his behaviour" and "his moderation in party", "while all around him were inflamed into rage at the opposite faction" (HEVI, 123).

In Hume's eyes, this exclusion of the middle ground had dominated the appearance of events to the extent of having entered and organized the very histories in which they were recorded. In his conclusion to the second Stuart volume, Hume announces, in an eschatological register rare to him,

> It is no wonder, that these events have long, by the representations of faction, been extremely clouded and obscured. No man has yet arisen, who has payed an entire regard to truth, and has dared to expose her, without covering or disguise, to the eyes of the prejudiced public. (HEVI, 532)

In his autobiography, "My Own Life", he records how his own attempt to pay an 'entire regard to truth' by means of moderation in party fell foul of public prejudice.[9] "Extremes are to be avoided" – he warns as he takes what he sees as the middle road – "though no one will ever please either faction by moderate opinions, it is there we are most likely to meet with truth and certainty" (HEVI, 534).

A PATTERN OF FALL AND RISE

In the fifth volume of the *History* describing Charles I's path through the crisis years leading to the civil war, the motif of decline is omnipresent, occasionally paralleled by a motif of rise. As one might expect, since such would occur in any epoch, the favourites of the king, of James I in this case – Somerset, Bacon, Buckingham – are seen to rise and fall. What is specific to this epoch is that entire organs of government are subject to the tides: "the fall of the peers and rise of the commons".[10] Yet it is the sovereign authority itself, its organs such as the Star Chamber and its expression through the royal prerogative, that goes through the greatest arc, being raised to the 'greatest heights', and then, through a train of events, seen to be "diminished", "reduced", "pushed downwards", "totally disarmed", "laid level with the ground", such that it 'falls' or is 'fallen' into a "low condition", a "total subordination", a "subjection" and "dependence" until the point, in the trial and execution of Charles I, that Hume can speak of "fallen majesty" and "oppressed and fallen majesty" and the king himself writes a letter to his son of that "low prince", and in verse, of "that grey and discrowned head".[11] In the last pages of the fifth volume, Hume names the genre from which he has borrowed the motif of fall when he speaks of the "tragical death of Charles" (HEV, 544).

The less frequent motif of rise, when it does occur, is most often associated with Cromwell. When Hume first notices this name mentioned in debates in the Commons in 1628, he remarks that "at that time" Cromwell was "a young man of no account in the nation" (HEV, 214). Twenty-five years later this young man became Lord Protector, and Hume draws up a full portrait:

> From low commands he rose with great rapidity to be really the first, though in appearance only the second, in the army. By fraud and violence, he soon rendered himself the first in the state. In proportion to the encrease of his authority, his talents always seemed to expand themselves; and he displayed

every day new abilities, which had lain dormant, till the very emergence, by which they were called forth into action. All Europe stood astonished to see a nation, so turbulent and unruly, who, for some doubtful encroachments on their privileges, had dethroned and murdered an excellent prince, descended from a long line of monarchs, now at last subdued and reduced to slavery by one, who, a few years before, was no better than a private gentleman, whose name was not known in the nation, and who was little regarded even in that low sphere, to which he had always been confined. (HEVI, 58)

Upon Cromwell's death, in his final assessment, Hume repeats this evaluation:

It seems to me, that the circumstance of Cromwell's life, in which his abilities are principally discovered, is his rising, from a private station, in opposition to so many rivals, so much advanced before him, to a high command and authority in the army. His great courage, his signal military talents, his eminent dexterity and address, were all requisite for this important acquisition. (HEVI, 108)

The appearance of Cromwell is deeply marked by this motif of rise from a low sphere to a tremendous height. The New Model Army that lay behind much of Cromwell's success, its hierarchy organized by merit rather than birth, was also extensively marked by rise in social status: "And most of the officers, having risen from the dregs of the people, had no other prospect, if deprived of their commission, than that of returning to languish in their native poverty and obscurity" (HEV, 493). Furthermore, it is not just the New Model Army but the rise of the very republic itself that gives opening to merit:

The confusion, into which all things had been thrown, had given opportunity to men of low stations to break through their obscurity, and to raise themselves by their courage to commands, which they were well qualified to exercise, but to which their birth could never have entitled them. And while so great a power was lodged in such active hands, no wonder the republic was successful in all its enterprizes. (HEVI, 41)

On the part of Hume this is rare: a positive and unalloyed evaluation of the Commonwealth. A king falls, but many rise, the king dragged down the sovereign heights by envy and fury, the many rising from low condition boosted by talent and courage alone.

If a king falls and in the same combination of events a private gentleman rises to the latter's vacated but supreme authority, then a pattern of inversion has arisen. And in these two volumes, inversions do appear, most evidently in the carnivalesque episodes in which a Stuart king, on the run, is forced to hide from soldiers in an oak tree for a day or to disguise himself as a servant

to one of his subjects: "When they arrived at Norton's, Mrs. Lane pretended that she had brought along as her servant, a poor lad, a neighbouring farmer's son, who was ill of an ague; and she begged a private room for him, where he might be quiet" (HEVI, 37, 518). When a person switches sides – and there are many key figures who do this in the *History* such as Montrose, Hamilton, Monk, Shaftesbury, Fairfax and Sharpe – the identity of their friends and enemies is inverted. The apostate – inverter of loyalty, dissolver of fidelity – is a recurrent character in Hume's history, but none worse than Cromwell himself, whose much-advertised republicanism ends in his embrace of kingship in all but name.

The kind of inversion that is most present in these two volumes is one in which what was low not only comes to the heights but subsequently takes on and absorbs the very properties of that entity against which it originally fought and over whose demise it has only just presided. Parliament becomes as despotic as, if not more so than the king in its exorbitant stretches of sovereign authority: it imposes heavy taxes, it multiples arbitrary 'Star Chambers', it abolishes trials by jury for the offence of treason, which goes against parliament's own *Petition of Right* and it expands the crime of high treason to include verbal offences though unaccompanied by any "overt act against the State".[12] Two years into the history of the war, Hume reflects on the inversion of qualities between the antagonists:

> While [the king] spoke perpetually of pardoning all *rebels*; they talked of nothing but the punishment of *delinquents* and *malignants*: While he offered a toleration and indulgence to tender consciences; they threatened the utter extirpation of prelacy. To his professions of lenity, they opposed declarations of rigour. (HEV, 435)

This inversion may, on occasion, become a pattern of *cyclical return*: once parliament and its army win the war and execute the king, the new government repeats and adopts, as if despite itself – oh irony of history! – the previously hated qualities of the exercise of royal prerogative:

> Complaints against the oppression of shipmoney, against the tyranny of the star-chamber, had rouzed the people to arms: And having gained a complete victory over the crown, they found themselves loaded with a multiplicity of taxes, formerly unknown; and scarcely an appearance of law and liberty remained in the administration. (HEV, 520)

The evidence for this pattern of cyclical return is completed by the passage in which Hume seals his classic antirevolutionary position:

> By recent, as well as all ancient example, it was become evident, that illegal violence, with whatever pretences it may be covered, and whatever object it

may pursue, must inevitably end at last in the arbitrary and despotic government of a single person. (HEVI, 54)

Revolution against despotism entails return of despotism; usurpation begets usurpation: its simplicity is dumbfounding, yet Hume detects this pattern again and again in the appearance of events (HEV, 492):

> Here commenced the encroachments of military upon civil authority. The army, in its usurpations on parliament, copied exactly the same model which the parliament itself had set them in their recent usurpations on the crown. Everyday they rose in their demands . . . at last they claimed a right of modelling the entire government and of settling the nation. (HEV, 503)

Yet the most evident case of cyclical return is lying in plain sight like Poe's letter: the restoration, a cycle which not only returns a Stuart king to the throne but also restages his fall through the following period in which parliament and the executive repeat and relive the very tensions over supply, over the demands, refusals and inadequate concessions that had marked the lead-up to the Civil War. Indeed, Hume himself remarks, "The one period appeared an exact counter-part to the other" (HEVI, 377).

But what is most repeated between the fall of one Stuart king and the fall of the next is the pattern of rumour, plot and conspiracy.

A PATTERN OF CONSPIRACY

Rumours of Catholic conspiracies breed panic in the people, rumours abound of a great design to subvert the established church and introduce the Romish religion in England, of an invasion of bloodthirsty papist army, of a Papist plot to blow up the bed of the Thames and drown the city in the river, of Catholic firebrands having set the Great Fire of London, of disbanded Irish soldiers having massacred Protestants and of general conspiracies against parliament.[13] These are rumours of unseen actions by imagined yet unseen enemies.

Another register is used when a hostile long-term plan is attributed to a known and seen enemy. Here, the intention remains unconfessed, and the action has not become fully manifest, but the agent is palpable: fabulous designs are projected onto antagonists by protagonists, grand long-term designs such as that of invading the privileges of parliament, the design of suppressing parliament's liberties and privileges, the design of subverting the constitution and the laws of the kingdom, the design of subverting the church and monarchy and the design of subverting the rights and very being of parliament.[14] Even in the official prologue to a parliamentary bill, the existence is affirmed of a most dangerous and desperate design upon the house of

commons (HEV, 375). Cromwell is accused by his rival in military command, the Earl of Manchester, of having deep republican designs, and the troops and officers of the New Model Army suspect parliament of "a settled design of oppressing them", lamenting that "designs were formed against them and many of the godly party in the kingdom" (HEV, 444, 494, 496).

A thousand conspiracies flower, combining a projected design with a rumoured action, and 'sham' plots proliferate: as many as fifteen "false plots" having been loaded, by the court, upon their adversaries (HEVI, 405), a "universal conspiracy of the papists" supposed as taking place (HEV, 305), a "desperate plot . . . laid" to "offer violence", "destruction" to parliament (HEV, 328, 361). Hume is quick to remark the political uses of these fictions, noting the Church party's encouragement, in the early 1660s, of "rumours of plots and conspiracies against the government; crimes, which, without any apparent reason, they imputed to their adversaries" (HEVI, 176). The long parliament had become past masters in the art of imputing conspiracy:

> In order to obtain a majority in the upper house, the commons had recourse to the populace. . . . Amidst the greatest security, they affected continual fears of destruction to themselves and the nation, and seemed to quake at every breath or rumour of danger. They again, excited the people by never-ceasing enquiries after conspiracies, by reports of insurrections, by feigned intelligence of invasions from abroad, by discoveries of dangerous combinations at home among papists and their adherents. (HEV, 361)

That this was not a phenomenon peculiar to England is signalled by the false plot used to accuse the great Dutch republican leader de Wit. Hume laments that "the accusation was greedily received by the credulous multitude" who then proceeded to lynch de Wit (HEVI, 268).[15] Hume, in contrast, foregrounds his own incredulity as he documents and traces the "popular frenzy and bigoted delusion" of the entire English nation during the years of the 'Catholic plot', a single eleven-month episode which takes up an entire chapter of the sixth volume and whose consequences resonate from 1678 through till late 1680 (HEVI, 332–72).

The Catholic plot begins in the testimony of one Titus Oates, who claims, in front of a justice of the peace, to have been employed as a messenger by the synod and councils of the Jesuits, themselves delegated by the pope to govern the kingdom of England in his name, the pope having apparently discovered of recent date his legal sovereignty over England. The Jesuits had already named a complete set of ministers of state, chosen from known Catholic nobles, and had already taken out a contract on the King's life – the King having been tried and condemned in absentia as a heretic and named 'the Black Bastard'. This contract was to be fulfilled by the queen's physician, Sir George Wakeman, for fifteen thousand pounds, of which a downpayment had been made, in partnership with "four Irish ruffians . . . hired . . .

at the rate of twenty guineas a piece", with the addition of two further accomplices, Grove and Pickering, paid, respectively, one thousand five hundred pounds and thirty thousand masses, Pickering being a devout man. Grove and Pickering's orders had been transmitted to them by a messenger paid a guinea for his service by Coleman, the secretary to the late Duchess of York, a known Catholic (HEVI, 332–36).

Hume's description of the plot is more elaborate than this summary, and no doubt Oates's own description was still more elaborate than Hume's, but it is the details of the various payments that supposedly vouchsafes the plot's veracity. The plot grew in the imagination of a few investigators until it was anchored in reality by an unsolved murder – that of the judge who received Oates's testimony – and the publication of scandalous passages from Coleman's private letters revealing the French king's interference in English politics and also Coleman's desire, avowed in a letter to Père la Chaise, the confessor of Louis XIV, to undertake a "mighty work . . . no less than the conversion of three kingdoms" (HEVI, 339). The murder and the discovery of the letters, however uncorroborated their ties to the alleged plot, were sufficient to enflame the public and unleash a "universal panic" (HEVI, 332). This "popular fury" was legitimated by the authority of parliament when both houses declared, by vote, their belief in the existence of this "damnable and hellish plot" and voted for 'addresses' ordering the discovery of papers that might serve as evidence, ordering the pursuit of 'Popish recusants' and ordering the widespread imposition of the oath of allegiance (HEVI, 344–45). The existence of the plot became indubitable, to the point that, "To deny the reality of the plot was to be an accomplice: To hesitate was criminal: Royalist, Republican; Churchman, Sectary; Courtier, Patriot; all parties concurred in the illusion" (HEVI, 342). In order to participate in politics in this period it was necessary to feign belief in the plot:

> The King, observing that the whole nation concurred at first in the belief and prosecution of the popish plot, had found it necessary for his own safety to pretend, in all public speeches and transactions, an entire belief and acquiescence in that famous absurdity, and by this artifice he had eluded the violent and irresistible torrent of the people. (HEVI, 379)

The plot itself was quite imaginary – this must have been evident to parties involved in the trials of so-called conspirators since the testimony given by Oates and the two other charlatans, Bedloe and Prance, was full of inconsistencies and improbabilities. Nevertheless, the panic and belief the plot gave rise to were all too real, as were its repressive and judiciary consequences and the political uses to which it was put, as Hume is quick to note. Trials and executions of supposed conspirators followed one upon another: Secretary Coleman; Father Ireland; the hapless Grove and Pickering; Hill, Green

and Berry falsely accused of the murder of the judge; five Catholic lords impeached for treason and imprisoned in the Tower of London; five Jesuits named Whitebread, Fenwic, Gavan, Turner and Harcourt, despite having demonstrated perjury on the part of the prosecution's witnesses at their trial, were condemned and executed; and finally Langhorne, lawyer for the Jesuits, was made to take his turn in a noose.[16] Almost two years after it began, the last victim of this conspiracy theory, Viscount Stafford, was tried and executed as a plotter.

The heir to the throne, the Duke of York, was known to be a devout Catholic. The popular party in parliament had resolved to prevent his accession to the throne by means of the 'Exclusion Bill', which had failed to pass the House of Lords on 15 November 1680 (HEVI, 391). The "clamour of the popish plot" served that party's purpose in that it fuelled popular mistrust of the Duke of York (HEVI, 386, 392). Yet the Exclusion Bill never passed, and when Charles II died, his brother James II, the former Duke of York, succeeded him as the last Stuart king of England.

When the pendulum swung in the other direction in late 1683 against the popular party, the King's ministers used the very same unreliable witnesses in sham accusations against its members and in the trial of Algernon Sidney (HEVI, 436).

Another element in this pattern of rumour, conspiracy and plot was governmental suspicion of people for harbouring nonconformist, dissenting, heretical or Catholic beliefs. This suspicion was given release in two practical forms: the first a series of covenants, public oaths, test acts and Acts of Uniformity which regulated access to ecclesiastical and public office according to a candidate's sworn beliefs, and the second a series of inquisitions and persecutions, especially in Scotland, designed to ferret out dissenters and stamp out their practice of public worship on pain of death (HEVI, 176, 417, 466, 486). The Scots had devised and entered into their famous Covenant in 1638 as an act of resistance against Charles I's imposition of a new liturgy. Originally, it was a public acclamation of beliefs and intentions. In 1685, under the Duke of York's administration, to even defend the Covenant as an obligation, much less declare it, was an act of treason (HEVI, 466). Such practices of inquisition in the Stuart era dated back to the time of James I, who had established the High Commission as the highest ecclesiastical court and endowed it with the authority to punish any word or act that expressed heresy or schism and to proceed on the basis of rumour and suspicion alone (HEV, 125).

This constant pattern of conspiracy and sham plots is a monument to the whimsy and fancy of the English people, a people usually thought to be so commonsensical and down to earth, perhaps in line with the philosophical tradition of empiricism, taken as their own. Seeing is believing, as my mother always says, but my what things we may see!

For all our astonishment, we must not be duped into thinking all plots were false. The *History* is rife with the discovery of real plots: from Raleigh's conspiracy and the gunpowder conspiracy of 1604 to the army plot to help the king in 1640, More's 1641 conspiracy to overthrow English rule in Ireland, Waller's 1643 plot to bring the Lords into alliance with citizens to refuse parliament's taxes and a 1651 Presbyterian plot against the republic. Charles II's executive – his ministers and counsellors – were openly spoken of as 'the cabal'; that is, their practice of secrecy, of hidden tractations and deals, had become an objective habit of government to the point that it still confounds the historian, in the absence of primary sources, as to what was real and false:

> It must be allowed that the difficulties, even inconsistencies, attending the schemas of the Cabal, are so numerous and obvious, that one feels at first an inclination to deny the reality of those schemes, and to suppose them entirely the work of calumny and faction. (HEVI, 286)

Monmouth and Shaftesbury were also known to be schemers, and their planning, along with the 'cabal of six', to rise in arms and prevent the Catholic succession lasted from 1681 until its eventual discovery, along with the Rye-House plot on Charles II's life in 1683. De Wit, the Dutch leader, had cause to complain of the English government:

> By the offer of a close alliance for mutual defence, they had seduced the republic to quit the alliance of France; but no sooner had she embraced these measures, than they formed leagues for her destruction, with that very power, which they had treacherously engaged her to offend. (HEVI, 260)

This constant practice of deception if not betrayal shows how the pattern of conspiracy, rumour and plots extended so far as to even infect England's conduct of foreign affairs.

Amidst the torrent of events, the historian finds himself sharing in moments of consternation and stupefaction, calling certain phenomena 'unaccountable' and heaping together diverse actions into categories so broad they become ciphers – 'fanaticism', 'enthusiasm', 'faction'. Sympathy for downfall may well land us in confusion. Yet the reader can detect the recurrence of three distinct patterns: a pattern of *faction* becoming an exclusive dichotomy that voids any neutral ground, a second pattern of agents *rising and falling* in time to compose *inversions* and *cyclical returns* and a third pattern of *rumour*, *plot*, *conspiracy* and *real deception*. If we have found patterns, we have a starting place for rebooting Hume's experimental method in the moral sphere and developing our own account of these 'ruling passions' so that events and actions will no longer appear 'prodigious and otherwise inexplicable'. Our object is to understand just how "By stronger contagion, the

popular affections were communicated from breast to breast, in this place of general rendezvous and society" (HEV, 294). For this, we need a theory of the passions, and as already mentioned, it just so happens that Hume developed such a theory in his early work *A Treatise of Human Nature*. We shall then fold this theory back onto his later work, the Stuart volumes of the *History of Britain*, with the aim of discovering just how the passions work in shaping collective experience, that is, in binding events that otherwise, raw and unbound, would do nothing but stupefy.

Chapter Two

Passion Locates the Self

In the second book of the *Treatise of Human Nature*, Hume stipulates that "The present situation of a person is always that of the imagination" (T 2.3.7.8). He shows how the imagination situates a person by associating certain ideas and impressions, associations he calls 'passions'. Hume defines passion as "a modification of existence" (T 2.3.5.5). He does not qualify this statement with any massive distinction between inner or outer, ideal or material, psychological or social spheres of existence. Passions are not confined to some supposedly internal or psychological realm. In his account, as in that of Hobbes and Spinoza, they not only are intersubjective but also constitute a kind of presubjective field out of which or onto which attributions of agency and selfhood are latched. The passions neither represent nor misrepresent external states of affairs but constitute their own independent plane of existence, a plane onto which attributions of collectivity and social order are joined. The further we explore the mechanisms of the passions, the clearer it will become that all talk of people 'having' emotions or 'experiencing' or 'feeling' emotions is inaccurate. There is no self prior to or independent of the passions; the only 'self' one ever experiences is a passional self: a self, as we shall see, that is located by the passions, with the caveat that Hume's system includes a series of extremely mild and very calm passions.

LOCATION OF A SELF

Hume begins his exposition with the primary passions of pride and humility. In his theory, there is a mechanism behind these passions that works through a double relationship of ideas and impressions. Hume's science of human nature begins in the distinction between ideas and impressions, the two kinds of perception that constitute minds. The general differences between the two

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kinds are their intensity and an order of priority. Impressions are said to be vivid (sense impressions, feelings), whereas ideas are less intense (memories, imagination, thoughts). In terms of the order of priority, simple ideas are said to initially arise from prior simple impressions, of which Hume sometimes says the ideas are 'copies'. One exception to the latter rule occurs with the passions, which are understood as 'reflective impressions' arising from an association of ideas. Occasionally, Hume also remarks that impressions can blur or transition into each other to form a kind of continuum, whereas ideas are always discrete.

In the mechanism of pride, the trigger is an initial impression of pleasure – let's say a bittersweet peppery taste. This impression gives rise to the idea of the object or quality that provoked that pleasure – a rocket leaf salad with cashews and pomegranate seeds. In turn, this idea is related to a second idea, the idea of the person's own self – an association that often works through the preestablished rapport of possession in that the initial object is understood to belong to the self – say I made this salad, that I even grew the rocket in my garden. The idea of the self – an essential proviso – is for Hume nothing more than a habitually associated "succession of related ideas and impressions" (T 2.1.2.2). This first linkage between the idea of the pleasure-giving object – 'today's rocket salad' – and idea of the self – 'I grow my own rocket' – allows a second linkage to occur between the initial impression of pleasure and another 'indirect' impression of pleasure which is the actual feeling of pride. Hence, we have a double relationship between ideas and impressions. That feeling of pride has a determinate degree of intensity, and the self is located on this scale of intensity as well as on the pleasurable quality: there is a mild, moderate or intense passion of pride in oneself, or, to be more exact, there is the feeling of a mildly, moderately or intensely proud self. The self thus comes to presence through being located on a scale of intensity, and the locating mechanism was triggered by the impression of a positive quality. The self, as a mere 'bundle of perceptions', is given determinate content by being located as a proud 'salad-making self'.

Evidently, this leaves open two questions: why do some qualities trigger pleasure and others pain – the latter giving rise to the inverse passion of humility? Moreover, why do certain qualities provoke a higher or lower degree of pleasure and thus more or less intense pride?

The degree of intensity of pride is influenced by a set of factors: the initial object or quality can itself be simply greater or less. This quantitative factor also holds at the level of time: the longer the quality lasts, the more pleasure it procures. Another factor is exclusivity: what counts is how rare possession of a certain quality is for our social position (T 2.1.6.4). In Hume's estimation another factor that determines the intensity of pride or humility is how absolute our relationship of possession is towards the initial quality or object. If it is something that I alone own or have made or created and not the

product of group work, then the pride is all the more lasting and intense (T 2.1.6.2; T 2.1.10.1). One final factor that Hume identifies as determining the intensity of a passion is the proximity of the external object: my pride lessens when it is not my child that wins the race but a friend's child, and my pride lessens further when it is a neighbour's child, a child from my suburb or a child from my city (T 2.1.9.5). Note that these levels of pride correspond to lessening degrees of cohesiveness amongst larger and larger social groupings: family, friends, neighbours, townspeople, fellow citizens. Let us call these operators the 'simple intensifiers' of passion: quantity, duration, rarity relative to rank, absoluteness of possession and proximity.

Each of these simple intensifiers has evident consequences at the level of social structure. For instance, take the rarity of the quality relative to social status. Hume remarks that qualities that lie in common with a great deal of people – especially those we take as our peers – do not excite pride (T 2.1.6.4). The cause of pride must be peculiar to the self if not exclusive. We have expectations concerning the average level of positive and negative qualities for each social rank; these expectations have a tremendous influence on the triggering mechanisms of pride and humility (T 2.1.6.8). The self is differentially located by these initial qualities, not just on a scale of degrees of intensity of pride and humility but also on a social scale: the self is ranked. Hume repeatedly asserts the ubiquity and universal reach of social ranks; for instance, in the *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, he claims that contempt for the poor and esteem for the rich is universal (EPM 6.30–33). Note that it is quite compatible with Hume's theory for those scales of rank to come in all kinds of forms: inside groups as well as between them, between the ancient estates and between modern economic classes, via snobbery and what we call 'cultural capital', as well as inside the contemporary malady of performance evaluation. These social scales and ranks do not exist in some independent and objective form. They exist only as a dynamic, as a function of the history of our pride and humility. Perhaps this is why so many external, material and institutional markers are employed in an effort to stabilize and guarantee social rank. Recall that in the *History*, the 'democratical enthusiasm' of the revolutionary period was said to have threatened a 'total confusion of all rank and order' (HEV, 361).

The other two primary passions for Hume – love and hatred – locate the self on a scale of intensity, as all other passions, but they also locate the self either within a group in the case of love or as separated from another self in the case of hate. The same mechanism of a double relation of ideas and impressions is at work, and the trigger is an initial impression of pleasure or pain provoked by a quality in another person. The idea of this quality is associated with an idea of the whole of the other person, and this association of ideas facilitates an association of the initial impression of pleasure with a second indirect impression, the passion of love or hatred.

In contrast with pride and humility, the object of the passions of love and hatred is not the self but another person. This is our first intersubjective passion, which creates a real association of two or more persons on the basis of an association of ideas and impressions. For Hume, the initial qualities that excite love or hatred are precisely those which, when present in ourselves, provoke a sense of pride or humility: excess or lack of physical beauty, wit, virtue, knowledge and good humour. He allows that in the case of love and hate the mechanism relating two impressions is not as evident as with pride and humility since the initial impression of pleasure or pain is indistinguishable from the second reflective impression of love or hate. This has two consequences for the shape of the passion: in love and hate the person as a whole is taken to be the triggering cause and not any particular quality, but at the same time that person as a whole is filtered through a particular salient quality: in other words, love and hate work through metonymies that confuse part with whole, and this confusion is going to play an essential role in some of the locating mechanisms at work in the passions.

Hume places love and hatred at the same level as pride and humility: they are primary passions. They have a social function: love creates a minimal group, a couple of friends or a romantic couple. Hatred creates a minimal dispersion or repulsion between two rivals or enemies. Before examining how larger groups and larger repulsions are formed, Hume shows how social groups and repulsions can be linked to social ranking via compound passions or transitions between passions. His example is a vicious brother – some kind of black sheep of the family. An initial painful impression – an incident – gives rise to an idea of a vice; this vice is associated with the idea of the brother as a whole person, which facilitates an association of impressions and provokes hatred of him. Hatred is thus the first passion making up this compound passion. The same painful impression and the subsequent idea of vice also provokes humility since the idea of one's brother leads to the idea of oneself and of one's family (T 2.2.2.12). There is a thus a transition from hatred to humility, which is the second passion making up this compound passion. Once the brother's vices are known, they will bring shame on the entire family and thus lower its social reputation. Hence, the group – the family – is located on a scale of social ranks with regard to other families via a mechanism that is triggered by just one unpleasant sensation. Evidently this same operation of social location can occur multiple times in the same day, with different triggers and thus with different consequences. Humility brought about by my brother's vice could be compensated for by pride provoked by my sister's virtue and vice versa, not to mention the compounding effect of the sins of the father, once known, or the virtue of the mother or vice versa. The compound passions accumulate and average out over periods of time in their comparative locating of the family on the scale of social ranks, but these averages themselves are not stable but purely conjunctural. In other

words, no person or group can be said to possess a social rank; there are only repeated operations of being differentially located at a particular rank relative to other persons and groups.

LOCATION OF A SELF ON A GROUP AND GROUP FORMATION

The obvious question that has not yet been addressed is that of the initial formation of groups: what role do the passions play in the constitution of groups? Hume appears to have two accounts of group formation, both using the mechanism of love. The first is one of collateral affection for the family and friends of the beloved: simply put, love spreads. Again, there is a transition of the passions, but not from one passion to a different passion; rather, the same passion transfers from one object to other objects. There is a primary object of love or hate, and then these passions usually "extend themselves towards all the contiguous objects, and comprehend the friends and relations of him we love or hate" (T 2.2.2.18). We form an association between ourselves and an entire group; however, this group is marked by the priority of our affection for one of its members. Let's call him or her the 'salient individual'. Hume is careful to point out that the mechanism of collateral affection occurs with far greater facility when our initial object is the salient individual, that is, "the more considerable" of the members of the group. For instance, we develop affection for the children and the partner of our friend, but we do not easily pass from friendship with a child to affection for his or her parents.

At this point in his exposé, Hume seems to be acknowledging, without directly theorising it, the existence of hierarchy within groups, specifically patriarchal hierarchy: "'Tis more natural for us to love the son on account of the father, than the father on account of the son; the servant for the master, than the master for the servant; the subject for the prince, than the prince for the subject" (T 2.2.2.19). Confirming the role of social hierarchy in forming the passions, he says, "In short, our passions, like other objects, descend with greater facility than they ascend" (T 2.2.2.19). To explain this phenomenon, he introduces another element of his 'dynamics of the passions'. In general, he claims, the imagination is both parochial, and starstruck: that is, the imagination passes with far greater facility from remote objects to close objects than it does from close objects to the remote; we like to imagine what is close and familiar. In a similar manner, the imagination 'takes most notice' of "whatever has the greatest influence" or "what appears of considerable moment" or "whatever is important" within a subject (T 2.2.2.20; T 2.1.9.13).

But why would the imagination be struck within a family by the importance of the father over that of a child or the mother? What is it that determines the degree of influence of an object for the imagination? There is no

prior order or ranking of entities in Hume's philosophy, whether social, cosmological or ontological: no 'great chain of being', no ontological priority of substance over its properties, so he cannot simply assume such in his theory of the passions. Indeed, as we shall see, the relative importance of an object can only ever be a function of an accumulation of prior associations of ideas on the part of the imagination. Whatever appears important is simply whatever object more people have imagined or whatever has been the object of more intense passion or the object of more frequent passions on the part of the same person. Internal group hierarchy is a sheer function of habit. For this reason, although patriarchal prejudice is quite determinate in Hume's presentation of his theory, at a strictly formal level its place is quite contingent: it could be replaced by any other set of systematic prejudices and habits, and the same internal group hierarchies would hold.

The formal consequence of this mechanism of collateral affection is that by its means an individual's relationship to a group does not change the latter's internal hierarchy. At a more general level, collateral affection does create groups composed of friends and their respective families, but it is not constitutive of the initial groups, the families. The latter must be constituted by another mechanism.

If there is no natural or divine ground of social ranking and if the importance of the objects of the passions is a function of their differential location with regard to other objects rather than any intrinsic quality, then the passions are potentially quite volatile: habits form and stay, but they can also fade, fall away and be broken.

Hume's second account of group formation meets this challenge of volatility by basing itself on our desire for lasting entertainment. According to Hume, human beings are driven to seek encounters with people to satisfy their need for mental diversion and entertainment. With this thesis alone, Hume is going to have a problem. If love is triggered by the experience of pleasure provoked by other people's qualities, such as wit, good humour or beauty, then what is to stop someone from moving from one encounter to the next, never stopping, never getting tired of the same qualities, always seeking new thrills? Society would end up being one big speed-dating machine. So Hume adds a second thesis: human beings are driven to repeat encounters with the same persons and thereby form relationships. Encounters with the same people create habits which facilitate further associations of ideas. Yet this mechanism does not explain why it is that we form relationships with certain people and not others – this is where Hume's associationism plays a role. He says,

> The passion of love may be excited by only one relation betwixt ourselves and
> the object. . . . Whoever is united to us by any connexion is always sure of a

share of our love, proportion'd to the connexion, without enquiring into his other qualities. (T 2.2.4.2)

These connections range from blood and kinship to being neighbours, practising the same profession and being citizens of the same country. Even when no such direct relation can be identified, mere acquaintance and familiarity can breed a connection (T 2.2.4.3). An immediate objection might arise here: we don't conceive friendship or attachment for every neighbour we bump into regularly, nor for every person who shares our trade, far less our nationality. A response to this objection can be found in another mechanism Hume identifies, one that selects potential friends with far more precision than contingent encounters: the mechanism of sympathy through resemblance. Hume notes that those with similar characters seek each other out: "men of gay tempers naturally love the gay, as the serious bear an affection to the serious" (T 2.2.4.6). This resemblance of character provokes sympathy as indeed can any relationship based on a commonality as listed above. Sympathy is a mechanism by which one thinking being imagines the feelings – the impressions and ideas – of another thinking being: later on Hume will explicitly state that it lies at the basis of all social groups in the form of a universal "desire for society" (T 2.2.5.15). Sympathy is an agreeable passion because it intensifies our idea of our own self – an idea which is always present – into a lively impression. This is a notable exception to the rule of the priority of impressions over ideas. This intensification of the feeling of self occurs when we notice another person having an impression which highly resembles impressions that we often experience. In other words, we seize on common ground with others because it enlivens our sense of selfhood (T 2.2.4.7).

If one adds the mechanism of sympathy to the association of self and other via some common property, one then has an explanation of why people seek encounters with particular people and not just anyone. But why is it that we seek to repeat encounters not just with a type of person but with the same individual? How is it that lasting social groups are formed? There must be another dynamic of the passions at work, and indeed Hume states that each transition from the idea of our self to the idea of our friend facilitates further such transitions: repeated associations of the same ideas facilitate further reinforcement of the relationship (T 2.3.5.7). The reason behind this mechanism is that "every lively idea is agreeable", and whatever enlivens our ideas further, or intensifies our passion, is even more agreeable. Hume writes, "custom also, or acquaintance facilitates the entrance, and strengthens the conception of any object" (T 2.2.4.5). Indeed, one of the general principles of Hume's theory is that human beings continually seek to intensify their passions. A habitual relation with people with whom we sympathize will do just that by strengthening the passion of love. This is the mechanism that lies

behind fidelity to friend and family and enables the formation of lasting social groups.

Hume's theory of the passions accounts for the formation of social groups through mechanisms of collateral love and sympathy. What is not foregrounded in his account but logically follows from his theses is the role of hatred and antipathy in the formation of social divisions and antagonisms. These mechanisms are not necessarily separate from those that form groups and alliances: hatred of certain kinds of people can be the reverse side of one's love for other kinds of people, just as one's pride in one's own qualities can involve, through differential ranking, the disqualification and marking down of other people's qualities, thus provoking their own sentiment of humility if we communicate our judgement to them (T 2.2.2.27).

There are two other phenomena that Hume covers in his account of group formation: one concerns concentric spheres of sociality, and the other concerns infidelity and the dissolution of groups.

In the list of qualities that can give rise to an association between the self and other persons, it is evident that the relationships run from the very close – kinship – to the quite distant – common nationality. Despite how distant the relationship created by common nationality, Hume does insist that it gives rise to a degree of affection and thus a group. Moreover, in certain contexts – such as organized antagonism between different nations or a community of expatriates – common nationality can form quite a strong bond. Evidently one and the same person can belong to different groups, and those groups will differ quantitatively by population and qualitatively by the intensity of affection binding the members together. As a general rule, the larger and more diffuse the group, the less intense the affection. Groups can thus be ranked by the degree of affection that ties their members together, and the smallest unit – the couple or the family – will usually be glued together by the most intense passion, with circles of friends, acquaintances and neighbours following, such that the groups to which a person belongs form so many concentric spheres that become more and more porous and diffuse, if the image will hold.

It is far more difficult to find an image for increasing degrees of separation and repulsion between oneself and those people or groups of people that one hates. There are those people who by merely belonging to a generalized group of 'foreigners' or 'strangers' may cause us mild uneasiness and dislike, and then there are rising degrees of dislike and hatred for diverse groups and individuals increasing all the way to those singular enemies for whom we conceive an intense hatred. What is striking about Hume's account of hatred is that it becomes quite clear how intense repulsion presumes a very strong association of ideas, a solid relationship, and thus, whilst it is experienced as division, it does create a stable social formation.

Hume explores the constructive side of dislike and hatred through the topic of partiality. The concentric spheres of attachment form what he terms "the partiality of the passions", remarking that "our strongest attention is confined to ourselves; our next is extended to our relations and acquaintance; and 'tis only the weakest which reaches strangers and indifferent persons" (T 3.2.2.8). Our preference for familiar individuals and groups can even cloud our judgement: though a city may at first be perceived as ugly and incommodious, through gradual acquaintance our "aversion diminishes by degrees, and at last changes into the opposite passion" (T 2.2.4.8). In this example, such partiality through acquaintance seems relatively innocent and somewhat positive, a way of making a virtue out of necessity. But it becomes less innocuous when "the mind", as Hume notes, fails to notice or enquire into new or strange objects due to its preference for the habitual (T 2.2.4.8). These unfamiliar and neglected objects may well have turned out to be more valuable to the subject, and thus the partiality of our passions can work against our interest. But this blindness can also occur in our relationships to other people. Hume points out that the identity of the people we tend to love and hate is often determined by what groups we are actually located inside and, in particular, by how we imagine the other's intentions with regard to ourselves (T 2.2.3.4–6). People who remain unfamiliar and whom we neglect may well have proven to be more valuable – more loving, more faithful – than those individuals whom our habits have led us to love, and so again the partiality of our passions can work against our interest.

Yet it is not the case that we can simply choose to be entirely open, continually embrace the unfamiliar and become perfectly cosmopolitan in our relationships. Nor can we regulate our passions through the application of reason as maximizing self-interest, thereby ensuring that we love only those people who will prove most valuable to us. The provinciality of habit cannot be undone since the intensification of the passions through repetition is part of habit's very operation. Nor can we exit habit and prejudice by leaving behind all social relationships, as if to incarnate the anchorite's illusion. In Hume's system, it is not possible for a self to exist outside any attachments or groups, independently of any scale of social ranks (T 2.2.3.13–14). Selves exist through being located, and they are given determinate content via such locations. Proud or humiliated selves appear on a differential scale of social ranks vis-à-vis other selves via their association with certain objects and qualities. Loving or hating selves appear as coupled and close to another person or as coupled to yet repelled from another person. Via collateral affection, a loving or hating self might be coupled and close to a group of people or coupled to and repelled by a group of people, each time the relationship passing via the 'salient individual' of that group, as we shall soon see. Through the long-term operations of sympathy, a loving or hating self might be located inside a group, and that group may in turn be located

inside wider and more diffuse groups. A self's passional locations depend both on conjunctures of habits and on the contingency of other people's locations, but there is no way to escape passional location per se: it is our fate, we do not exist independently of it. As Hume writes, "Ourself, independent of the perception of every other object, is in reality nothing", the self being nothing more than "that succession of related ideas and impressions, of which we have an intimate memory and consciousness" (T 2.2.2.17; T 2.1.2.2). To say that the self exists via its location by the passions and to admit the inescapable partiality of the passions is not to say that habits and prejudices are permanent. In Hume's theory, novelty can intensify passion, and certain habits do change: it is precisely the dynamics of such change that will form the object of enquiry of a later section.

THE DISSOLUTION OF GROUPS

After group formation, the second major phenomenon Hume investigates after partiality is that of group dissolution. Again, Hume's case study is limited by his own prejudices and the widespread prejudices of his time. The case study supposes the existence – and the normality – of a patriarchal set of 'general rules' that order society. Despite its limits, this example may serve us by generating a formal microcosm of *any* social hierarchy per se. In our epoch, we reject patriarchal structures. Some, paradoxically, still accept other forms of hierarchy as natural: to the point that Michelle Obama found it necessary to point out that "That shit – 'leaning in' – doesn't work all the time", leaning in being a liberal feminist technique which leaves structural economic inequality and institutional racism untouched. Others understand that it is quite logical to struggle against all forms of hierarchical differentiation. In such struggle a formal definition of microhierarchy, as embedded and actualized in a configuration of passions, can be of great use despite its original presentation being mired in the blind stupidity of patriarchal prejudice.

Hume's case study concerns broken fidelity, but the situation is complicated: the fidelity is broken through a combination of circumstances and viewpoints. A woman's husband, with whom she has had several children, dies. The woman subsequently remarries. In Hume's estimation, this remarriage, in the eyes of her children, considerably diminishes the strength of her relation to them, quite independently of any disappointments in their material interests. It happens, Hume writes, "merely because she has become part of another family" (T 2.2.4.9). He then notes a curious phenomenon: "This also takes place with regard to the second marriage of a father; but in a much less degree" (T 2.2.4.9). To explain this asymmetry, Hume turns to the imagination and how it experiences and forms relationships. He sets out a theorem

which seems to build exclusivity and jealousy into the very foundations of his theory:

> In order to produce a perfect relation betwixt objects, 'tis requisite, not only that the imagination be conveyed from one to the other by resemblance, contiguity or causation, but also that it return back from the second to the first with the same ease and facility. (T 2.2.4.10)

It may appear as though each of these relations of resemblance, contiguity and causation is reciprocal, but if it so happens that the second object also entertains a strong relationship of causality or resemblance with a third object, the imagination will be conveyed from the first to the second and then to the third object and thus less easily back to the first object. In the case in question, the mother now has strong relations of contiguity, resemblance and causality with a whole set of 'third' objects, namely, her new husband and new children, and so the fancy, as Hume concludes, cannot "return . . . from her to myself" so easily, and so my relationship to my mother is weakened (T 2.2.4.10).

Why then does this not occur in the case of the father's remarriage? Here, Hume reintroduces the theorem of the salient individual that we met in the mechanism of collateral affection; that is, the imagination "goes easily from the view of a lesser object to that of a greater, yet it returns not with the same facility from the greater to the less" (T 2.2.4.12). Each time this theorem is invoked in Hume's account of the passions it is a question of explaining – and assuming as normal – the prior existence of a patriarchal order in society (T 2.1.9.13; T 2.2.2.20). As such, according to Hume, when I think of my remarried father my imagination is not led with facility to a third object, his new wife, because she is a lesser object than he. In contrast, when I think of my remarried mother, my imagination is easily led to her husband since he is a greater object than she. Indeed, in a striking turn of phrase Hume asserts that the remarried father "is not sunk in the new relation he acquires" (T 2.2.4.11). To be *sunk in a relationship* is not a mere metaphor in Hume's theory: it is a precise topological concept of a type of location of a self. The remarried wife is sunk in her relationship to her new husband. This position means that her ability to form and maintain relationships is not destroyed but curtailed, and reciprocally the ability of other people to form and maintain relationships with her is also curtailed: this analysis offers us a concept of oppression. Take the position of the remarried father: Hume says he is 'not sunk in a relationship'. We can take a step further than Hume by stating that the husband may be 'raised in a relationship' insofar as his ability to form and maintain relationships is augmented by his new family, as is that of other people to form and maintain relationships with him. If the imagination does have a tendency to return with facility from lesser to greater objects, the more

related lesser objects a patriarch surrounds himself with, the more people's imagination will travel to him as the greater object.

However, just when we thought we had discovered the topological structure lying behind many forms of social domination – beyond the patriarchal limits of Hume's example – a contradiction rears its head. When Hume explains the phenomenon of collateral love for the children of one's friend, he states that the imagination passes more easily *from the greater to the lesser object* than the inverse (T 2.2.2.19, emphasis added). However, when he explains the asymmetry of the remarried husband's relation to his children from his former marriage, he states that the imagination goes easily *from the view of lesser object to that of a greater*, yet it returns not with the same facility from the greater to the less (T 2.2.4.12, emphasis added). The danger here is that if Hume uses inconsistent principles to explain different phenomena, his explanatory science of human nature will prove incoherent. What is still more troubling is that at base it is the same theorem at stake in the two situations, the theorem of the salient individual in a group.

The contradiction can be dissolved in two manners. First, the two situations are quite different: remarriage does not involve collateral affection. Collateral affection concerns the initial formation of a group and the initial outgoing passage of one passion: love. Moreover, the social rank of my friend is unimportant in the formation of love. Rank plays a role inside the family only when my love spreads to my friend's children (lesser objects). In the case of the broken fidelity, the first group, that of the defunct husband's family, has already been formed, and it is about to be dissolved via the formation of the second new family. This case involves a compound of passions: love, hatred, respect, sympathy, pity, humility and pride. Many of the latter passions imply social ranking in their very constitution. Consequently, the location of the remarried mother on social ranks is fundamental. Her rank is now determined by her new husband's proper name: he is the salient individual and hence operates as a metonymy of the new family. In other words, in the imagination's outward journey from the self of the former children, it goes easily from lesser (the mother) to greater (the new husband) because the greater object has absorbed the lesser – given, of course, the prejudices of those times. It is thus not so much a case of the imagination ascending from the lesser to the greater object – a direction Hume does not favour – as of the imagination being attracted directly to the greater object, the new husband.

In the subsequent operation of the imagination for the children, the return journey, they are not led immediately back from the new husband to their mother and from her to themselves. Why does this blockage occur? If the same mechanism occurred as in collateral affection, the imagination would descend easily from greater to lesser objects and thus from new husband to wife to children from the first marriage. The difference is that collateral

affection takes place within one homogeneous group, between a greater ob-
ject and lesser but related objects. In this case of remarriage, the former
children are certainly lesser objects, but they are not related to the new
husband by resemblance, contiguity or causality.

By way of contrast, let's consider the operation of the childrens' imagina-
tion within the initial family, before their father died. They entertained a
strong relationship of resemblance, contiguity and causality with their father.
For that reason, when their imagination passed from their mother to him, it
then returned back to them with ease.

Consider the case of the remarried father. When his children from his first
marriage think of him, their imagination is not led to any greater object than
him. Hence, the preexisting relationship that his children have to him in-
volves an easy return passage from the greater object (him) back to the lesser
object (themselves). The new wife is not a great enough object to hinder such
passage.

This last point brings us to the second aspect of our dissolution of this
apparent contradiction in Hume's theory of the passions. The question with
the phenomenon of broken fidelity is not one of a simple passage in the
creation of a new relationship for the self; it is rather one of the *return
passage* of the imagination, once a relationship has already been constructed
by another self. In fact, it is actually the same principle of dynamics at work
in both passages: in its repetition of associations, the imagination is attracted
to the greater object rather than the lesser object. The imagination of the
children passes to their former mother (a lesser object) and from her to her
new husband (greater object), and then it returns to her (as his new wife), but
it does not return to them (lesser objects) but is rather attracted again to the
new husband (greater object). In short, in its transitions, the imagination
finds it easier to return to the greater object, and it can do so via other
intermediary objects, lesser but related objects. We can see that this compara-
tive ease of return to greater object is also at work in the phenomenon of
collateral affection: once we have affection for our friend's children, that
affection returns our imagination to him and reinforces our affection for him.

Our dissolution of the apparent contradiction in Hume's dynamics of the
passions hence gives rise to a revised theorem. The imagination returns with
more facility to the greater object through the lesser object than it would
return to the lesser object through the greater object.

To return to the general question of the dissolution of groups, in the case
of the remarried mother, her fidelity is broken in the eyes of her children, and
so the coherence of the first group, the initial family, dissolves. In the case of
the remarried father, the fidelity is not broken in the eyes of the children, and
so the coherence of the first group, the initial family, remains intact. A group
dissolves when its fidelity is broken through one of its members constituting
a new fidelity in which he or she is 'sunk'. A group is augmented when its

salient member constitutes a new fidelity that surrounds him or her with additional 'lesser objects'.

LOCATION ON AN ENVELOPE

The position of being 'sunk in a relationship' generates a new formal operator in our topography of the passions: that of the *envelope*.[1] An envelope is both an object that contains other objects and a compound intensifier of passion. It contains other objects by being located on a higher social rank than they and also by having a greater passional intensity than they do through accumulative associations of ideas. An envelope is not an impermeable boundary and does not divide an outside from an inside. Indeed, there is no such thing as a discrete outside or inside within a Humean topology of the passions. Rather, an envelope 'contains' objects in that it severely curtails – without destroying – their capacity to create and maintain relationships to objects that do not belong to the envelope. The envelope's pertinence as a topographical operator in Hume's theory of the passions can be demonstrated through two other cases.

Take Hume's examination of the role of 'external advantages' in the mechanism of pride, in particular, pride in the external advantages of one's own family and in the family name. Hume wants to account for the pride or humility we might feel on account of the qualities or feats of a distant ancestor. We have already seen that one of the simple intensifiers of passion is proximity. In terms of proximity it would seem quite difficult for someone to develop a strong association with a distant ancestor. He may well be causally related to us, but down through many intermediate and unfamiliar generations. As Hume explains in his very first exposition of the association of ideas,

> Cousins in the fourth degree are connected by *causation*, if I may be allowed to use that term, but not so closely as brothers, much less as child and parent. In general we may observe, that all the relations of blood depend upon cause and effect, and are esteemed near or remote, according to the number of connecting causes interposed betwixt the persons. (T 1.1.4.3)

However, there is a remedy for this weakness of association with a distant ancestor, and it lies in the connection of the family name to a piece of real estate that is transmitted from generation to generation:

> Now 'tis certain the identity of possession [continuity of ownership in one family] strengthens the relation of ideas arising from blood and kindred, and conveys the fancy with greater facility from one generation to another, from the remotest ancestors to their posterity, who are both their heirs and their descendants. (T 2.1.9.12)

The role played by the family estate here is that of a compound intensifier of passion, in this case the passion of pride. The association with the distant ancestor – which is fairly weak at the level of causality – is reinforced by the operation of contiguity. I touch the walls that he touched, walk on the land he walked on. The association is also reinforced by the operation of resemblance: my house is the same as his house. If Hume does not consider the case of the ancestors of a tenant farmer or those of a serf whose family has been living, at the lord's pleasure, in the same hovel for generations, it might be because what is essential is a connection between the family name and the actual property title. Hume's example is one in which the family property is a kind of permanent inheritance via primogeniture; that is, no generation is free to sell off or subdivide the family home – in Smith's history of jurisprudence this is a form of entail. The binding of the surname to the property is thus bigger, in a sense, and more autonomous than any one generation of the family or any family member: it has a higher passional intensity than the ideas of those individuals that it contains. They are all, patriarch or not, sunk in a relation to it. In psychoanalytic terms, we could say that in such a family a particular association of ideas has already been carved out in the symbolic order and each individual is sown into it in turn. This is how the long-standing family property handed down through the generations provides us with an instance of an envelope. We can easily imagine other familial envelopes, even those that cause humility for later generations, such as the sins of the father. Oedipus cast just such a shadow over his children, and the question raised by Antigone is precisely that of how to dissolve an envelope.

The third example of an envelope comes from Hume's analysis of our ideas of the other's action. The phenomenon he begins with is that of other people proving either useful to us or harmful and thus exciting our affection or our ill will. To illustrate just how far the partiality of our passions goes, he takes the example of how we relate to public enemies or antagonistic groups: "When our nation is at war with any other, we detest them under the character of cruel, perfidious, unjust and violent: But always esteem ourselves and allies equitable, moderate, and merciful" (T 2.2.3.2). This distortion of judgement concerns not just the enemy group but also salient individuals in that group, and here his example is pertinent to our study of the *History*: "If the general of our enemies be successful, it is with difficulty we allow him the figure and character of a man. He is a sorcerer: He has a communication with demons; as is reported of *Oliver Cromwell*" (T 2.2.3.2).

In order to form a stable relationship of hatred with an enemy, a single impression of harm to the self due to an enemy's action is not sufficient. Indeed, Hume makes a larger ontological point: an action in itself does not last but "passes in a moment, and is as if it had never been". The relation of an action to its agent as cause is "too feeble and inconstant to be a foundation for the passions" (T 2.2.3.4). In order to secure a foundation for the passions,

an intention or design must be attributed to another self. An intention lasts beyond an individual action; as such, it could give rise to further actions. An intention provides a passional location or target for our judgement, and it allows us to grasp agency. Rather than an accidental relation between the action and another person, the latter is transformed into a cause of the action and is perceived to possess that action: he or she becomes its 'agent'.

The attribution of a hostile intention to an agent also intensifies the impression of harm and furthermore secures the idea of purposeful injury. It does so by facilitating the association of impressions between the recipient's humility – having been injured and diminished – and the agent's perceived passions of contempt and hatred. To extrapolate from Hume's argument, if the antagonist's hostile intention were perceived to be a long-term design and not just extinguished after one action, then the recipient's sensation of harm and injury would be all the greater. Here again, we have the relatively intense idea of an object – an intention or design – which in turn contains ideas of lesser intensity: those of individual actions, their consequences and their agent. We form relationships with the intention rather than with the individual actions or the agent. Indeed, Hume writes, "We can never think of him without reflecting on these qualities [shown by the intention]; unless repentance and a change of life have produced an alteration in that respect" (T 2.2.3.4). The individual to whom that intention is attributed is thus 'sunk in that relation' to an attributed intention.

Through these three examples – the remarried mother sunk in her new family, the family member sunk in the history of the family property and the antagonist sunk in his supposed hostile intention – we can see how the operator of the envelope locates an individual within a region and does so in an almost exclusive manner, reducing that individual's capacity to form and maintain other relationships. In particular, once an individual is situated in a region via an envelope, the envelope also determines how the individual will relate to other regions, namely, via the dominant region-to-region relationship established by that envelope. Recall Hume's example of how we systematically detest the soldiers of a nation with whom we are at war, condemning them as cruel and unjust, and systematically approve of our own soldiers as brave, just and presumably incapable of war crimes (T 2.2.3.2). This passage suggests a hypothesis: region-to-region relationships thus occur 'under a character trait', where that trait is precisely the kind of quality that provokes love and hatred, pride and humility.

LOCATING A GROUP ON ANOTHER GROUP

The most extensive treatment of region-to-region relationships in Hume occurs in his analysis of the mechanisms of pity and malice, which will lead us

into the complex question of extended sympathy. Our argument is that Hume's theory of the passions constructs society through a topology; that is, through a combination of locating mechanisms. We have seen how individuals can be located inside groups, on a scale of social ranks and on a scale of intensity of passion. We have also seen how an entire group – such as a family – can be located inside another group, like an extended family or a neighbourhood. What we are now looking for is a formal mechanism that locates one group with regard to another group but not inside it.

Hume defines the 'secondary passions' of pity and malice in the following manner: "Pity is a concern for, and malice a joy in the sufferings of others, without any friendship or enmity to motivate these passions" (T 2.2.7.1). At a formal level, we thus have no prior relationship of love or hatred to these other individuals, no prior belonging to a group together and no prior repulsion from them. These are people we happen to encounter during our daily life – for instance, Hume says "pity depends, in a great measure, on the contiguity, and even sight of the object" (T 2.2.7.4).

In the case of pity, it is the mechanism of sympathy that enters into play: I feel sympathy for another person's pain. Here, Hume has recourse to a far more general basis for sympathy than the common qualities he refers to when explaining the formation of friendships and groups. The common ground we share with those persons we pity is simply the fact of being human: "all human beings are related to us by resemblance" (T 2.2.7.2). I have a 'lively idea' of the other's passion: of her or his pain or pleasure. There is already an association of contiguity between the idea of myself and that of the other self through some kind of encounter. To that is added an association via resemblance in that we are both human. These associations of resemblance and contiguity bring about a transition of ideas between other and self, and given the liveliness of my idea of the other's pain or pleasure, this idea is "easily converted into an impression", and I imagine feeling the same pain or pleasure as the other (T 2.2.7.2). Hume then shows how 'general rules' determine the occurrence and degree of our pity. He claims that "we find from experience, that such a degree of passion is usually connected with such a misfortune" (T 2.2.7.5). For this reason, if we witness someone bearing great misfortune with relative equanimity, we are moved to pity him or her all the more. Given that he has just spoken of a spectator's pity for the hero of a tragedy, we tend to imagine Hume is referring to disasters when he speaks of misfortune, but as his parallel treatment of malice shows, misfortune can quite easily refer to simple social rank: someone who is poor has suffered misfortune.

These general rules thus also match degrees of social rank with levels of explicit suffering. So, when I pity someone in pain, through the operation of a general rule, I unconsciously match them to a social rank and compare their expression of suffering with what is normal for such a situation. As such,

through pity I relate not to a singular individual in all of his or her complexity but to a social type, to a category of individual. This means that pity is a passion that locates the self with regard to an entire group, a group that is usually indexed on a lower social rank. However, given that we met earlier with a case of sympathy for an unhappy king, a question arises as to how an individual might feel pity for someone of a higher social rank than herself.

In the case of malice, we feel delight in the misery of another and uneasiness upon evidence of his happiness. The reason for this is that our own passions of happiness and misery are intensified by a differential comparison: "the misery of another gives us a more lively idea of our happiness, and his happiness of our misery" (T 2.2.8.8). The general mechanism of comparison, in Hume's analysis, entails that "A small object makes a great one appear still greater. A great object makes a little one appear less" (T 2.2.8.9). The passion of malice thus locates us as higher than or lower than another person on a single scale of happiness and misery. Through this passion, we relate to the other person as a mere index of a degree of happiness.

In the case of envy, our level of happiness or misery is evaluated as a function of our own social rank:

> We feel greater or less satisfaction . . . from reflecting on our own condition and circumstances in proportion as they appear more or less fortunate or unhappy, in proportion to the degrees of riches, and power, and merit, and reputation, which we think ourselves possessed of. (T 2.2.8.8)

To compound rank with differential location, we estimate our own fortune, our own degree of power, wealth, merit and reputation, by comparison with the condition of others. Again, through envy, we are relating not to the singularity of another person but to her perceived degree of riches, power, merit and reputation, that is, to her as the index of a social rank or a social type. Hume also points out that we envy the enjoyment of those who are socially superior to us but not those people who are vastly superior since there is little association of ideas between ourselves and them on the basis of resemblance. Consequently, our envy is provoked by those who are socially close to ourselves, who are solely one or two ranks above us: "A common soldier bears no such envy to his general as to his sergeant or corporal" (T 2.2.9.13). Hume's theorem has a convenient consequence for the rich and powerful: it removes any fear of violent envy on the part of the poor and powerless. Envy is more a matter of microdifferentiation within a social bracket than between separate social brackets. Indeed, for Hume, we can also be located by envy on the enjoyment of people who are socially inferior to us. If the degree and quality of their enjoyment approaches our own, we become uneasy, and the proximity "is even disagreeable"; consequently, there is a passage to action, which brings envy close to malice: "we desire a

greater distance, in order to augment still more the idea of ourself" (T 2.2.9.12). So we seek either to suppress our inferiors to a lower rank or to rise even further above them, and our greatest unease is provoked by those social climbers who threaten to overtake and pass us. In a case that Hume does not treat but that one can extrapolate from his theory, we would experience both malice and the dissolution of our envy if we were to perceive a former superior, on whom we had been located by hate and humility, to fall to the point of becoming our inferior.

These operations of envy reveal still further the plasticity and relativity of social ranks we remarked on earlier. In the society that Hume theorizes, there may well be external marks of social rank, but these marks are all subject to differential evaluation and thus cannot guarantee the stability of a rank. People cannot hold on to a social rank in a lasting manner, but this is not simply due to the accidents of fortune. Hume's dynamics are far more radical: there is no such thing as a stable rank that one might hold on to, just as there is no such thing as an object's "intrinsic worth" (T 2.1.6.4; T 2.1.8.8; T 2.2.8.2). These ranks of enjoyment or suffering exist only through mechanisms of pity, envy, pride and malice. If rank exists only in the moment of active differentiation from another self, then no rank is secure or stable for long. This is why we continually feel the need to reinforce our remembered rank by instantiating it again, either by actively suppressing our inferiors to an even lower rank or by asserting our rise still further above them.

Pity and malice locate an individual not in relation to another individual but to a person as a social type, as representative of a category, as the index of a rank in an order of enjoyment or suffering. Our object of enquiry, however, is group-to-group relationships. To envisage these relationships it is enough to realize that for Hume the individual is always already located within a group constructed through love and sympathy, such as a family or the far more diffuse group of one's fellow villagers. The self is a sequence of ideas and impressions, and the elements of that sequence depend on the groups in which an individual has been located. My ten-year-old self lived on Greenvalley Avenue, where there was an older boy located by intense pride on his silver chromoly Mongoose BMX with blue Tuffs. His mates rode heavier steel-framed bikes with wire-spoked rims. Two even older brothers looked down on the whole BMX crowd from the heights of their racing bikes rocketing down Kitchener street's fifteen-degree slope no hands, leaning into the ninety-degree turn into Greenvalley Avenue with their arms crossed and a shit-eating grin: their rank was maximal.

The compound passion of love of gravity and death-risking pride located those brothers on a group and on a high social rank that repelled that group from any rival adolescent male group within the region 'Greenvalley Avenue'. At school, yet another rival group was hated because of specific qual-

ities that caused displeasure: the marble-wash skinnies they wore, the Win-
field reds they smoked, the cars they drove, the AC/DC they listened to.

In general, the other group is indexed onto a rank of enjoyment via specif-
ic measures of wealth, power, merit or reputation. We can confirm the
hypothesis that group-to-group relationships 'occur under a character trait'
by generalizing it: in the formation of groups and their location inside larger
groups, they are figured by the passions as finite collections of individuals
unified by a common salient property.

In contrast, when it comes to group-to-group locating via the passions of
malice and envy or via the compound passion of snobbery, the group is
figured as an index, as the instantiation of an entire category which is differ-
ent to another category, little matter how many or which actual individuals
belong to the group at that moment. Indeed, 'group' is not quite the appropri-
ate term: an indexed social rank is indeed a collection of individuals, but it is
a category or an order of size rather than a particular identity. There is no
other quality uniting the individuals apart from their salient quality and their
perceived social rank, and that ranking is instantaneous and differential: there
is nothing in such a location of a collection of individuals that would give it
the duration or substance of a group. For this reason, let's distinguish two
types of collective location: the location of one group inside another group
and the location of one region upon another region by ranking via a salient
quality.

LOCATION ON A GROUP THROUGH TIME

A group differs from a region in that it lasts, perhaps through repeated inter-
nal locations of the same selves on it. The identity of a group lies in an
absence of substantial change in membership over a period of time. This
raises the question of how duration enters into the passions. Hume repeatedly
remarks the inherent inertia of the passions: once we have a passion, we seek
further impressions and ideas to reinforce that passion; as he writes, "all
passions avoid as much as possible" any diminution (T 2.2.3.10). Such iner-
tia involves duration but is not in itself a locating operation. We find the
latter in the second mechanism Hume discovers behind the occurrence of
certain passions: the mechanism of 'parallel directions' or 'extended sympa-
thy'.

Hume is led to this mechanism by problems he encounters when trying to
account for pity and malice via the double relation of ideas and impressions.
According to the latter, pity, triggered by an impression of pain in another
person, should give rise to hate. Likewise, malice, which involves pleasure
triggered by another person's pain, should therefore give rise to love. To
explain why the opposite occurs – pity giving rise to love and malice to

hatred – Hume introduces the alternative mechanism of 'parallel directions'. This mechanism enables a 'transition of passions' from pity to love and malice to hatred. These transitions are enabled not by the initial impressions of the first passions but by what Hume calls "the whole bent or tendency of [the passions] from beginning to end" or their "impulses or directions" (T 2.2.9.2). That is, these passions give rise to a motivation for action in the form of desire or aversion. Pity involves aversion to the other's misery and a desire for his happiness, whilst malice the inverse (T 2.2.9.3). Since benevolence involves exactly the same aversion to the other's misery and desire for her or his happiness, there is a 'parallel direction of the affections', and an easy transition occurs from pity to benevolence. In turn, there is a natural linkage of benevolence with love, and thus the passage from pity to love is explained.

Hume immediately illustrates this mechanism of parallel directions with two cases of what we now call collective action problems. In the first case, two practitioners of the same trade seek employment in the same town, but the town isn't big enough for both of them. Only one can succeed, and her success entails the other's failure: it's a zero-sum game based on scarcity of opportunities with an exclusive good. In the second case, two merchants living in different parts of the world enter into a partnership, and the success of one rejoices the other just as her failure causes the other pain. In both cases, the interest of one protagonist is tied to the other protagonist's interest such that her happiness or misery depends on that of the other. The double relation of ideas and impressions cannot explain the contrast between the constant hatred of the rival and the changing impressions: joy when the rival fails, grief when the rival succeeds. How can joy arise from the unpleasant impression of someone's failure? Why doesn't that joy give rise to love? It is rather the mechanism of parallel directions of the affections that explains the constant hatred of the rival and the constant love of the partner. In both cases, my passions and those of my rival or partner are tied together by interest. I feel joy when my partner succeeds and sadness when she fails because I benefit directly from her success, and so our passions run in parallel. This similarity is a form of pity, which in turn runs parallel to benevolence since both involve a tendency to action. Benevolence in turn naturally gives rise to love. In the case of the rival, our passions run in parallel but inverted: I feel joy when he feels sadness and vice versa. Hence, I locate myself on my rival by the passion of malice. Malice, in turn, runs parallel to anger and its tendency to action. Anger then naturally gives rise to hatred, and so I hate my rival.

Hume also employs the concept of sympathy in his explanation of the parallel directions of affections, in particular what he terms *extended sympathy* (T 2.2.9.9). Extended sympathy involves our imagining the other's pains and pleasures "which are not in being, and which we only anticipate"; it thus

entails a projection of the other's future state or condition (T 2.2.9.13). Hence, extended sympathy locates an individual in time by tying her present passions to another person's future as a virtual realm of possible outcomes. This is how time as duration enters into the topology of the passions.

As the two collective action problems show, what Hume is now actually theorizing is the passional situation of action. Motivation – desire or aversion for someone's happiness or misery – is now tied to a specific person and his or her projected future state. All sympathy involves the conversion of a lively idea – of the other – into an impression. In extended sympathy an idea of a virtual future becomes a present impression, and this is what provides the trigger for action: "Supposing I saw a person perfectly unknown to me, who, while asleep in the fields, was in danger of being trod under foot by horses, I should immediately run to his assistance" (T 2.2.9.13). In extended sympathy, the idea of the other's future is also produced on the basis of a present impression, a 'salient' impression amongst the other's circumstances "which strikes upon us in a lively manner" (T 2.2.9.14). This striking circumstance is thus taken as a kind of metonymy or index of the future, the hand of the future stretching back into the present to point to its own cause.

Alongside action, Hume has also provided here a mechanism for ensuring stable group relationships over time, from couples to friends to families and up to entire communities. Extended sympathy goes beyond the identification via character traits that lies at the base of the simple sympathy at work in forming friendships; it entails sharing in the emotional experiences, the ups and downs, of the other – a minimal form of solidarity. By means of the comparison of memories with the present, extended sympathy can generate a perception of the other's progress or regression, from misery to happiness or vice versa. Extended sympathy enables us to pick up on correlations between the other's passional locations and changes in their circumstances: we begin to 'get' them. These perceived patterns in the passions give a structure to duration, to the period of time over which we have related to the other person.

There is, however, an initial requirement for extended sympathy to take place, and that is that the first moment of sympathy must be particularly intense. Hume is led to make this qualification when he recognizes that he has two different explanations for when transitions occur between the passions: the double relationship of impressions and ideas and parallel directions (T 2.2.9.12). The topic of the transition of passions is important within our topology: if each passion locates the self, then the transition of passions treats the question of how a change in location might occur.

Hume's task is to distinguish the situations in which the two different explanations of transition apply. As he claims earlier on, there are some situations in which the other's poverty and mean condition provokes uneasiness due to their pain, and then the impression of pain triggers the mecha-

nism of hatred in accordance with a double relation of ideas and impressions. But in this section, he argues that extended sympathy is not actuated by the initial impression of pain alone but also involves pleasure in the other's pleasure. His solution is to stipulate that in all those situations in which sympathy is weak, uneasiness will "produce hatred or contempt" by double relations, whereas if the initial sympathy is strong, uneasiness "produces love or tenderness" via parallel directions (T 2.2.9.12).

There is thus a kind of threshold requirement for the formation of a stable social group: the initial passion of sympathy must be particularly intense. Strong sympathy enables pity with regard to those of lower social rank and thus temporarily creates an association between social ranks that are normally quite separate. Weak sympathy, in contrast, maintains the repulsion between ranks that is constitutive of the very appearance of differential social order (T 2.2.10.9–10).

Out of curiosity, let us pursue this trail of devices and mechanisms that short-circuit, blur or erase the differential social order which seems so important in Hume's account of pride and humility and in his optimistically titled section "Of Our Esteem for the Rich and Powerful". In the section on respect and contempt – passions which presuppose and reinforce social rank – Hume is led to consider certain moral virtues via the odd question of "why any object ever excites pure love or hatred" (T 2.2.10.8). This question arises because respect and contempt are mixed passions – respect a mix of humility and love, and contempt a mix of pride and hatred. These mixed passions are produced by the same object: the qualities and circumstances of the other. Say that we perceive a good quality of the other: if we regard it in itself, it triggers love; if we regard it in comparison to ourselves and we lack that quality, it triggers humility; and if we regard it both in itself and in relation to ourselves, we feel respect. Respect is thus a mix of passions that are produced by the same object under different regards. The order of social ranks is primary in determining the particular mix: "The same man may cause either respect, love, or contempt by his condition and talents, according as the person who considers him, from his inferior becomes his equal or superior" (T 2.2.10.3). The object itself provokes a mix of passions in that "all those objects, which cause love, when placed on another person, are the causes of pride, when transferred to ourselves" (T 2.2.10.5).

For this reason, only quite a peculiar object would cause "pure love or hatred, and . . . not always produce respect and contempt, by a mixture of humility or pride" (T 2.2.10.8). There are such objects according to Hume: "good nature, good humour, facility, generosity, beauty and many other qualities" (T 2.2.10.8). It is evident why such qualities provoke love, yet their incapacity to give rise to pride or humility is left unexplained by Hume. We can hazard a simple guess: it has something to do with such qualities being nonexclusive goods, that is, goods that cannot provoke a zero-sum game or

goods that take place by being shared between people. One person's good humour does not prevent another person – a companion, a neighbour – from being of good humour; indeed, it might even encourage the latter. One person's benevolence does not preclude another's benevolence. Of course, at a secondary level, these qualities might be co-opted into a ranking system: a beauty contest or a competition between rich men to appear as the most generous public benefactor. However, in their primary emergence, these qualities bring people together without ranking them and thus momentarily push to the side or bypass social hierarchy.

LOCATING THE SELF OR A GROUP ON THE WHOLE

At a formal level, our topology of the passions would not be complete without a consideration of the mechanisms that locate a region or an individual in relation to the whole. But at first glance, such a question makes little sense: what could a 'whole' possibly be in terms of the passions? There does not appear to be any equivalent of the whole in Hume's own exposition. It seems that here we have reached the limit of a topological interpretation of the theory of the passions in the *Treatise*. Indeed, at this point in our exposé, it is no longer a question of interpretation but rather one of extrapolation and conceptual construction. The point of engaging in such speculative construction – as in the development of the concept of the envelope – is to expand our understanding of the patterns that occur in the appearance of events in Hume's *History*.

If we go back to the prevalence of social ranking in Hume's theory of the passions, a particular way of conceiving the whole in terms of an ordinal ranking system becomes clear. In order for individuals or groups to be located differentially on a social rank, the order of ranks must itself appear to exist. Given that all appearance of ranking is differential, for the entire order to appear, the maximum rank must appear, as must the minimum. This is Hamlet's theorem: "a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar".[2] Just like any other rank, the maximum and the minimum ranks can appear as indexed only by particular individuals: in short, someone has to appear at the bottom of the heap and someone at the very top: beggar and king or traitor and king. These minimal and maximal social positions remain implicit in the location of individuals and groups at certain ranks, but in order for a group to be located with regard to the whole, both the distance between its rank and the minimum rank and the distance between its rank and the maximum rank must appear.[3] These are the requirements for locating a group on the whole.

We already know that the passions of pride and humility locate individual and groups as either inferior or superior to certain other ranked individuals and groups. When I am ranked as superior to another individual, I do not pay

attention to how inferior I remain to other higher individuals. When I am ranked as inferior to another individual, I do not take account of how superior I remain to many others positioned below me. What is exceptional about the location of an individual or group with regard to the whole of the social order is that they are instantaneously ranked as inferior to the maximum and superior to the minimum, as strung between two extremes.

Recall that the primary passions of pride and humility, love and hatred, also locate individuals and groups on a scale of intensity of passion: I am a very proud self or a mildly proud self, and so on. It is interesting to ask what it might mean, in the life of our passions, to be located with regard to the whole of the scale of intensity of passion. Following the suggestion above about the differential social ranks, this would require the joint appearance of both the minimum and the maximum degrees of passion. Take the triggering impression of pleasure: the maximum would be bliss or nirvana, and the minimum would be anaesthesia and numbness. The question then – one we will leave in suspense for the moment – is what kind of pleasure could simultaneously locate the self in regard to experiences of total bliss and perfect numbness. In both cases – the scale of intensity of the passions and the scale of social ranks – the whole that appears through the simultaneous indexing of minimum and maximum ranks is a *differential whole*. There are a very few moments in which just such an indexing occurs in Hume's *History*: each involves the downfall of a king, the passions at stake being pride and humility.

But there is another way in which the whole might appear in a Humean topology of the passions, and that is at the level of the formation of relationships. Given a particular social hierarchy, certain individuals are said to be 'sunk in relationships' such that their capacity to form new relationships or maintain old relationships is severely curtailed: this is Hume's case of the remarried widow. The converse case is that of the patriarch, the husband, who is raised by a relationship to a new family since the passions have a natural tendency to return from lesser to greater objects and the new family is a set of lesser objects that conduct the passions and thus relationships to him. Hence, within a hierarchically structured society, we have a simple theorem: any relationship that sinks an individual within a group conversely raises the other partner of that relationship. It is another case of a zero-sum game in a differential and exclusive social order: one person's rise entails another person's fall.

In my terminology, when an individual is sunk inside a group, he or she is placed inside an envelope. When an individual is raised in a group by a relationship, that individual is the envelope. Take the case of the family estate handed down through the generations from eldest son to eldest son: it is the family estate itself, marked by the surname on the title deeds, that forms the envelope and thus is raised. If every raise entails an inverse sink-

ing, what is it that is sunk by the rise of this family property? Quite simply, every individual member of the family whose surname is on the title deeds, even the eldest sons: their capacity to form relationships is diminished by their inclusion inside this envelope.

What then might be the whole? At this point, our departure from an exegesis of Hume's theory of the passions is complete; a Humean 'topology of the passions' already entailed much extrapolation, such as in our construction of the concept of 'envelope', but now we fully enter the domain of speculation.

The hypothesis is that an individual or a group would be located in a relationship to the whole when that relationship raises them without conversely sinking any other individuals or groups. In other words, the whole is an object that increases to a maximum our capacity to simultaneously form new relationships and maintain old relationships without curtailing the capacity of those individuals or groups with whom we are related to form and maintain their own relationships. Here an objection emerges: how is this 'whole' different to, say, Louis XIV's version of centralized monarchy, which emancipated the peasantry from the regional power of feudal lords? The response is that Louis freed the peasants from local subjection so as to subject them to his taxes and obligations, thus restricting their capacity to form new relationships and also, in his battle against regional powers, cutting the local populace off from their old relationships to those powers. The possibility we are envisaging here is that of a location within an object that does not entail any restrictions on new or old relationships: there is no jealousy here, no differential exclusion with regard to attachments, no new forms of dependency.

At the same time, location with regard to the whole does not entail a new form of independency or autonomy or singular and splendid isolation: to be raised out of all envelopes is to be able to form relationships with all other individuals and groups regardless of the passions of love or hatred and the latter's subsequent group formations and repulsions. Groups are formed through collateral affection for the salient member of a group or through simple sympathy with the salient qualities of other individuals. In the whole, there are no salient members or qualities. For Hume, there are salient members in exclusive groups, such as patriarchs in families, that function as kinds of metonymies or indexes of that group. Even in the appearance of the differential whole, there are particular individuals who index the maximum and minimum ranks. But there are no salient individuals or particular qualities or maximum terms that index what we will term the *inclusive whole*. In mundane terms, the whole is simply what includes all groups and individuals without rank or differentiation. To be located in relation to the whole is thus to be presented with the simultaneous and equal locating of all other groups and individuals within the whole: a kind of plural bringing together. The

whole is thus an object that neutralizes all differential locations of individuals on the scale of social ranks. As a simultaneous location of all groups, the whole must neutralize any preexistent antagonistic repulsions between groups. At the same time, it must also neutralize any preexistent exclusive group formations. The whole is as much a moment of dissolution and letting go as it is a moment of binding and holding together.

Another way of imagining this location by the whole is in terms of modality. As Hume shows in his critique of the metaphysical notion of objective and necessary causality, our idea of necessity is built up through habit, the habit of associating the ideas of certain contiguous objects. Hume also shows how the passions are regulated by habit. If an individual is repeatedly located as sunk in a group, then his or her location in that group and, by implication, his or her place in society will appear – through habit – to be necessary, and the possibility of other locations for that individual will appear quite low. If an individual is repeatedly located as raised by the groups in which he or she is located, then having the status of the 'greatest object' or salient member of these groups will appear necessary. At the same time, since her capacity to form new relationships is not curtailed by her location in any of these groups, her placement in each of these groups will appear to have a degree of contingency – she could be located in other groups. Hence, the possibility of other locations for that individual will appear quite high. When an individual or group is located in relationship to the whole, they are exposed to the absolute contingency of *all* specific and differential locations; it becomes evident that each of the formed groups, envelopes, repulsions and rankings could be otherwise. At the very same moment, the self located on the whole grasps the necessity of all individuals and groups being continually located within the whole, any isolation and separation being an illusion.

The whole is not a finite object like a group or an envelope, nor can it be indexed by a salient quality, not even a name. It dissolves specific repulsions between antagonistic groups, and thus it is experienced as a coming together, a bonding. It dissolves specific attractions that form exclusive groups, and thus it is experienced as a letting go, a releasing. Location within the whole diminishes the importance of any other location of the self within groups and on a social rank, and so it renders the self more indistinct and diffuse. Through this very same location within the whole, other individuals are seen to lose their specific differential locations in groups and on social ranks, and so the self is rendered more equal with others, more equally exposed to the sheer multiplicity and presence of other individuals without the security of groups and differentiation; this sharing of exposure expands the self.

What remains unanswered is whether this speculative possibility in a Humean topology of the passions – location of an individual on the inclusive whole – is ever historically instantiated. But then our enquiry has not yet reached the topic of the historical modelling of any of the passional locating

mechanisms. In the following chapter, we return to Hume's *History* and refine its patterns of faction, inversion and conspiracy according to the terms of this topological theory of the passions.

THEORY OF DISCORD

Before returning to historical conflict, we can identify three basic forms of passional discord in a topology. The first form of discord is that generated by partiality, that is, the combination of selfishness and limited generosity. Through love and interest, human beings compose exclusive groups – couples, families, friends, villages – which are in turn often located on wider, more diffuse, slightly less exclusive groups – extended family, acquaintances, neighbourhoods, towns and cities. Selves are located on these concentric groups by their degrees of partiality, or bias, that is, by the extent to which they are prepared to be generous and make sacrifices for the good of the group. Here the discord lies between the self who places a limit on their generosity and the other person who finds him- or herself outside that circle of generosity.

The second form of discord occurs through the differentiation of selves and groups via social ranking. This location on ranks occurs via passions such as pride and humiliation, respect and contempt, pity and malice. These ranks exist solely through the accumulation of locations of selves and groups upon them, and that accumulation is solely brought to bear within each single operation of location. In addition, the ranks exist only through their differentiation with other ranks as 'higher than' or 'lower than'. As our analysis of the *History* will show, in particular with regard to the pattern of rise and fall, selves and groups are often differentially ranked according to their progression or regression on that scale: who is on the rise, and who is in decline? Moreover, the ranks can index different qualities, such as social status, property, political loyalty, political legitimacy and political power. Here, discord occurs between a self or a group that is located as lower than another self or group: the lower group is antagonistic towards the higher. If the distance is great enough, the higher group is indifferent. If the lower group is very close to the higher group, as Hume notes, the higher group will also be antagonistic and resist any rise on the part of the lower.

The third form of discord comes in the shape of the primary passion of hatred between selves or groups, which can take the form of an extended antipathy whereby each group anticipates the other's pain and seeks to prevent or defer the other's pleasure. The striking feature of hatred in Hume's topology, as noted previously, is that it is just as much a relationship as love. In other words, the force of repulsion and division brought about by hatred takes place through a bond. Like all passions, hatred comes in many different

degrees of intensity. Phenomena that seem relatively calm and not particularly distressing, such as competition in sports or business, do require degrees of hatred. Moreover, location by a minor degree of hatred is quite compatible with a coterminous location by a degree of love, as in what are termed 'healthy rivalries'. Nevertheless, whatever the degree of ambivalence might be, however the passions of love and hate may commingle and oscillate, the discord persists.

What remains to be seen is whether the analysis of patterns in the *History* in the terms of the topology will generate concepts of other forms of discord.

Chapter Three

From Patterns to Configurations of Appearance

As may have become evident to the reader, each of the three general patterns of events that we remarked in Hume's *History* is characterized by certain passions, such as fury for faction, if not by passional location mechanisms, such as the pride and humility involved in the rise or fall of certain protagonists. Our general hypothesis is that each of the three patterns of appearance and their variations can be formally defined in the terms of our Humean topology of the passions. In this chapter, it will be a question of folding Hume's theory of the passions back onto the Stuart volumes of his *History of Britain* so as to decrypt the mechanisms behind these three recurrent shapes of collective experience. This will allow us to analyze a historical sequence of events as a particular topology with its own distinctive 'configurations of appearance'.

THE CONFIGURATION OF FACTION

The simplest pattern seems to be that of faction, and indeed many of its features in the *History* seem to be directly drawn from Hume's theory of the passions in the *Treatise*. In that theory, hatred leads to anger or the desire to cause harm to the other, and love leads to benevolence or the desire to cause the other's happiness. Hume can thus speak of the natural "desire for punishment of our enemies, and of happiness to our friends" (T 2.3.9.8). He shows how partiality distorts our judgements of actions and people, and this distortion is clearly a part of faction. In his account of partiality due to interest, his illustration – cited earlier – is one of faction but at a national scale: "When our nation is at war with any other, we detest them under the character of

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cruel, perfidious, unjust and violent: But always esteem ourselves and allies equitable, moderate, and merciful" (T 2.2.3.2). These partial judgements can in turn become habits and prejudices due to the fact that "all the passions avoid as much as possible" any diminution, and "Custom readily carries us beyond the just bounds in our passions, as well as in our reasonings" (T 2.2.3.10; T 2.1.6.8). But prejudice, partial judgement and the desire to cause harm to an enemy are not sufficient to define faction; something else is required. In the patterns of faction that recur through the *History*, faction is always marked by fury and by perfectly reciprocal antagonism. A faction's enemy is the target of its most intense hatred; there is no other object of hatred that comes close. Given that hatred locates the self on a scale of intensity, this means that the maximally hating self is located in relation to the enemy faction and vice versa. This reciprocity of the passions also works via zero-sum games: every victory for one faction is a loss for the other, and everything that pleases one faction displeases the other. This reciprocity is carried to the point that any third party who loves or benefits the enemy faction becomes itself the object of our hatred and anger despite the fact that it does not actually belong to the enemy faction. This reciprocity is a maximal version of the solid coupling that is at work in any repulsion caused by hatred. That is, a faction organizes its own existence, its judgements and actions, around its hatred of the other faction in preference to any other entities, including public welfare, religious and social duties and the efficacy of government.

What is the mechanism that ensures this reciprocal intensity of hatred? It is the location of a group on the other group's hostile intention with regard to itself. In the previous chapter, we saw how an attributed intention could form an envelope, that is, a region in which the other is sunk such that her or his relationships can only pass via the envelope. We relate to all of the other's actions and qualities through the intention we attribute to him; it is an unavoidable intermediary. The intention becomes what I termed above a 'compound intensifier' of passion in that it increases any impression of injury caused by the other's actions. An intention has duration – it informs the past, present and future. Henceforth, any impression of harm will be associated with the other's hostile intention: there is thus a kind of overspilling of passion; the attributed intention expands to include accidental injuries or harm done to us by third parties. What is at stake in the phenomenon of faction is thus a maximum expansion of the envelope that is the other's hostile intention within a given finite sphere of action. The envelope is expanded to the point that anything or anyone that benefits the other is seen as facilitating the other's designs with regard to ourselves. In other words, from our perspective, there is no possibility for other individuals or groups to enter into a relationship with our enemy except via the bias of this hostile intention: it organizes the entire field in which these groups and individuals ap-

pear. In turn, anything or anyone that benefits us is helping us in our campaign of defence against the other's hostile intention.

From the perspective of faction, there are thus no neutral actions on the part of third parties directed towards either ourselves or our enemy. This is what I mean by the expansion of the envelope to cover the entire domain of action. The striking thing about this expansion is that it is mutually reinforcing. If my party enlists all beneficial actions on the part of supposedly neutral parties within our fight against the enemy faction, then the latter is quite right to see those supposedly neutral parties as our friends and thus as their enemies. This is why the reduction of any neutral ground is a consequence of faction, but that reduction can happen to different degrees, from rendering neutrality slightly uncomfortable to evacuating any possibility of neutrality and hence forcing third parties to join one's camp or that of the enemy. The degree of expansion of the other faction's intention – and the concomitant reduction of neutral space – depends on two factors: first, how many factions entertain hostile relationships in that sphere and, second, the rank and intensity of the hostile factions compared to the other neutral parties. The classic situation, the one that recurs in the *History*, is that of two factions – the king and his cabinet versus the House of Commons – that dominate the domestic political field and attempt to enlist other parties in their battle, such as the church, various parties in Scotland and Ireland, and foreign kings.

In the attribution of a hostile intention to an enemy group, the intention is figured as an envelope in which the other is sunk. But that intention itself projects a possible state for us, a state in which we have been brought to the lowest rank possible. The intention presents this future state of ours as brought about entirely by the actions of the enemy; in other words, our fate will no longer have been determined by any other individual or group. It is solely our adversary who will have located us. For this reason, the state in which the intention projects us is one in which we in turn are sunk within the other group, the adversary, qua envelope.

Given these various mechanisms involving the passions, what is the formal definition of faction? Here, a formal definition requires not mathematical or logical notation but rather reduction to a minimal number of operators from our topology. Hence, faction is the reciprocal location of a group on another enemy group's maximally expanded intention, that intention being an envelope in which the enemy group is located, that intention projecting a state in which the first group has been brought to descend as low as possible on the scale of social ranks as a function of the second group's actions and as a function of the second group's ascension as high as possible on that order, that future state positioning the first group as sunk within the other enemy group.

So what difference does this formal definition of faction make to our understanding of the *History*? Perhaps the encounter between Hume's *Histo-*

ry and his theory of the passions from the *Treatise* will have an impact in the inverse direction, resulting in a refinement of the formal definition and an adjustment of the topology. The first case to be evaluated is that of the splitting of the House of Commons in 1645 into two distinct groups: the Presbyterians and the Independents.

In Hume's account, the formal cause of the split is the auctioneer's logic, the one-upmanship at stake in the self-definition of the Presbyterians as incarnating religious and political principles. Once the Presbyterians distinguish themselves from the court party by their adherence to principle, the way was open for the Independents to distinguish themselves in turn from the Presbyterians by their stricter adherence to religious principle:

> The independents went a note higher than the Presbyterians [in their 'degree of fanaticism', their 'higher pitch of saintship and perfection']. . . . The Independents rejected all ecclesiastical establishments, and would admit no spiritual courts, no government among pastors, no interposition of the magistrate in religious concerns, no fixed encouragement annexed to any system of doctrines or opinions. (HEV, 442)

In terms of their political differences, Hume holds that the Independents aimed from the very beginning at the abolition of monarchy and the aristocracy, whereas the Presbyterians favoured the reduction of the king to the position of first magistrate. The split was first concretized by a debate in parliament that spread to the city over the Self-denying Ordinance, sponsored by the Independents, according to which all members of parliament and lords were to be stripped of their military command of regiments in order to install a military hierarchy based on merit alone – hence the 'New Model' army. In actual fact, the ordinance allowed the Independents to remove the army from parliamentary control and to ensure a more vigorous prosecution of the war against the royalist forces under Cromwell's implicit command (HEV, 444–49). In 1646, Hume notes that the Independents blocked the Presbyterians' attempt to have the House of Commons recognize the 'divine right' of presbytery; they also scandalized the Presbyterians by tolerating dissenting religious sects (HEV, 482–83). In 1647, the split between the two parties had become still greater, the Presbyterians dominating parliament and the Independents allied with the New Model Army.

The conjuncture that interests us takes place from June 1647 to January 1648. A triangle emerges between king, the Presbyterian-dominated parliament, and the New Model Army allied to the Independents. Both the Presbyterians and the army make rival overtures to the king in June and again in August (HEV, 504, 509–10). The army secures a political victory over the parliament in August, entering into London, taking the city militia under its control, annulling recent acts of parliament and forcing parliament to expel eleven members of parliament, including the leaders of the Presbyterian par-

ty (HEV, 508). When the king escapes to the Isle of Wight, he unwittingly places himself under Cromwell and the Independents' power, the governor of the Isle being one of Cromwell's dependents (HEV, 511). Finally, when the Vote of No Addresses to the king is passed in January 1648, the king is taken out of the game.

In Hume's account of this triangular relationship, neither the Presbyterians nor the Independents are presented as demonizing each other or the king. The reason is that in this conjuncture, it is not the case, for any of these parties, that the intention of just one other party threatens to shape its political fate. The other parties' actions will affect its fate and are important factors to take into consideration, but the intentions behind these actions are not assigned an all-encompassing and all-determining form. Furthermore, it would not be entirely accurate to state that the struggle between the three parties dominates the sphere of political action to the point of totalizing it. That struggle is very important, but the party Hume identifies as the Independents is actually composed of two if not four separate groups: the soldiers in the regiments, the Leveller agitators elected by each regiment to represent their griefs and desires, the officers of the army and the Independent members of parliament. These four groups enter into conflict between themselves in late 1647 and early 1648 when Cromwell sets out, as Hume remarks, "to quell those disorders in the army, which he himself had so artfully raised" (HEV, 513). On its side, the parliament was subject to intense pressure to resist the army on the part of the city and the "seditious multitude" of London (HEV, 507).

It is this multiplication of groups that act in the political sphere that renders impossible any reduction of their conflict to that between two or three primary groups. Of course, it is not the multiplication of groups per se that renders faction impossible: if there are a series of smaller groups that can all be ordinally placed inside two main groups and their internecine conflicts all subordinated to the global conflict between the two main groups, then faction indeed can take place. But this is not the case in this triangular conjuncture of 1647: none of the three groups can be placed inside each other, and the four groups that make up the Independents are engaged in such an uneasy alliance that the agitators at least cannot be said to be a 'subgroup' of the Independents.

The analysis of this 1647 conjuncture in the *History* in the light of the formal definition of faction generates two observations. First, a general result: it is not the case that all political differentiations into groups are organized by faction. Second, more specifically, for a multiplicity of political groups to be organized by faction, an ordinal sequencing of size and inclusion is required such that all the groups are placed as subgroups or sub-subgroups and so on inside the main antagonistic groups.

There is a second case of political conflict between multiple parties, this time concerning foreign affairs and, in particular, Louis XIV's attempt to increase his territory in the Low Countries over a period stretching from 1664 to 1778. For three chapters, Hume tracks the annual campaigns, sea battles, shifting alliances and inconclusive negotiations over this territory, and he does this because Charles II's foreign allegiances, often favouring the Catholic French king over the protestant Dutch prince, formed one of the hottest points of contention between him and the parliament. The conflict, although focused on a relatively small geographical area, involves multiple parties and concerned the entire fate of Europe; indeed, Hume claims that in July 1678, Europe was on the brink of war over Flanders (HEVI, 318). Six nations and alliances of nations were involved over one stretch of territory: Spain, the Dutch Republic, France, Sweden, the Holy Roman Empire and England. This plurality was organized around two main contenders: France and the Dutch Republic. Indeed, France was suspected of having imperial ambitions that embraced the entirety of Europe: "Louis . . . had, during some years, a real prospect of attaining the monarchy of Europe, and of exceeding the empire of Charlemagne, perhaps equalling that of ancient Rome" (HEVI, 320, 444). In 1664, Hume claims,

> The other nations of Europe, feeble or ill-governed, were astonished at the greatness of [Louis'] rising empire, and all of them cast their eyes towards England, as the only power, which could save them from that subjection, with which they seemed to be so nearly threatened. (HEVI, 218)

In this situation, the antagonistic parties ascribe a hostile intention to Louis XIV in the form of a maximal envelope: his actions and personage are understood via that intention, and that intention encompasses the entirety of the European political field.

With two main antagonistic parties and an all-enveloping hostile intention, it does appear as though we have a clear case of faction, and this would be interesting since faction has usually been diagnosed as a malady of domestic rather than international politics. Yet there are two problems with such an analysis. The first lies in the role of England: placed by demand in the role of guarantor of the European balance of power, it is not a subgroup in the alliance led by the Dutch Republic. Indeed, in Charles II's hands, England switches from one side to another, engaging in a sea battle against French and Dutch forces in 1665, signing a defensive treaty with the Dutch in 1668 to prevent the French advance, attacking the Dutch in March 1672 in alliance with the French and finally declaring peace with the Dutch in 1674. It was thus impossible for any side to attribute a stable intention to the English: indeed, in 1678, Hume writes, "the States [the Dutch Federation] had been too often deceived to trust [Charles II] any longer" (HEVI, 320).

Moreover, there is no evidence in Hume's account of the French attributing a hostile intention to the Dutch Republic in the form of an all-embracing threat to France's place and rank in Europe. There is no reciprocal attribution of intentions in the form of maximal envelopes between the two main antagonists.

The second problem with a diagnosis of faction is that an alliance is not the same organization as a main group with subgroups, especially given the instability of these alliances. Sweden switched sides just like England: it had entered a 'Triple Alliance' with England and the Dutch against the French that was dissolved in 1670, and it subsequently entered into an alliance with the French in 1672. Each of the parties in these alliances had their own territorial ambitions and historical antagonisms apart from the question of Flanders; for instance, the Danish joined the Dutch side, and then they engaged in war with Sweden in northern Germany in 1675 following Sweden's attempted invasion of Brandenburg. In these intricate wars and alliances, the Franco-Dutch War is an important factor, as is the dichotomy bequeathed by the wars of religion, but in Hume's account these dichotomies do not completely overdetermine all other factors and interests for the warring parties in Europe. In the question of the European balance of power and the fears of Louis XIV's imperial ambitions, Europe is certainly treated as a finite sphere of action – and this is one of the defining characteristics of faction. However, that finite sphere is not totalized by the Franco-Dutch War as it figures in Hume's *History*.

Upon analysis, neither of these two conjunctures turn out to be cases of faction, but our definition of faction has been refined. We stated that faction is the reciprocal location of a group on another group's maximally expanded intention, that intention being to cause the first group to descend as low as possible on the scale of social ranks as a function of the second group's ascension. To this, we must add that all other groups ranked on the social scale must be subgroups of the two groups that have maximal intentions. Furthermore, those ascribed intentions must be seen to completely envelope the future ranking of the other group and all of its subgroups. In a certain sense, faction is an ideal type of conflict in that it is ordered, locked down, simplified and thus predictable.

THE CONFIGURATION OF INVERSION

Let's turn to the pattern of inversion and construct its formal definition in the terms of our topology of the passions. The rise and fall of political groups can clearly be indexed on the scale of social ranks as long as there is a function of memory to compare the rankings of a group over time. We saw that duration enters into the passions most clearly in the form of the 'parallel directions' of

the affections. In our relation to a rival, for instance, we experience joy when he experiences pain and vice versa. The mechanism of parallel directions gives rise to 'extended sympathy', as we saw, but to extrapolate from Hume, it also gives rise to 'extended malice'. Via extended malice, an individual can be located by pleasure on a rival's fall in social ranking, a fall that occurs humiliation by humiliation. Via extended sympathy, an individual can be located by pleasure on an ally's rise in social ranking, a rise that occurs triumph by triumph. In the pattern of inversion that recurs through Hume's history, two entities, coupled by faction, exchange places from a maximum to a minimum rank and vice versa. This is what takes place between the House of Commons and Charles I. It is not the case that at the beginning of Charles's reign, members of the House of Commons were found at the minimal rank in terms of social status. Yet as soon as parliament and king were locked into faction, the king placed parliament at a minimal level of political fidelity and obligation; that is, he located them as completely subversive of the constitution, saying, "You have taken the whole machine of government in pieces" (HEV, 297–98). In the revolutionary period, the minimal political rank is indexed by the traitor and the maximal rank by the 'protector' of the people. In the trial and execution of Charles Stuart, he is located on the minimal rank in that he is "impeached as a tyrant, traitor, murderer, and a public and implacable enemy to the commonwealth" (HEV, 535).

Take the pattern of cyclical return in the case of parliamentary despotism. Here, two mechanisms of inversion are combined. On the one hand, when the civil war is won, the places of the parliament and the king are inverted in the exercise of sovereign political power. On the other hand, when it comes to degrees of faithfulness to government limited by the rule of law, parliament originally ranks the king at the minimum rank as despotic – in the imposition of ship money, for instance – and itself at the maximum rank of fidelity to the constitution. Analysing the conduct of parliament during the civil war – its imposition of extraordinary taxes and enforcement of religious conformity and in the trial of Charles – Hume ranks parliament as despotic: the "people were under the rod of lawless limitless power" (HEV, 536). Describing the trial, Hume ranks Charles at maximum rank of "the majesty of a monarch" asserting his own rightful sovereignty over the Commons as their "NATIVE, HEREDITARY KING . . . who derived his title from the Supreme Majesty of Heaven" (HEV, 536). Thus the second inversion between parliament and king is complete; as is the cyclical return.

These analyses generate some further elements for our formal definition of inversion and cyclical return. Pride and humility, respect and contempt, locate individuals on a scale of ranks, but those ranks do not need to be degrees of social status; they can also be degrees of political power or of fidelity to the source of political legitimacy, whether it be the constitution or divine right. Furthermore, what is crucial in inversion and cyclical return is

the question of the standpoint from which one is ranked on this political scale: by the self in the passion of pride or by another political group in the passion of respect? In order to be located on the maximum ranks of both political fidelity and power, it is not sufficient to be located via pride from the standpoint of the self alone. Other intense and highly ranked groups, such as institutions, political parties, influential officials, the militia and the army, must habitually confirm such a maximal location through the passion of respect.

To be more precise in the definition of cyclical return, the two mechanisms of inversion involve two scales of ranks: one of political power, the other of political legitimacy. Cyclical return is defined not only by the inversion of the positions of two entities on the same scale but also by an inversion of the positions of the same entity on two different scales, those of power and legitimacy. That is, in Hume's *History*, the entity that ends up ranked as minimal on one scale (power) also ends up ranked as maximal on the other scale (legitimacy) – that is, the king. In turn, the entity that ends up ranked as maximal on the scale of power also ends up ranked as minimal on the scale of legitimacy – that is, parliament. To complete the definition of cyclical return, we must note that the two parties involved in these inversions are also locked into a relationship of faction, which determines their mutually hostile placements of each other at minimal ranks of political legitimacy.

THE CONFIGURATION OF CONSPIRACY

The pattern of conspiracy can in turn be remodelled via our topology of the passions. In the image of the plot, it is evidently a question of paranoia as a form of hermeneutics. That is, an individual locates himself by searching for and finding signs of an opaque yet hostile intention on the part of the other. On the one hand, the individual supports and agents of this intention remain unknown, as do the forms in which it will eventually actualize and reveal itself. On the other hand, the nature of the hostile intention and the kind of person involved in it is well known: the intention is to invade England, to subject it to the pope's authority, and the agents of this design are Catholics, sometimes Irish, sometimes French. The intention is an underlying substrate that manifests itself here and there through little signs or indices: a court case, a scandal or a few outrageous sentences in some private correspondence that has been discovered.

The whole of the intention is thus never completely grasped. Even when a real plot is exposed, suspicion remains that not all of the conspirators have been discovered. The individual who is located on a conspiracy is being kept in the dark, and at the same time, she or her group is being acted upon by others who do possess knowledge. There is an intrusion or ingression of the

other, but its exact location and resource are unknown. The intention is close to us – indeed, it surrounds us and aims at us – but it is also distant from us in that we are incapable of either completely discovering it or of removing ourselves from its grasp.

A conspiracy is structured by deception; some people are so completely deceived by a conspiracy that they are not aware of its existence, or, if they are shown signs of its work, they do not believe in its existence. In contrast, the individual who believes in the conspiracy knows that it is under way and taking effect whether it is exposed or not. Hume's account of the short reign of James II, the last of the Stuart kings, is organized by the gradual revelation and exposure of intentions: "The king's design to subdue the church was now sufficiently known," and "The dangerous designs of other princes are to be collected by a comparison of their several actions, or by a discovery of their more secret counsels" (HEVI, 480, 483).

In terms of a formal definition, an individual is located on a conspiracy when she is sunk within an enveloping hostile intention, that is, one that aims to maximally decrease her position on the order of ranks. She is able to name the kind of group that possesses that intention – 'Catholics' – and ranks that group at the minimal level of political fidelity, but either she is unable to securely identify particular individuals that belong to that group or, if she can identify them – the 'Duke of York' is named in the Exclusion Bill – she cannot persuade enough people who have the power to act that these individuals should be ranked at the minimal level of political fidelity. In any case, to be sunk inside an envelope is to have a diminished capacity to form or maintain relationships with other individuals outside that envelope.

This definition can be tested by running it through the varieties of the pattern of conspiracy that we found in the *History*: rumours of a massacre, politicized trials and inquisitions into a fake plot, inquisitions into real heretical beliefs, required displays of the absence of heretical beliefs in the form of test acts and real plots. All of these phenomena are variations on a theme – the question of whether an individual actively possesses a hostile intention. But in our topology, what is it for an individual to possess an intention? An intention is nothing more than a set of words referring to a desirable change in a state of affairs: it can be registered on all kinds of media or support, and it can be more or less widely reported. What is crucial here is this question of active possession or property. We have said that an individual who is located as the potential victim or object of a conspiracy is sunk within an intention. In contrast, an individual who is located as the subject of a conspiracy – a plotter – actively possesses an intention in that she is raised by it; the intention increases her ability to form and maintain relationships. She is also bound to all other individuals who possess this intention by extended sympathy, sharing in their pleasures and pains, their rise and fall on the social ranks.

The only exception in this list of variations of conspiracy would appear to be rumour, which seems different because it concerns an event that is reported to have actually happened; that is, there is no intentional deception at work but rather unintentional falsehood due to a failure to seek independent confirmation of the event. Yet the rumoured massacre is actually the dramatic manifestation of a conspiracy: it has exploded into the light in a nearby town or on the coast, and yet it continues to take the form of an unseen envelope because it is going to continue, and the army of crazed Irish Catholics is coming to London but has not yet reached the city, nor does anyone know when they will come. This uncertainty as to the timing of the arrival of the event reveals another fundamental mechanism in conspiracy: uncertainty as to its exact degree of proximity to the individual.

Upon the analysis of the *History*, we thus arrive at the following refinement of our formal definition of conspiracy: an individual is located on a conspiracy when she is sunk in a hostile intention that is born by a nameable but unknown other, the intention being to bring about her descent on the scale of ranks, a descent that will correspond to the other's ascent on that scale. The hostile intention raises that unknown other, enabling his or her relationships to flourish. The degree of the other's contiguity to the self is uncertain.

In Hume's *History*, conspiracy is often connected to both faction and inversion. In the early days of conflicts over power and prestige within the parliamentary army, the Earl of Manchester, as mentioned before, accuses Cromwell of being a "man of very deep [republican] designs; [in that] he has even ventured to tell me, that it never would be well with England till I were Mr. Montague, and there were ne'er a lord or peer in the kingdom", hence combining conspiracy with inversion (HEV, 444). Through the mechanism of faction, Charles I accuses parliament of a design to subvert the machinery of government, and indeed at the completion of their pattern of inversion, parliament has him tried and executed in what he saw as a complete overturning of the constitution.

By definition, faction requires the attribution of a hostile intention as envelope to the enemy and thus includes part of the mechanism of conspiracy. Yet there is a crucial difference between faction and conspiracy. In conspiracy, there is no reciprocity between the two parties. In faction, the enemy is completely manifest, its degree of contiguity is evident and it explicitly advertises its hostile intentions with regard to the other.

DEFINITION AND FUNCTION OF CONFIGURATIONS
OF APPEARANCE

A pattern in the appearance of events that meets with a clear and distinct definition in the terms of our topology of the passions is a *configuration of appearance*. Configurations of appearance are temporally oriented changes in the regional organization of the passions. There are two aspects of this definition that need further explanation: the orientation of time and the regional organization of the passions.

A configuration of appearance generates an orientation for time by connecting a series of events as a pattern of passional locations. For instance, an individual is located in a number of events by the social passions of respect and contempt. The configuration of 'fall', for instance, will extend that series of locations and give them a definite beginning and end, that is, starting from a position of being respected, high on the social ranks, and ending in a contemptible position, at the bottom of the social ranks.

One immediate question is how certain passional locations receive, say, the configuration of inversion rather than that of conspiracy. The response lies in the inertia and self-expansion of the passions and in habit. Even at the level of one location by passion, such as a moment of humility, the humility has a tendency to extend itself, to search for other impressions that confirm the individual's lower position on the social ranks since, like all passions, it resists any diminution (DP, 8; T 2.2.3.10).[1] Moreover, a passion easily gives rise to a transition to related passions which may well carry the individual back to the original passion:

> Grief and disappointment give rise to anger, anger to envy, envy to malice, malice to grief again, till the whole circle be completed. . . . 'Tis difficult for the mind, when actuated by any passion, to confine itself to that passion alone, without any change or variation. (T 2.1.4.3)

At the level of repeated locations of an individual by a passion, habit and general rules also set in. Hume notes, "Custom readily carries us beyond the just bounds in our passions, as well as in our reasonings" (T 2.1.6.8). With regard to how we learn to value people and things, he says,

> As custom and practice . . . have settled the just value of every thing; this must certainly contribute to the easy production of the passions, and guide us, by means of generally established maxims, in the proportions we ought to observe in preferring one object to another. (T 2.1.6.9)

When it comes to how we judge the normal level of qualities that might induce pride for a particular social rank or how we evaluate kinds of misfortune and the degrees of grief and pity to which they should give rise, there

are 'general rules' that come into play and determine the imagination in its association of ideas (T 2.1.6.8; T 2.2.5.12; T 2.2.7.5). Consequently, habit or general rules can lead repeated passional locations towards the construction of a configuration of passion, as we shall see in another context in chapter 6. Take, for instance, an individual who is located several times via contempt by another individual when the latter previously located him via respect. Each location by contempt is not simply a positioning on a low social rank; it is a differential positioning as 'lower than'. Moreover, once this 'lower than' is joined to a memory of that individual previously being located on a high social rank, as a 'higher than', each location as 'lower than' will be perceived as a 'further lowering', and these accumulated 'lowerings' will produce a tendency to descent in social ranking. Henceforth, it will be the 'fall' configuration of appearance that is applied by the imagination as a general rule to that particular individual.

How do habits and general rules emerge in the passions? Hume stipulates that "all relations are but a propensity to pass from one idea to another, whatever strengthens the propensity strengthens the relation" (T 2.1.9.13). This implies that each association of the same ideas (via resemblance, contiguity or causality) creates further facility for the imagination in making the same association again and thus increases the proximity of the two ideas (T 2.3.5.1). At times, Hume employs metaphors drawn from fluid dynamics to image the inertia and self-expansion of the passions (T 2.2.9.14). However, these metaphors are accurate only if imagined in three dimensions with no dichotomy between fluid and container. In other words, if passion is liquid, there are no pipes, no conduits, no riverbed carved out, no two-dimensional surfaces along which it can flow. Passion creates its own conduits by transferring intensity from idea to idea and impression to impression – as passion flows, it enables its own propensity to flow still faster and thicker along the same sequence of impressions and ideas. And if there is no solid surface bounding and limiting these flows, if these flows make their own laminar surfaces, then that in which they flow, what surrounds the flowing, could only be other passions and their own tendencies and flows: like an ocean current inside the ocean.

The configuration of fall orients time by giving determinate form to the past – a golden age of elevated social status and privilege – and to the present – losing more and more social status – and to the future – all social status lost. Moreover, as the experience of Charles Stuart shows, a fall can be very long, punctuated by many stages, even those of momentary respite and elevation, but the descent is not infinite; it will come to some kind of end, and so this configuration paints the future in the figure of a terminated fall. But for Cordelia, this would be the theorem of Lear. At the material level of speech acts and discursive performances, the temporal dimension of the rise

and fall configuration comes into play when anyone makes a prediction as to an individual's future or engages in an evaluation of his career.

A configuration of appearance is a temporally oriented change in the regional organization of the passions, that is, a specific transformation of a set of passional locations. This is clearly instantiated by the configuration of inversion: when one entity falls, another entity, linked to the first by hatred, rises. By referring to 'regional organization', this definition takes us back to the formal question 'what is a region?' A region is a plurality of contiguous, similar and causally related groups and individuals for a raised individual or group. That is, just like any other entity in the topology of the passions, a region is formed through the association of ideas that takes place either through the double relation of ideas and impressions or through the mechanism of parallel direction of the affections. A region is not the same as a group, even a large diffuse group, since it includes individuals and groups that are bound together – whilst repelled – by the passions of hatred, malice, envy and contempt. A region is a plurality of groups for a raised individual – or group – since a sunken individual has a severely diminished capacity to maintain or create relationships, and so their perception of the plurality of groups is reduced, and their access to regions passes predominantly through that of the 'greater object' or salient individual that defines the envelope of their group.

When Hume first introduces the operation of sympathy, it explains and grounds our entire experience of social ranking: "Upon the whole, there remains nothing, which can give us an esteem for power and riches, and a contempt for meanness and poverty, except the principle of sympathy, by which we enter into the sentiments of the rich and poor, and partake of their pleasure or uneasiness" (T 2.2.5.14). When he extends his theory of sympathy by conceiving of it as a force that operates "through the whole animal creation," he identifies human beings as the creatures with the maximal desire for society. To explain this attraction, he states that "we can form no wish, which has not a reference to society" (T 2.2.5.15). It is evident, from our exegesis above, that all desire – and all action subsequent to passion – presupposes a minimal plurality of individuals, at the very least to index different social ranks such that the mechanisms of pride and humility can operate, not to mention the formation of those minimal groups of friends and enemies through love and hatred. We relate to others only through the mechanisms of the passions, and those mechanisms instantly give rise to habit, to general rules for the imagination and to the performance of actions: "Custom has two original effects upon the mind, in bestowing a facility in the performance of any action or the conception of any object; and afterwards a tendency or inclination towards it" (T 2.3.5.1).

On the basis of this application of Hume's 'topology of the passions' to the Stuart volumes of his *History*, my thesis is that in the field of political

history, these 'general rules' take the form of configurations of appearance. In parallel with the elementary principle 'we can form no wish, which has not a reference to society', I propose 'we can wish for no event, which has not a reference to a configuration'. In other words, there are no events save those whose appearance falls into a configuration of the passions. This ubiquity of the configuration is not a claim to the effect that faction, inversion and conspiracy make up a total catalogue of events in the *History* but rather a point about the internal integrity or cohesion of the configurations: they admit no holes. Once an individual is located vis-à-vis other individuals under a configuration, all other groups and individuals will appear to him via the evaluations of that configuration. In other words, there is no neutrality and indifference within a configuration: there can be no relationship between individuals and groups save in its terms, in the way it temporally organizes love and hatred, respect and contempt, pride and humility. For instance, in the configuration of conspiracy, everyone is located by the hostile intention: either one is part of the plot or one is a potential victim of the plot; no one remains outside its reach. For this reason, we can speak not only of the internal cohesion of a configuration but also of its projection of an image of the whole. In short, a configuration of appearance provides an answer to the individual's question 'what is my place?': it binds an individual, by passional locations, to an image of the whole. For faction, inversion and conspiracy, the whole that is at stake in this image is the differential whole of the order of ranks, not the inclusive whole of relationships. Each of them binds the individual into a group that is differentially ranked with regard to another group, and the horizon of this ranking is always the maximum and minimum positions as indexed by particular individuals: Charles I, Cromwell, Stafford, Laud, Buckingham, Montrose and Monk.

EXCLUSIVITY OF THE THREE CONFIGURATIONS

Do the three configurations of faction, inversion and conspiracy make up an exhaustive list of the patterning of events at work in the two Stuart volumes of Hume's *History*? Is every single event that occurs in those texts fashioned by at least one of these configurations? Before we develop a general answer to this question, it is worth reflecting on the reach of just one of these configurations, that of conspiracy and plot. Any individual who is engaged in strategic or tactical action with regard to other individuals and groups, the latter being also engaged in such action, is necessarily located on the intentions of these others. These intentions are perceived as designs that are not entirely known and are more or less proximal in their realization. Such an individual is thus located on the spectrum of plots and conspiracies.

In more general terms, we can identify four elements that are common to the three configurations: (1) groups of friends that are defined by their antagonism to groups of enemies; (2) an order of ranks of power, with a rank of power preceding and allowing a claim as to one's rank of legitimacy; (3) the intention of the other as an envelope; and (4) the relative position of an individual with regard to an intention – sunk or raised. We can also identify combinations of these elements across the configurations. Faction organizes a primordial division of the political field into friends and enemies via the passions of love and hate. Without this configuration, there are no antagonistic groups in the political field.

In Hume's general topology of the passions, presented in the *Treatise*, there are other ways in which groups can form, such as through collateral affection, or familiarity. However, in his *History*, which presents a specific topology, groups are formed antagonistically through their repulsion from common enemies. In turn, inversion and conspiracy presuppose the existence of hostile groups. The antagonism between groups is marked on the order of ranks of power and legitimacy. Each group attempts to ascend the ranks at the expense of other groups, if not directly bring about the descent of other groups. It is the configuration of rise and fall, inversion and cyclical return which maps all possible variations of rank between two antagonistic groups. We have seen that all positioning on the order of ranks via pride and humility, respect and contempt, is differential; that is, a group is ranked not at a fixed position but as 'lower than' or 'higher than' another group. Via these passions, there is no possibility of two groups reciprocally locating themselves on the same rank. Each group knows that the other group wants to make it descend in favour of its own rise, and thus it attributes a hostile long-term intention to the other in the form of an envelope, filtering all appreciations of the other's actions and qualities. With regard to the other's hostile intention, one can be immediately sunk within it but with uncertainty as to the contiguity of the individuals who will realize this intention: in this case, one is located in the configuration of conspiracy. In contrast, one can be projected as sunk within the enemy's intention and reciprocally project that enemy as sunk within one's own intentions and be certain about the individuals who bear these intentions: in that case, one is located within the configuration of faction. The two factors that determine placement in conspiracy or faction are thus the reciprocity of hostile intentions and the degree of certainty about the identity of those individuals in whose hostile intention one is sunk. As we shall see below, in the topology of the passions, degrees of certainty can be reduced to the relative frequency of alternative passional locations, so this second factor does not introduce anything new.

What is demonstrated by this reduction of the three configurations to combinations of their common elements? Is there no other way to combine groups, ranks, intentions and the sunken and raised positions? As we have

already shown in the example of the split of parliament into Presbyterians and Independents and the battles over Flanders, it is quite possible for antagonistic groups to exist in the political field without falling perfectly into the configuration of faction. But as I argued, faction is a kind of ideal type of conflict, and so some situations, rather than involving an entirely different configuration, might present weak versions or variations of faction in which the antagonism is not as simple and as complete. At a formal level, if we take the basis for all the configurations to be the formation of antagonistic groups through love and hate, the only common element that does not seem to be equally employed is the position of an individual as raised by a group. An individual is raised when she belongs to a group that increases her capacity to form and maintain relationships because she is the 'greater object' or salient individual in that group. The capacity to form and maintain relationships in the political field is evidently a measure of power. It therefore does not seem possible that an individual can be raised by a hostile intention aimed at her. Hostile intentions, by definition, sink the individuals that they cause to fall on the order of ranks. What ties together these three configurations of appearance is their indexing of antagonism onto an exclusive and differential order of ranks: this is what is characteristic of Hume's *History*; it is most often a matter of a zero-sum game between enemy groups, the rise of one is the fall of the other – inversion – and the perception of the hostile intention of one is doubled by the hostile intention of the other – faction. For an event in the *History* to belong to a different configuration of appearance than faction, inversion and conspiracy, it would have to entertain no relationship to a differential order of ranks and to the antagonism of groups, and those are very difficult conditions to meet in a political history. For this reason, we shall conclude that these three configurations do not absolutely complete but most certainly dominate the field of events.

Yet at least at a formal level, there is one thing that is missing from the combinations of the three configurations, and that is the possibility of an individual being raised by a relationship without concomitantly sinking another individual. This possibility is precisely what emerged in our speculative hypothesis concerning the location of an individual on what I called the *inclusive whole*, that is, a whole that dissolves the differential indexing of groups and individuals. Earlier, I left open the question of whether such a location met with any historical model. It just so happens that at the very beginning of chapter 1, we found ourselves in medias res, alongside Hume, overwhelmed by torrents of passion and events that would cause confusion for anyone who sympathized with an 'unhappy king'. If an event, or a popular torrent, causes stupefaction, then it is clear that its appearance is not configured by any habitual organization of the passions. There is a term that Hume employs as a kind of catchall category, a cipher for these confusing events – "the spirit of democratic enthusiasm" (HEV, 361). For Hume,

enthusiasm has a particular structure: the self locates itself on the divine. Yet enthusiasm is dismissed as more of a pathology than a stable organization of events. In the *History*, it is the order of exclusive ranks that binds together and ensures the dominance of the three configurations of faction, inversion and conspiracy. If 'democratic enthusiasm' is not a configuration of appearance but a cipher in the *History* and if it is also said to threaten the confusion of all exclusive rank and order, then perhaps we have found a clue in our pursuit of a historical instance of the location of an individual on an inclusive whole.

THEORY OF DISJUNCTION

The previous chapter ended with a question as to whether the analysis of patterns in Hume's *History* – as explored in this chapter – would reveal further forms of discord apart from the basic forms of partiality, social ranking and hatred. Given the terms of Hume's theory of the passions, these three forms will occur to one degree or another in any topology. The following two forms of discord are far more contingent, depending on particular conjunctures. The first, *faction*, occurs quite often and is examined in both the first section of this chapter and chapters 6 and 7, whilst the second, *expulsion*, might be quite rare or just as common as faction; it is not yet clear.

Faction as a configuration of appearance develops a variant of the third form of discord – hatred as extended antipathy between groups – in which the pleasure of one group equates with the other's pain. Like all three forms of discord, faction separates two selves or groups according to the same ranking system and thus within a common topology. The two groups are bound to each other through the passion of hatred as extended antipathy, but faction, as we saw, adds the structure of a zero-sum game in which the rise of one group is directly equivalent to the fall of the other group. This equivalency requires both groups to be continually attached to the same ranking system, a ranking system indexed on an exclusive quality, such as property, resources, prestige, power or political legitimacy. The conflict between the two factions produces an integral image of the whole. Since the rise of each group is directly tied to the fall of the other group, we shall classify faction not only as a configuration of appearance but also as a form of *disjunction* since the disagreement between the two groups has become endemic and all-embracing.

It is the downfall of an unhappy king that allows us to glimpse the possibility of a second form of disjunction, one that runs deeper still than faction. For a king, however hated and feared, to be executed, he had to lose the figure of a king and be given another name, a name that would stick; the army and the Independents came to call him 'Charles Stuart, that man of

blood'. When Charles was executed, he was ranked by the passions of humiliation and contempt at the absolute minimal level of 'traitor to his country'. The distance between a traitor and the faction whose rise was sealed by his death was so great that a passion of indifference began to settle in: not for ordinary people, as Hume takes great pains to observe, but at the least for the Independents and the army. Once sentence was passed, the king had become nothing to them apart from an act to be finished. There had already been signs and forerunnings of a will to such indifference: as mentioned early on, during the war, Cromwell told his own soldiers that if ever he came across the king on the battlefield, he would shoot a musket into his face as he would to any enemy soldier (HEVI, 57). But the indifference was neither widespread nor absolute, and Charles Stuart still appeared, inasmuch as he was located by pity, malice or contempt, at the minimal level of traitor and thus as a political enemy. His execution is one of those rare moments in a topology of passions in which selves and groups are located on the differential whole through a contemporaneous indexing of the maximum and the minimal rank through the completion of the most vertical and deep fall possible in society: from king to traitor.

Imagine, if you will, a contempt for the other that has become so intense that there is no longer any basic sympathy possible for them as a bare human being. The contempt turns into indifference because they do not even merit the minimal social or political rank: they have been expelled from that ranking system. Here, the other is not recognized as an agent or as an object worthy of the investment of a passion such as hatred. The other is still ranked, of course, but not on the same scale as the self, rather on a scale, say, of utility or convenience or price. This is a ranking that the other shares with instruments and commodities. The other does not have access to the same pool of scarce resources from which the qualities are drawn that index the self on its order of ranks. Such a form of disjunction is asymmetrical. Unlike faction and hatred, there is no mirrored inversion of the passional locations of the two sides; that is, one can no longer say 'you call me a traitor and think to lower my rank, but I name your enmity as a sign of my own legitimacy, and my rank increases by means of my antagonism with you'. Rather, the disjunction we are considering here takes place across *two different topologies*, with separate ranking systems. The selves located by disjunction do not share any other configurations of appearance; indeed, one of the selves does not even appear as an individuated self and cannot make relationships with individuals or groups in the other topology. This kind of disjunction shall be called *expulsion*, and it will remain an open question as to whether it finds a concrete instantiation in Hume's philosophy or history.

To dive deeper into the conflict at stake in Hume's *History*, we must trace the appearances of intention in all of its varieties, all the way up to expanded and opaque intentions that dominate an entire political field and become

maximal envelopes: all this a prelude to the enquiry into the place of action in a topology of the passions.

Chapter Four

What Does the Other Want?

DECEIVERS, TRAITORS AND APOSTATES

The two Stuart volumes of Hume's *History* present us with a sequence of deceivers, traitors and apostates. James I's and Charles I's chief ministers, the Earl of Buckingham and the Earl of Strafford, are both accused of treachery and impeached by the Commons (HEV, 169, 287). Buckingham is presented as a deceiver and a manipulator in his conduct during the Spanish treaty, managing to "embroil the two nations" in conflict due to his personal interests. Both Buckingham and Strafford at certain points in their career had found it useful to briefly ally themselves with "popular counsels" or the Puritans in the Commons. Once they were more confident of the king's favour and their own position, they abandoned the popular party, earning themselves the reputation of turncoat. Buckingham exposed himself to the "hatred and resentment" of the Puritans, whilst of Strafford, Hume writes, "His former associates in popular counsels, finding that he owed his advancement to the desertion of their cause, represented him as the great apostate of the commonwealth, whom it behoved them to sacrifice, as a victim to public justice" (HEV, 158, 287). In the accusation that led the Commons to impeach Strafford for treason, the popular leader Pym claimed that he was Charles's preeminent evil counsellor and bore the plan of "changing entirely the frame of government, and subverting the ancient laws and liberties of the kingdom" (HEV, 287).

In 1638, during the first outbreak of war in Scotland between the Covenanters and Charles I due to his imposition of a new liturgy and form of government upon the Scottish church, the Earl of Montrose both raised and led Covenanter armies. At the Treaty of Berwick the following year, Montrose met and was charmed by the king and entered secretly into his service

whilst retaining his position of general of the Covenanter armies (HEV, 462). In Hume's account, during the second Scottish insurrection against the king's forces, a letter from Montrose to the king is intercepted, and Montrose is accused of treason – of corresponding with the enemy – and temporarily thrown into prison. He later raises a royalist army and with far inferior numbers defeats the Covenanter armies in a series of lightning battles from 1644 to 1645. After the general defeat of Charles in England, Montrose goes into exile in Holland. When he hears of the execution of Charles I, he invades England at the head of a small force and is defeated, captured and executed. Hume laments the death of this "great soul" and says there was something "vast and unbounded" to his character and actions (HEVI, 24–25).

The general who ensured the success of the restoration, Monk, was quite reticent in the publication of his intentions and allegiances during this unstable period – most probably out of prudence, "cautious ambiguity" in Hume's words – pursuing a seemingly republican design by supporting the restoration of the long parliament in 1659 and then calling for elections for a new parliament. Monk had originally fought for the king's forces during the civil war and had been defeated by Fairfax and imprisoned in the Tower of London for two years. There, he apparently refused offers of employment by parliament until Cromwell persuaded him to take responsibility for an honourable military mission of suppressing the Irish rebels. After that mission, he had to follow the subsequent orders of parliament and so found himself fighting against the king's forces in Scotland, hence clearly switching sides. When Oliver Cromwell died in 1658, Monk remained loyal to Richard Cromwell out of loyalty to the father. When the army, under Lambert, undertook to dissolve the restored parliament in October 1659, Monk declared himself on the side of parliament, though, as Hume notes, "Deeper designs, either in the king's favour or his own, were, from the beginning, suspected to be the motive of his actions" (HEVI, 124).

In the winter of 1660 at the head of six thousand soldiers, Monk advanced from the north of England down to London, where he addressed parliament and presented himself as the messenger of the populace who were greatly desirous of a settlement of the nation to be brought about by that parliament (HEVI, 130). Hume claims that at this moment, "While he still pretended to maintain republican principles, he was taking large steps towards the reestablishment of the ancient monarchy" (HEVI, 133). In actual fact, as Hume admits, no one was sure of Monk's intentions. Fairfax, who was about to declare for the king and commit his military forces, tried to sound out Monk but to no avail and retired from the field, apparently for lack of support (HEVI, 129). Monk had a reputation for extreme prudence and discretion. Hume reports an anecdote that Monk refused to see his own brother once he learnt that the latter had disclosed a secret to a trusted collaborator of Monk rather than keeping it for his ears only. This discretion is such that it frus-

trates the historian's work of interpretation: "How early he entertained designs for the king's restoration, we know not with certainty" (HEVI, 124). Time and again Hume notes Monk's refusal to declare his intentions and then excuses this conduct as an instance of prudence given that "no less was requisite for effecting the difficult work, which he had undertaken".[1] During this labile period, in which the government of England could have gone in different directions, pulled by different actors, this opacity of intention becomes characteristic of Monk. The lack of any indication on his part concerning his desires for the future and the absence of explanations accompanying his actions force both contemporaries and historians to evaluate his actions as signs: "Yet would not the general declare, *otherwise than by his actions*, that he had adopted the king's interests; and nothing but necessity extorted at last the confession from him" (HEVI, 134, emphasis added). Eventually, Monk trusts Granville with verbal instructions to deliver to the king, urging him to quit Spain immediately for Holland. On 1 May, Granville brings a declaration to parliament from the king, setting out his conditions for restoration, and the parliament joyfully accepts and publishes the declaration. Monk had switched sides once and then switched them again. He kept his intentions veiled from all during a period in which those intentions would decide the fate of the kingdom. This veil caused doubts to be cast on "his sincerity", as Hume notes, on whether he had actually been an opportunist, hesitating between republican and monarchical solutions to government and watching which way the wind blew. Hume dismisses such doubts: "His silence, in the commencement of his enterprise, ought to be no objection to his sincerity; since he maintained the same reserve, at a time, when, consistent with common sense, he could have entertained no other purpose" (HEVI, 134). However, the repetition of Hume's apologies for Monk – "His temporary dissimulation, being absolutely necessary, could scarcely be blameable" – leaves us an uneasy sign of Hume's own doubts as to Monk's loyalty, as to whether the very general who brought about the restoration had genuinely chosen the king's side when the latter was still in doubt and beset with danger (HEVI, 247).

During Hume's account of the reign of Charles II, it is the Earl of Shaftesbury who earns the title of the greatest apostate, traitor and deceiver. Founder of the Whig party and known plotter against Charles, from 1670 Shaftesbury was a member of the king's executive council known as the 'cabal' and was made chancellor in 1672 (HEVI, 255). In his youth, he had switched sides from Charles I to parliament, had "insinuated himself into the confidence of Cromwell" and at the same time "had great Influence with the Presbyterians", which he employed in Cromwell's favour, and yet later he gained favour with the new young king by supporting the restoration (HEVI, 240). In 1673, upon Charles II's concession to parliament whereby he withdrew the Declaration of Indulgence, Shaftesbury despaired of his design to in-

crease royal authority. Sensing the wind turn, he decided to abruptly change sides once again:

> Immediately, he entered into all the cabals of the country party; and discovered to them, perhaps magnified, the arbitrary designs of the court, in which he himself had borne so deep a share. He was received with open arms by that party, who stood in need of so able a leader; and no questions were asked with regard to his late Apostacy. (HEVI, 276)

Shaftesbury went beyond apparent apostasy to real treachery when he joined the 'cabal of six' who entered into a conspiracy to prevent the Catholic succession in the late 1670s: their plans entered into such an advanced, operational and ready stage that he abandoned his house and "secretly lurked in the city, meditating all those desperate schemes, which disappointed revenge and ambition could inspire" (HEVI, 425–26).

Another member of the 'cabal of six' should be added to this list of traitors and apostates for his treachery both familial and political. The Duke of Monmouth, illegitimate son of Charles II, enjoyed great popularity and had illustrated himself in battle against the Covenanters in 1678. Fallen under Shaftesbury's influence, he began to entertain hopes of succession to the crown and engaged in the plot to overthrow Charles II in order to prevent the Catholic succession in Charles's brother, the Duke of York. Once that plot was revealed, Monmouth escaped and then, upon the advice of Hamilton, wrote letters of apology to his father, was readmitted to court, encouraged to confess his role in the plot and assured that his evidence would not be used in court against his accomplices. He was thrown into disgrace as a turncoat amongst his fellow plotters and discovered that his evidence had become such public knowledge that it would be used in trial anyway. In response, he decided – as Hume puts it – to "retrieve his honour" by retracting his confession and claiming it was an artifice of the court (HEVI, 440). The king was so angered by this further switch of sides on the part of his own son that he banished him from the court and his presence.

Finally, one of the harshest Scottish inquisitors and persecutors of the Covenanters was the "apostate" Archbishop of St Andrews, Sharpe (HEVI, 372). A much-hated figure, subject to two botched assassination attempts before he was finally murdered, he had brought lasting opprobrium upon himself for having betrayed the Presbyterian and covenanter cause. Appointed by them to negotiate on their behalf with the king, as Hume recounts,

> [He] was persuaded to abandon that party; and as a reward for his compliance, was created archbishop of St. Andrews. The conduct of ecclesiastical affairs was chiefly entrusted to him; and . . . he was esteemed a traitor and a renegade by his old friends. (HEVI, 169, 326, 372)

The figure of the apostate and the closely related figure of the traitor raise two fundamental questions for any agent in the political field: what does the other really believe, and what does the other really want? If, as Hume argues, we attribute beliefs and intentions to other people through habit, then the apostate and the traitor present a problem since they break habit or show habits and general rules to be deceptive. If it turns out that a person's professed intentions and beliefs cannot be trusted, the question is whether there are any clues or signs of their real beliefs. In Monk's case, Hume takes his eventual actions as signs, but nothing in his prior conduct had given the game away.

It is not just major protagonists of Hume's *History* who fall into the category of betrayal through being stigmatized as apostates and traitors: entire swathes of the population are obliged to conceal their religious beliefs from a government intent on enforcing religious uniformity – not just the Catholics but all kinds of dissenters, save a brief respite during the revolutionary years, and all the Scottish Covenanters after the restoration. Not only does a dissenter have to conceal her true beliefs from the ecclesiastical and civil authorities, but she also has to assume and practise the rites of the established church, and this is where the betrayal lies. If the civil authorities impose a form of ceremony and a structure of government upon religious practices, a form and structure that are seen to be false, idolatrous and papist by the people, then those people find themselves caught in a contradiction between their religious beliefs and their political obligations. If they choose to conform in their outward actions to the law, then – by their own lights – this is a performance of apostasy, an outward betrayal of their true convictions, and the ceremony is worse than worthless because it is not only spiritually empty but also encourages a Godless government to continue to pursue its prideful ways.

The category of betrayal widens during these years in its various declensions – the traitor, the apostate, the turncoat, the side switcher – and this widening is an object of concern for Hume. He repeats his apologies for Monk's concealment of his intentions, a concealment so successful that it gave rise to suspicions of opportunistic deception, and he is also most concerned by the splitting of private and public loyalty in moments of revolution. In November 1688, the Prince of Orange invades England with an army of fourteen thousand men, and James II's fall inexorably steepens as betrayal follows betrayal. Hume portrays the two most wounding and bewildering betrayals and desertions for James: that of one of his favourites, Lord Churchill, and that of his very own daughter, the princess Anne. Seen from the standpoint of politics, the split seems inevitable and generates a general apology:

> During the violence . . . of such popular currents, as now prevailed in England, all private considerations are commonly lost in the general passion; and the more principle any person possesses, the more apt is he, on such occasions, to neglect and abandon his domestic duties. (HEVI, 513)

Seen from the standpoint of family, the scene rends the heart:

> Though these causes may account for the behaviour of the princess, they had nowise prepared the king to expect so astonishing an event. He burst into tears, when the first intelligence of it was conveyed to him. Undoubtedly he foresaw in this incident the total expiration of his royal authority: But the nearer and more intimate concern of a parent laid hold of his heart; when he found himself abandoned in his uttermost distress by a child, and a virtuous child, whom he had ever regarded with the most tender affection. "God help me," cried he, in the extremity of his agony, "my own children have forsaken me!" (HEVI, 513)

Sympathy for downfall again lands the reader in pain and confusion. With regard to Lord Churchill's betrayal, Hume issues a stern reprimand and announces the appropriate compensation: "This conduct was a signal sacrifice to public virtue of every duty in private life; and required, ever after, the most upright, disinterested, and public-spirited behaviour to render it justifiable" (HEVI, 512).

Hume is also attentive to the widening of the category of betrayal on the legal register. He turns to the definition of treachery according to the Treason Act of Edward III in volumes V and VI of the *History*, once with regard to the attempt by the House of Commons to prosecute Strafford for treason in 1641 and again with regard to the prosecution of Lord Russell, one of the 'cabal of six' who conspired against Charles II in 1683. In Strafford's trial, the Commons attempted to add a new definition of treason as "an endeavour to subvert the fundamental laws" (HEV, 315). In Russell's trial, the lawyers pushed for greater latitude in the proof of the crime, no longer requiring – as stipulated by the statute – that two witnesses confirm the same overt act towards assassination of the king or towards making war against him but solely that they testify to different overt acts of that nature, an interpretation of the statute that Hume notes had been established in Strafford's trial (HEVI, 431–32). Under the Commonwealth, Hume notes that the rump parliament enlarged the laws of treason to verbal offences and removed trial by jury for treason due to the unreliability of the jurors (HEVI, 13, 39). In 1682, under the Duke of York's administration of Scotland and severe persecution of dissenters and 'enthusiasts', the definition of treason was extended to include conversation with traitors and failure to denounce them immediately to public authorities (HEVI, 417). Bands of soldiers ranged through Scottish towns interrogating people in their homes and on the street, demanding an-

swers to questions on their political obligations or that they immediately abjure a seditious declaration stating that Charles II was a tyrant: any failure to do so was met with capital punishment for treason.

CROMWELL AS APOSTATE AND *PHRONINOM*: THE PROPER NAME AS VORTEX

That the category of betrayal become wider and wider, that accusations and executions for treason multiply, that people be torn between their familial and political loyalties, between their religious and political obligations, is perhaps entirely to be expected in a period of civil war, revolution and restoration. Indeed, within the frequent combinations of the faction and conspiracy configurations of appearance, any member of a faction who does not follow its most recent line of judgement with regard to third parties and enemies will be cast as traitor. What is not so evident – and what does not appear to be catered for in any of our three configurations of appearance – is the emergence of a completely new category of political agent: the apostate *phroninom*. In Aristotle's analysis of the virtue of prudence or practical wisdom, the *phroninom* is that exceptional individual who knows how to apply a general guideline – such as that of the virtues – to the particular and contingent situations in which she or he finds himself. Throughout the *History*, Hume upbraids protagonists for a lack of prudence – Charles I – or praises their prudence – General Monk. There are two measures of prudence at work in Hume: moderation in one's political opinions and long-term success in one's actions. There is one figure in the *History* whose long-term success outshines that of any other actor, and it is Cromwell. But Cromwell is no moderate. What is more, Cromwell is seen to slide across the entire gamut of deception, insincerity, hypocrisy, betrayal and even apostasy. Indeed, the grand republican and defender of parliament ends up becoming a king in all but name, the 'Lord Protector' appointed "supreme magistrate of the commonwealth," retaining the right of peace, war and alliance and the power to pardon all crimes but murder and treason (HEVI, 64–65). As a prize instance of the configuration of cyclical return, it was in Cromwell's hands, Hume writes, that "the dissolution of parliament had left the whole power, civil and military, of three kingdoms", and indeed, Cromwell himself apparently expressed the wish of "assuming the rank of king, which he had contributed, with such seeming zeal, to abolish" (HEVI, 55, 39, 95).

What happens when the apostate is victorious, when, unlike any other figure, he proves to be immune to all charges of treason, when, unlike any other figure known for deception, he does not fall but rises to the maximum rank? What explains this improbable success? Cromwell himself explained it by providence, each battle an "appeal to God" whose "irrevocable decision"

is awarded to Cromwell's New Model Army (HEVI, 31, 101nG). Evidently, such an explanation will not wash with Hume, author of the most devastating attack on the theological confusion of 'ought' with 'is' in the argument from design according to which what exists and what happens are internal parts of God's great design. Indeed, Hume's satire is at its most biting when he caricatures the Scottish clergy's dismay at the failure of providence, when their Presbyterian army is defeated by Cromwell and they see fit to blame God, telling the Lord "that to them it was little to sacrifice their lives and estates, but to him it was a great loss to suffer his elect to be destroyed" (HEVI, 31). If Cromwell's rise cannot be explained for the historian by him being one of God's elect, the question remains: whence Cromwell?

A topology of the passions does not explain the causes behind events: rather, it maps the dominant habits and configurations of the imagination that determine the appearance of events. Our question here is not what explains the rise of Cromwell – Hume's *History* already does that, as do many later and more detailed histories – but rather what is Cromwell at the level of semblance? What figure does he cut?

In the *Poetics*, Aristotle states that actions appear to us in two basic ways, or via two qualities: as persons and as thoughts or, in more contemporary terms, as agents and intentions.[2] An action occurs, and we immediately think of *who* did it and *why*. Throughout his long career, Cromwell is seen to have manipulated, deceived and outwitted both his enemies and his allies with regard to his intentions. For instance, Hume describes how he outwits the Presbyterian majority in the House of Commons via the Self-denying Ordinance in 1645 and again in 1647, when he pretended, on parliament's behalf, to contain and extinguish the army's discontent when in fact he had fuelled it, "the most active officers and agitators [being] entirely his creatures" (HEV, 449, 490, 498). Once his hypocrisy and enmity to parliament are discovered by a spy, he flees to the army, assumes real command by duping Fairfax (who is his superior in the army, at least in name), marches the army on Westminster and subdues the parliament and has the king seized by Cornet Joyce whilst denying all direct command of this action. And then, with regard to those very officers and agitators whose rebellion helped him in his fight against parliament, Hume recounts how Cromwell suppresses "those disorders in the army, which he had himself so artfully raised", thus disappointing the democratic and republican plans of the Leveller agitators (HEV, 513). This is but one hastily sketched example of Cromwell's art; through having to report many such examples, Hume is led to speak of Cromwell as an "artful and audacious conspirator", capable of "profound dissimulation", "crooked schemes and profound artifices", being "the most dangerous of hypocrites" who had attained the greatest authority through "fraud and violence" (HEV, 498, 450; HEVI, 29, 58). Of the four separate portraits Hume

devotes to Cromwell, apart from many detailed analyses of his tactics, character and action, it is the first that casts his role in the *History*:

> Cromwell, by whose sagacity and insinuation Fairfax was entirely governed, is one of the most eminent and most singular personages, that occurs in history: The strokes of his character are as open and strongly marked, as the schemes of his conduct were, during the time, dark and impenetrable. His extensive capacity enabled him to form the most enlarged projects: His enterprising genius was not dismayed with the boldest and most dangerous. (HEV, 450)

How does one and the same character combine eminence and singularity with dark and impenetrable schemes? In Hume's hands, Cromwell is an actor who takes on many roles: he is an astute observer of people's character, and he is able to be all things to all people, deceiving the common soldier, the Leveller, the dissenter, the officer, the parliamentarian and even the king (HEVI, 29, 109). Cromwell is a chameleon who charms and enters into the close affection of all momentarily useful allies; he is a mobile piece rearranging events in his own guise and thus an imitator in Plato's sense in the *Republic*. On the one hand, he continually declares and publicizes his good intentions to reassure his allies of the moment, but on the other hand, his betrayals of former allies, his temporizations and his flirtation with several incompatible strategies render his intentions completely opaque. Indeed, apart from Hume's diagnosis of 'dark and impenetrable schemes', one of the very few rivals he met on his upward climb, the Earl of Manchester, recognized him "as a man of very deep designs" (HEV, 444).

In Cromwell's case, as in the configuration of conspiracy, it is evident that his intention, his real desire, forms an envelope in which his actions and those of his allies are sunk. Yet, unlike conspiracy, in which the intention is known but the means and the agents are hidden, with Cromwell, the intention is unknown, whilst his means and agents – the army and his allies – are known. When an intention is unknown and yet it has the potential to organize a maximum number of actions and events in a field, then somehow it must be marked. My hypothesis is very simple: the marker of Cromwell's intention is his own name; the proper name 'Oliver Cromwell' is a larger envelope than his intentions – it encompasses his intentions. As the power of his name grows, it comes to encompass all actions and events within the New Model Army, even the Leveller agitator actions directed against the power of the 'grandees', the army officers.

The name of Cromwell becomes an envelope in the topology of passions described in Hume's *History* because the intentions of an apostate *phroninom* become an enigma, a permanent and insistent question for other agents. Since these agents must act so as to survive politically, they must interpret Cromwell's intentions, and so, in their plurality, they attribute different designs to him. What do all these designs have in common but that they fall

under the name 'Cromwell'? Political victory follows upon military victory upon political victory in a sequence so long that the name 'Cromwell' becomes the key to a secret savoir faire, an obscure knowledge of the ways and means, the desires and grievances, that wove together each situation in which he placed himself, a knowledge so intricate, a craft so fine and subtle, that he found the right way, each time, out of situations that could so easily have become inexorable predicaments, each move joining together to lead him all the way to the possession of sovereignty.

In this topology of the passions of the Stuart volumes of Hume's *History*, the proper name of the apostate *phroninom* becomes a *vortex*. A vortex is an envelope in which all other envelopes are sunk; it is the maximum envelope. This means that in the operations of the imagination, all associations of ideas lead inevitably to the 'greatest object', the greatest 'salient individual' of the group. Each passion locates an individual with regard to other individuals, and the repetition of these locations intensifies the passion and creates a habit that facilitates the repetition of the same location. An individual is sunk in an envelope when their capacity to maintain or create relationships is curtailed by their relationship to a greater object, an object to which all other people's associations of ideas will inevitably pass once they connect to the individual. What then does it mean for an envelope to be in turn sunk within a greater envelope? It means that dependency and hierarchy are transitive. In other words, an envelope is a greater object to which the imagination passes with ease from lesser related objects; that envelope in turn is a lesser related object with regard to an even greater object.

To grasp the specificity of this configuration, let's compare it to concentric groups within groups, such as a group of neighbours within the larger group of villagers. Unlike being in an envelope, being part of a simple group of neighbours does not diminish one's capacity to maintain or create relationships, and the larger the group one belongs to by affection – such as one's country – the less intense the passion, and so the less one is bound by fidelity and habit. In contrast, when one is sunk or bound in an envelope, one's capacity to maintain or create relationships outside that envelope is severely curtailed. Remember our zero-sum game formula: 'any relationship that sinks one individual within a group conversely raises the other partner of that relationship'. In Hume's example, this held true of the remarried patriarch whose new family surrounded him with further 'lesser objects' through which people might associate with him, passion returning easily from a lesser to a related greater object. Let's apply this formula to the configuration of one envelope being sunk within a second 'larger' envelope. The first envelope will retain its increased capacity to form and maintain relationships; however, all those individuals who relate to it as envelope will in turn be led to relate to the second envelope in which it is itself sunk. In contrast, in accordance with the zero-sum game formula, all those individuals and groups

who relate to the second 'larger' envelope will not be led in turn to relate to the first sunken envelope. In short, no relationship can be formed to the first envelope that doesn't entail a further relationship to the second envelope, whereas the inverse does not hold. Such is the difficult status of any 'right-hand man' to a rising noble, gang lord or executive: source of all expediency but ultimately expendable.

So far, this configuration of one envelope within a larger envelope seems to model any basic pyramidal or arborescent hierarchy, whether for a corporation, a bureaucracy, a gang or a single institution. We can also easily imagine a maximal envelope for a given field: it could be next year's budget for a bureaucracy or the board of directors or majority stockholders or the chief rival for a corporation. It could even be an entire nation for a state, with its subordinate envelopes – at least according to Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* – being the executive civil service, the estates and the corporations, all the way down to families.

What we are looking at with a vortex, however, is a very special kind of maximal envelope; it is a proper name that immediately indexes another all-embracing but completely opaque entity – an intention or design. A vortex thus locates individuals by simultaneously dislocating them in that it confuses them as to the exact identity of those groups that are to be loved and those groups that are to be hated, those groups that are to be respected and those groups that are to be despised. Cromwell produces a variant of this effect: he places himself in a position of sympathy with parliament over army discontent, and then, in an incompatible position of sympathy with ordinary soldiers, and despite his instrumental force behind the trial of the king, he places himself in sympathy with Fairfax and his qualms over that very trial.[3] His actions, however, betray those sympathies and show not only that he does not share in the pleasures and pains of his supposed allies but also that the dispositions of his affections and dislikes are entirely other than what he had implied. Hume accounts for uncertainty as a function of the statistical frequency of contradictory associations concerning the same idea (T 2.3.9.10). If Cromwell's affections are declared one way and then the following day another way and this switching is repeated often enough, then these contradictory locations will produce uncertainty and turn his intentions into an enigma.

The second specificity of Cromwell's vortex as envelope of envelopes is that it presents the differential whole. Cromwell explicitly presents both the minimal and the maximal political rank. He is ranked at the lowest possible rank not because he was a mere 'private gentleman' in his origins as Hume remarks but because he clearly assumed the place of the ultimate traitor to the ancient political order: a regicide. He then rose with extreme rapidity to the maximum rank of sovereign, a sovereign even more free of constitutional

constraints than Charles Stuart himself given the absence of a constitution
during the years of the Commonwealth.

FROM CONFIGURATIONS OF APPEARANCE TO MODELS OF POLITICAL ACTION

In the Stuart volumes of Hume's *History*, a vortex forms around the name
'Cromwell'. Here, we seem to have found a passage between our configura-
tions of appearance, our topology of the passions and the more normative and
ontological concerns involved in what is to come: *models of political action*.
A model of political action provides answers to five simple questions:

- Who can act?
- Who can act on what grounds?
- Who is right about what is to be done?
- What is it to succeed or fail?
- If you and I split now, were we ever united, and to what end?

These questions are answered with judgements, judgements that are norma-
tive in that they evaluate ends, consequences, degrees of success and degrees
of authority or legitimacy. These judgements appear to be ontological in that
they name neither appearances nor locations but rather entities, actors: *who* is
right about what is to be done? Even the 'end' invoked in the fifth question is
an imagined state of affairs, an organization of existence.

   One bridge between these entities and evaluations and the configurations
of appearance in Hume's *History* occurs precisely with the vortex around the
name of Cromwell. Once Cromwell manages to suppress the Leveller agita-
tors' democratic political organization of the New Model Army in late 1647,
and given the dependency of parliament after 'Pride's purge', his is the sole
name that can answer the first three questions: Cromwell can act, Cromwell
can act on both republican and theological grounds (as concretized in the
successes of the army), and Cromwell is right about what is to be done
inasmuch as all of his endeavours have met with success and his rise contin-
ues. To succeed for Cromwell – in Hume's account – is to consolidate his
power, to amass allies, to secure the position of supreme commander of the
army after Fairfax resigns and eventually to secure the position of sovereign:
it is to rise. To fail is to lose those allies, to risk sedition, rebellion and
betrayal in turn, and this is precisely why Cromwell's position at the very end
of his life, fearful of assassination and spies, is so uneasy.

   Finally, it is the fifth question that the name of Cromwell opens up in all
of its complexity: many were his former allies – agitators, army officers,
republican parliamentarians – who asked whether they had been united with

Cromwell or manipulated and instrumentalised and, moreover, to what end if the republic of the saints had been not established down here below but rather replaced with a shoddy simulacrum, a Lord Protector become ersatz king.

This bridge between the appearance of 'Cromwell' as vortex and a Cromwellian model of political action opens up a question: if there is no solid response to the fifth question for Cromwell and if his answer to the second question – on what grounds can one act – vacillates between republican and theological principles, then do we have a coherent model of political action? The answer is negative, and in part this incomplete model explains the incoherency, vulnerability and short life of the English Commonwealth. By contrast, perhaps we can adventure a counterhypothesis: a complete model of political action will name an agent whose name does not form a vortex. The reason is simple: if the grounds of action are not ambivalent and the end towards which one acts is clear, there will be no mystery around the agent's intentions. Those intentions will derive from an encounter between the grounds and end of action and the particular conjuncture in which the agent finds itself. But this is a hypothesis to be tested in the following chapters during our enquiry into rival models of political action. What is highlighted by this passage between configurations of appearance and models of political action is a simple question: are there always determinate linkages between particular models of political action and particular topologies of passion – as we have just conjectured here – or are their linkages purely conjunctural and contingent?

A TOPOLOGY OF PASSIONS AND AN ONTOLOGY OF ACTION?

What is this hasty distinction between a topology of the passions and an ontology of models of political action? Is our enquiry into Hume organized by a division of labour between separate kinds of discourse, by a split between appearing and being, between associations of ideas and events? And if this is the case, shall this be a classical division of labour, with ontology playing the role of first philosophy, operating as a ground for our topology in the double sense of substrate and norm?

Ontology takes the position of a substrate when an ontological reduction is performed upon topological configurations, reducing them via a dissolution into the constituent elements of ideas and impressions. In its genetic analyses of complex ideas and passions into their basic atoms of simple impressions, Hume's empiricism does appear to repeat the classic philosophical order of foundation and origin. Is it the case that as philosophers we can return to origins in our Humean topology of the passions?

Ontology, or first philosophy, takes the position of norm when the various configurations of appearance are anchored in one fundamental structure and its variants. For instance, Kant's schematism of appearance is anchored by the transcendental subject of apperception and the twelve categories of the understanding. In Hegel, the historical forms of world spirit are anchored by the eventual identity of subject and substance in the absolute. What then would anchor the play of the passions in our Humean topology? Habit alone? Or would it be Hume's faith in the uniformity of human nature – the very object of his new science – mirrored in what he calls 'moral evidence', that is, the constant conjunction of types of character and types of behaviour?

For Hume, his science of human nature taken as a whole occupies the classical place of first philosophy – that of *foundation*:

> 'Tis evident, that all the sciences have a relation, greater or less, to human nature; and however wide any of them may seem to run from it, they still return back by one passage or another . . . the science of man is the only solid foundation for the other sciences. (T Intro.4.7)

Despite Hume's critique of the categories of classical ontology – such as substance or solid bodies or the immaterial soul – the *Treatise* itself sets out a foundational discourse: its task that of analysing the genesis of belief, of passion and of moral rules. Where exactly do the origins of these phenomena lie? Is it at an ontological level, at the level of those atoms that are the impressions and the ideas? Or does the origin of belief, passion and moral rules lie rather in the imagination's association of impressions and ideas? What is primary: entity or relationship? In other words, which philosophical discourse has priority: ontology or topology?

It seems that our topology could easily compete for the position of first philosophy. The very entities that are at stake in our ontological discourse on political action – Cromwell, the House of Commons, the Presbyterian party, the royalists, Charles I – are precisely those whose identity is consolidated through the faction, inversion, conspiracy and vortex configurations of appearance. Furthermore, these political actions might well imply an ontological model, but they still form a subset of the passions and thus fall under the general purview of the topology. In Hume's *Treatise*, what is irreducible and comes first is clearly the work of the imagination and the associations that it weaves. As Deleuze writes, "The essence and the destiny of empiricism are not bound to the atom, but to association", the term 'atom' referring to the discrete simple ideas.[4]

But then how can an association occur if not between two ideas, those ideas themselves originating in simple impressions of sensation?

Yet in a book on action, the foundationalist enquiry into origins seems out of place. When one deals with action – the lesson of Homer – one begins in

medias res, in the thick of things, never at a beginning or an origin. This enquiry into the supposed priority of Hume's atomism or his associationism is problematic in that it presupposes an order of production in which one level – atoms or associations – is supposed to produce or generate the other. Yet any reproduction of a productivist metaphysics within our philosophy would be inappropriate. Under the paradigm of action, there is no Aristotelian distinction between agent, form, purpose and material, their result to be analysed as a formed matter that meets the agent's purpose. An action is more like a change of relationships within a milieu with no hard-and-fast separations between levels or entities.

Let's then try another approach to the articulation of ontology and topology, atomism and associationism: it should be carried out on a *praxical level*. That is, the key question is, *when* does the difference between topology and ontology occur in practice? Is it the philosopher, the historian or the historical agent who desires access to origins? If indeed we are to begin in the thick of things, it seems more apposite to ask, 'for whom does a split between appearing and being occur?' In other words, in which practical moments does the ontological split from the topological?

It just so happens that in Hume's *History*, there are two kinds of encounter in which topology and ontology come unstuck and peel apart: the moment when a former ally of Cromwell confronts the latter's apostasy and the moment when an acolyte of the king experiences stupefaction and confusion faced with 'the popular torrent'.

When Cromwell turns against a former ally – for instance, the Leveller agitators in the New Model Army – the ally discovers that Cromwell is not who he professed to be, that his convictions must be quite different from those that he had advertised and that his aims must diverge from those that he had declared. There is a retrospective split between how Cromwell has appeared and how he must have actually been, in truth, given his current betrayal of the army's democratic and republican cause. This split continues into the future since none of Cromwell's avowed intentions and beliefs can be trusted. This is the moment of 'the apostate's division'.

Faced with the sudden and complete downfall of an unhappy king, the former acolyte is stupefied by the unleashing of a general passion. Hume writes, upon the news of execution of Charles Stuart,

> It is impossible to describe the grief, indignation, and astonishment, which took place, not only among the spectators, who were overwhelmed with a flood of sorrow, but throughout the whole nation, as soon as the report of this fatal execution was conveyed to them. (HEV, 540–41)

At such moments of confusion, there is a split – for the acolyte – between what he or she took to have been the solidity of the established social and

political order and the general passions ruling the daily appearances of politics. This is the moment of 'the acolyte's stupeur'.

There is thus no a priori or abstract articulation of our topology of the passions and our ontology of political actions. The articulation of these two discourses is historical and thus conjunctural. Their disposition within a split between appearance and being specifies each time a kind of subject that has to deal with that split, whether acolyte or apostate. The fluid organization of these two discourses, of our enquiries both topological and ontological, historical and normative, has been conceived to allow more space for the occurrence of such conjunctures.

In the *Treatise*, there are no islands of neutrality, of truth, of objectivity, of some 'is' that has not already slipped into an 'ought' within the topology of passions. Hume's reduction of all entities to a set of related ideas and impressions affects self, object and reason: the fabric of passions is all-enveloping and continuous.

In the section on the personal identity in the first book of the *Treatise*, Hume affirms that there is no specific idea of self, just a "bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with inconceivable rapidity" (T 1.4.6.4). We suppose that there is some underlying identity to which these perceptions belong, but this is a mere attribution on the part of the imagination due to the relations of resemblance and causation between these perceptions (T 1.4.6.18–19). Consequently, there is no finite, bounded and stable self. Rather, there are plural locations of the self: as Hume says, "when I enter most intimately into what I call *myself*, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure" (T 1.4.6.3). There is a 'hot self', a 'sunstruck self', a 'hating self' and so on. All these locations are conjunctural and bind the perceptions of self to a particular set of ideas and impressions. However, over time, these locations can turn out to be quite different, even perhaps conflictual, especially when they involve intense passions and the membership of various groups, as we have seen with the figure of the apostate. Whatever counts for our sense of self and our interlocutors' senses of ourself and of themselves is thus an integral part of the variable fabric of the passions.

If the self must be discarded as some kind of anchor for our topology, what of the object? Is there not some level of objectivity to events that can serve as a measure for the reform of the passions? Yet the doctrine of solid, impenetrable external objects undergoes just as severe a critique at Hume's hands as that of the underlying self (T 1.4.4.3–14). Our ideas of objects are never free of the passions. At one point in the *Treatise*, as part of his argument against intrinsic value, Hume examines the phenomenon of distorted judgement with regard to the size of objects. Say that we see a small object and then immediately a larger one; we will inevitably judge the latter object

to be larger than it actually is. To explain this phenomenon, Hume claims that

> No object is presented to the senses, nor image formed in the fancy, but what is accompanied with some emotion or movement of the spirits proportioned to it; . . . however custom may make us insensible of this sensation and cause us to confound it with the object or idea. (T 2.2.8.4)

Hence, not only is it the case that, like all ideas, our ideas of objects have a certain intensity, but they also are attended with a passion, and since passions can come in every degree of intensity, that passion might be very slight. Consequently, every single object that might make up some putative 'objectivity' actually forms an integral part of the fabric of passions. Hume makes no distinction between 'internal' and 'external' experience here since all experience is fabricated through a continuous topology of passions, constituted from associations between ideas and impressions.

But what of the work of reason independent of objectivity, say the formulation of a categorical imperative as a way of identifying a duty – does such reasoning not take place in some haven safe from the turbulence of the passions? When he argues that reason can never motivate action, Hume claims that what we often take to be the absence of the passions and the workings of reason is actually the presence of calm passions (T 2.3.4.8). Hume does allow that, in certain cases, reasoning occurs "without producing any sensible emotion", but this absence does not place the philosopher or the historian in a constitutively different realm to that of the passions. One can allow that "abstract or demonstrative reasoning . . . never influences any of our actions" at the same time as recognizing that this absence of direct motivation does not separate the philosopher or the historian from the material in which she is engaged. If all motivation is engineered by the passions and if there must be some motivation behind the philosopher's or historian's choice to engage with a particular period or question rather than another, then the philosopher's and the historians' activities also form part of the fabric of passions.

To think and write about particular material is to follow an association of ideas. At two moments in his argument, Hume stipulates that we have no idea of the operations that associate our ideas: it is an imperceptible operation: "The uniting principle among our internal perceptions is as unintelligible as that among external objects, and is not known to us any other way than by experience" (T 1.3.14.29; T 2.1.9.4). We may be able to retrospectively rationalize our choice of material and research projects, but the initial association of ideas that led to that choice remains inaccessible in its actual operation. For that association to form part of a motivation for research, it must have been part of a passion, a double relation of ideas and impressions

or parallel directions. In this manner, as author, I am bound to Hume by passion just as he was to Cromwell and Charles I, just as they were to the events of their day: we are all located on one plane of ideas and impressions bound by associations whose operation we do not direct or control and whose effects we know by experience alone. This is how my reason is a slave to the passions: it takes place within their continuum, a continuum that collapses any ostensive distinction between levels of sense and reference, the subject of enunciation and the subject of the enunciated, the writing of a history and the actual unfolding of history.

A passion is a modification of existence without any representation of some other level or sphere of existence (T 2.3.3.5). When a philosopher and a historian write their sentences, imbricated as they are in the fabric of passions, they modify their own existence as they modify that of the subjects of their sentences in interaction with those modifications brought about by every other author and actor who engages and has engaged with the actual matter in our hands – English revolutionary history.

At each ostensive level, we are located by particular topological configurations in the all-enveloping and continuous fabric of the passions. But for all that, these locations are not particularly stable. Although the passions become relatively fixed through habit, they are vulnerable to change in two forms: a transformation through the formation of a counterhabit and variation through transition to related passions.

In the *History*, there are moments in which an apparently sudden switch occurs in the general or popular passions, such as the immediate and massive embrace of monarchy on the part of the people and parliament alike upon the restoration (HEVI, 139). At the very moment of the execution of Charles I, Hume reports that it is precisely in "his misfortunes, and magnanimity" that he was most "dear to his people", remarking,

> In proportion to their former delusions, which had animated them against him, was the violence of their return to duty and affection; while each reproached himself, either with active disloyalty towards him, or with too indolent defence of his oppressed cause. (HEV, 541)

At another moment of popular sympathy for the downfall of an unhappy king, Hume reports that after James II had been captured by fishermen in Faversham, despite the Prince of Orange's wish that he remain at Rochester, "He was already arrived in London, where the populace, moved by compassion for his unhappy fate, and actuated by their own levity, had received him with shouts and acclamations" (HEVI, 518). Each time, the key to this transformation of popular passion lies in the operation of sympathy, an operation which has the singular capacity to transform an idea – of someone else's passion – into an impression – our sharing in that passion (T 2.1.11.7).

However, one moment of intense sympathy is not enough – for a transformation to take place in the passions surrounding a figure, a new 'counterhabit' must be formed such that an alternative mechanism of extended sympathy or parallel directions falls into place.

The emergence of a counterhabit and an overall transformation in the disposition of the passions is a relatively rare occurrence and would appear to require an entire set of favourable conditions. What is far more constant is the everyday variability and modulations of the passions due to the fact that there is an easy transition from one passion to a related passion:

> All resembling impressions are connected together, and no sooner as one arises, than the rest immediately follow . . . our temper, when elevated with joy, naturally throws itself into love, generosity, pity, courage, pride, and the other resembling affections. 'Tis difficult for the mind, when actuated by any passion, to confine itself to that passion alone, without any change or variation. Human nature is too inconstant to admit of any such regularity. Changeableness is essential to it. (T 2.1.4.3)

These rapid transitions through series of passions must also be facilitated by the permeability of the reflective impressions. In explaining the amalgams of love with benevolence and of hatred with anger, Hume begins with an analogy whereby ideas are discrete and mutually exclusive, whereas "impressions and passions are susceptible of an entire union; and like colours, may be blended so perfectly together that each of them may lose itself" (T 2.2.6.1). This is Hume's most explicit description of what could be termed the 'continuum of the passions'. Perhaps neither 'blending' nor 'transition' offers the most precise term for this changeability of the passions and what is required to grasp it are terms more like 'sliding' and 'blurring'. What is crucial about this phenomenon is that it is not a rare and punctual occurrence but rather a permanent condition of any location of the subject by the passions.

Not only are the passions ubiquitous, but they create a plane of existence, of continuous modifications that again collapse ostensive distinctions between sign and thing, sense and reference, the author's world and the world referred to in the author's work. We cannot escape being implicated in and located by this fabric of passions, but even as we are located by various configurations, those locations in turn are modified and slide into other neighbouring locations. The passions never dissolve but continually reorganize themselves at a microscopic level of modulation, whilst the gross configurations of appearance that structure the general passion and the popular torrent are themselves vulnerable to the sudden emergence of counterhabits.

In a sonnet, John Donne wrote that 'no man is an island'. Hume's science of human nature sets out to demonstrate this maxim. Perhaps it is the absence of any island of self, object or truth amidst the passions that leads both historian and unhappy king to fear the general ruling passion, the popular

torrent. If we are to avoid rekindling the old fire of the anxiety of the mob, perhaps we in turn must learn our own counterhabit and end our sympathy for downfall so as to no longer end in confusion.

Part II

Action

Chapter Five

Locating Action

How does action emerge from the passions? This is the question at the heart of the third and final chapter of the *Treatise*'s second book on the passions. In chapter 2, we already spoke of the 'passional situation of action' within our exegesis of Hume's concepts of extended sympathy and parallel directions. Certain passions, such as benevolence or anger, and certain transitions of passions, such as from pity to love or from malice to hatred, immediately give rise to "impulses or directions" to action (T 2.2.9.2). In particular, it is our desire for or aversion to our own or another's happiness or misery – whether real or projected into the near future – that leads us to act.

Extended sympathy and parallel directions are specific cases of Hume's treatment of the passional situation of action. He says that it is the near prospect of pleasure or pain "from any object" that gives rise to the 'direct passions' of desire or aversion, and these are the passions that directly lead to action (T 2.3.2.3). He develops this thesis at the very beginning of his treatment of motivation in the context of an argument against "the greatest part of moral philosophy, ancient and modern", which holds that

> Every rational creature . . . is obliged to regulate his actions by reason, and if any other motive or principle challenge the direction of his conduct, he ought to oppose it, till it be entirely subdued, or at least brought to a conformity to that superior principle. (T 2.3.3.1)

He sums up this position as "the pre-eminence of reason above passion". In contrast, in his analysis of motivation, he sets out to show how "reason alone can never give rise to any action, or give rise to volition", from which he also infers that reason alone is incapable of combatting or subduing the passions or any volition (T 2.3.3.1).

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The project of this chapter is to extend our topology of passions to the question of political action. From Hume's opening gambit in the question of motivation, we will extract the thesis that action emerges at the same level as the passions, that is, from a saturated passional location. As we remarked earlier, our topology of the passions is not organized by any massive dichotomies, such as between the internal and the external, the mental and the physical or the psychological and the social. For this reason, our enquiry into the emergence of action will not begin with a psychological or epistemological or even a linguistic classification of desires, beliefs and reasons for action. Rather, it will begin with a study of *where* action occurs in the topology of the passions, and, in particular, we will explore the temporal as well as the spatial nature of that topology as it affects the emergence of action.

WHERE DO WE ACT?

We have already had occasion in chapter 3 to speak of the temporal nature of the passions with regard to extended sympathy. Each passion has its own duration due to its tendency to resist any diminution of its intensity. When we are located by extended sympathy on another person or group, we imagine the other's future pains and pleasures and act accordingly. In chapter 3, I developed the concept of a configuration of appearance to account for patterns in the presentation of events in Hume's *History*. A configuration of appearance is defined as a temporally orientated change in the regional organization of the passions. In this chapter, I will expand on the idea of the locating mechanisms of the fabric of passions being as temporal as they are spatial.

The first temporal phenomenon to command our attention is that of discounting the future. The passion provoked by an object of pain or pleasure is much reduced if that object is situated far in the future. Indeed, Hume remarks that although "distance both in space and time, has a considerable effect upon the imagination, and by that means on the will and the passions, yet the consequences of a removal in *space* are much inferior to those of a removal in *time*" (T 2.3.7.4). Another phenomenon is that of discounting the past. Hume writes, "A small degree of distance in the past has, therefore, a greater effect, in interrupting and weakening the conception [of an object], than a much greater [distance] in the future" (T 2.3.7.8). He makes an exception to this rule in the case of objects of great antiquity and in the case of objects separated by a great distance: in these cases, our "esteem and admiration" for such objects is increased, especially in the case of great removal in time (T 2.3.8.1–2).

These three aspects of discounting show how time enters as a powerful factor in the intensification or the reduction of the passions. They also draw our attention to how the passions act on time as well as on space; that is, they slow and speed up time as much as they contract and expand space. When we speak of the passions locating the self, we must remember that this location can be as much temporal as it is spatial. For instance, extended sympathy locates us on the imagined future of another person. Many of the triggering initial impressions, or objects, of the passions are past, as in the cases of regret and revenge, or they are imagined and projected into the future, as in the cases of hope and fear. Insofar as we react to the passions of other people, either our initial impressions of their passions can be in the recent past or we can imagine and anticipate their future passions. Insofar as extended sympathy or antipathy locate us inside or as repelled from other groups, we are always imagining and projecting the future pains and pleasures of those groups. Indeed, it seems that we are often differentially located by the passions at the level of time and not just social rank, strung out between a vivid past and an imagined future, never fully situated in the present moment or in our immediate physical location. Hume argues that the imagination continually anticipates the future, and in doing so, it follows the natural order of the association of ideas by causality, as following the succession of events in time (T 2.3.7.7). So our imagination continually anticipates the future, and thus there is a form of haste built into the basic operations of the passions. The present situation of a person is thus not determined by objective spatio-temporal coordinates, but, as Hume says, "the present situation of a person is always that of the imagination" (T 2.3.7.8).

It is Hume's explanations of these phenomena of past and future discounting that lead us into the core of our argument. He explains the superior effect of removal in time over removal in space in the reduction of the passions by referring to the different properties of space and time:

> Without having recourse to metaphysics, any one may easily observe, that space or extension consists of a number of co-existent parts disposed in a certain order, and capable of being at once present to the sight or feeling. On the contrary, time or succession, tho' it consists likewise of parts, never presents to us more than one at once; nor is it possible for any two of them to ever be co-existent . . . the incompatibility of the parts of time in their real existence separates them in the imagination, and makes it more difficult for that faculty to trace any long succession or series of events. (T 2.3.7.5)

In this passage, Hume claims that the very nature of time poses an obstacle to the associating operations of the imagination. It is those operations that construct the double relations of impressions and ideas that constitute the passions. If time itself offers resistance to those operations, this would explain the general reduction in intensity of passion for objects that are in the distant

future or past. This passage is exceptional in the *Treatise* since, despite his disavowal, Hume quite clearly does engage in metaphysics here, making ontological claims about the nature of space and time rather than speaking solely about the associations of impressions and ideas. It is as though time in its 'real existence' comes to split apart the two principles of Hume's experimental philosophy: atomism and associationism. On the one hand, the imagination traces 'long successions of events' by associating the ideas of those events, but the 'incompatibility of the parts of time' separates those ideas and restores them to their original atomistic form.

At the end of *Alphaville*, Jean-Luc Godard has Alpha 60, the omnipresent computer that governs the totalitarian city of Alphaville, break down as it tries to process and understand a poem recounted to it by the detective hero, Lemmy Caution, a poem that is in fact an adaptation from an essay, "A New Refutation of Time", by Jorge-Luis Borges:

> [The present] is frightful because it is irreversible and iron-clad. Time is the substance I am made of. Time is a river which sweeps me along, but I am the river; it is a tiger which destroys me, but I am the tiger . . . the world unfortunately is real, I, unfortunately am Alpha 60. [1]

This parable of the demise of government has haunted me ever since I saw Godard's film in my undergraduate days and then borrowed my father's copy of *Labyrinths*, never to return it. In this chapter, I am going to return these sentences of Borges to Hume.

Time in its real existence and the marking of its incompatible parts dissolves habit and undoes associations: it returns us to atomism. Hume writes that "action is perishing" because, in its real existence, it is a sequence of incompatible parts of time without a binding association. As we saw in chapter 2, to function as the seat for praise or blame, virtue or vice, an agent must be attributed to an action, and an intention must be attributed to that agent. Once attributed agent and intention, action bridges the incompatible parts of time, and it does so by modifying the passional locations of selves and groups.

Action takes place in a spatiotemporal fabric of passions: but where precisely? In the *Treatise*, Hume mentions threats and injuries as triggers of action and the violent passions in general (T 2.3.3.9; T 2.3.4.1). He also speaks of surprise at an unknown object and the fear and uncertainty that it may provoke as cues for action, and here we might think of the surprise generated amongst the people by Charles's imposition of irregular taxes (T 2.3.9.26–27). In the terminology of our topology of the passions, our general thesis shall be that action takes place at the site of a disturbance or, rather, an abrupt dislocation of the self. Consider Sir Francis Seymour's speech at the opening of Charles's third parliament in 1629, a prologue to that most defi-

nite political action on the part of parliament which was the drawing up of the *Petition of Right*. Seymour outlines his vision of the nonsubservient role of parliament in the government of the kingdom. Speaking in the name of the Commons as envoys of the people, Seymour names a series of "grievances" – the billeting of soldiers in private homes, "the imprisonment of gentlemen for refusing the loan" – referring to Charles's extraparliamentary recourse to an exceptional 'general loan' imposed upon the people (HEV, 189). Sir Robert Philips follows him in classifying these "grievances, by which we are oppressed" under the two headings of "acts of power against law, and the judgements of lawyers against our liberty" (HEV, 190). Both Seymour and Philips repeat formulae in which they, as parliamentarians, refuse the position to which they claim the king's actions reduce them: that of being slaves. As Seymour puts it, "he is not a good subject, he is a slave, who will allow his goods to be taken from him against his will, and his liberty against the laws of the kingdom" (HEV, 189). Philips draws up an analogy between the ancient Roman practice of giving slaves one day a year in which to speak their minds freely and the brief periods of activity allowed to parliament by Charles:

> This institution may, with some distinction, well set forth our present state and condition. After the revolution of some time, and the grievous sufferance of many violent oppressions, we have now, at last, as those slaves, obtained, for a day, some liberty of speech: But shall not, I trust, be hereafter slaves: For we are born free. (HEV, 190)

Philips experiences this reduction to the position of a slave as intolerable. In his words, it was "to have my liberty, which is the soul of my life, ravished from me" (HEV, 190).

In the terminology we developed in chapter 2, Seymour and Philips are expressing the dislocation of their self from its proper location, which was that of being raised by an envelope – as parliamentarians enjoying the ancient liberties of parliament. They are being dislocated to an improper location, that of being sunk in an envelope. The agent of this dislocation is the king, or, to be precise, what is perceived to be at work – the envelope – is the king's excessive enjoyment: "But how can we express our affections, while we retain our fears; or speak of giving, till we know whether we have any thing to give. For, if his majesty may be persuaded to take what he will, what need we give?" (HEV, 189). Seymour continues by accusing certain priests of having "forsaken their own calling" when they preach "That all we have is the king's by divine right" (HEV, 189). The avidity of the king and his privy council and their overreaching claim to possess 'all we have' are perceived as leaving no place for parliamentarians but that of slaves, a place which is

no longer a place, hence the dislocation of self, hence the subsequent action of drawing up the *Petition of Right*.

The occurrence of action within a general schema for action such as that of justice is an entirely different matter, as we shall see later on in our exegesis of Hume's *Treatise*. Within the schema for justice, which is said to underpin the institutions of the judiciary and the penitential system, triggers for action are provided by instances of injustice. We experience sympathy with the victims of injustice however distant they might be from our groups. Due to this sympathy, we consent to the action of government of arresting, judging and punishing those individuals who have inflicted injustice upon these victims (T 3.2.2.24). In such cases, we do not act directly ourselves – since it is not our sense of self that is disturbed and dislocated but perhaps our sense of a maximal group, society. We allow others to act in our place, with judicial violence, as part of the ordinary functioning of government.

WHEN DO WE ACT?

Action emerges from the fabric of the passions at the site of a dislocation: this idea must be tested. We have met with clear examples of the dislocation of the self in the political field, such as a self no longer being raised by one envelope but being sunk within another envelope. What happens at a more everyday level – can we always speak of dislocation?

We'll start this query with a simple question – when does action occur? – and we'll take it through some key passages in the *Treatise*. Hume states quite simply that an action begins when the contiguity of a present object of pleasure or pain gives rise to desire or aversion; moreover, "the will exerts itself when either the good or the absence of evil may be attained by any action of the mind or body" (T 2.3.3.3; T 2.3.9.7). The contiguity to the self of an object of pleasure or pain is a modification of the passional location of that self. The contiguity of the object, through the association of ideas, will immediately be linked to the idea of the self and thus give rise to a new passion, which relocates the self, in however slight or significant a manner: hence a dislocation.

In the section of the *Treatise* entitled "Of the Influencing Motives on the Will", Hume distinguishes three "principles" that "operate on the will" in determining action: the principles of pleasure and interest and a third general category of the 'violent passions'. The principle of pleasure gives rise to action in the form of a "present uneasiness". The principle of interest gives rise to action through the view of an "advantage to myself" or the "greatest possible good". The violent passions, on the other hand, in the form of threats and injuries by another person, can lead us to "desire his evil and punish-

ment, independent of all considerations of pleasure and advantage to myself" (T 2.3.3.9; T 2.3.9.8).

Hume makes another tripartite distinction in this section of the *Treatise* when he considers the kinds of conjuncture – the "determinations of the will" in his terms – in which action emerges: the violent passions, the calm passions, and situations in which there is a "contrariety of motives and passions".

The violent passions are said to have "a great influence on [the will]" and are instantiated at the opening of the book on the passions by "love and hatred, grief and joy, pride and humility" (T 2.1.1.3). Hume does not explicitly define the term and admits that the distinction between the calm and the violent passions is "vulgar and specious" and "far from being exact" (T 2.1.1.3). Nevertheless, the category of violent passions does allow Hume to make room for 'influencing motives on the will' other than those of pleasure and interest. He classifies these motives as "natural impulse[s] or instinct[s]" and mentions "the desire of punishment to our enemies and of happiness to our friends; hunger, lust, and a few other bodily appetites" (T 2.3.9.8). The violent passions offer clear evidence for our hypothesis of a dislocation of the self to be found at the origin of actions. In the cases of pride or humility, the self is relocated higher or lower on the social ranks. In the cases of love or hatred, the self is bound closer to or repelled further from another human being. Note that in the phrase 'dislocation of self', the self must not be taken in any substantialist sense. For Hume, as mentioned in the previous chapter, the self is nothing more than a series of connected ideas and impressions which are themselves part of the web of passions (T 2.1.2.3; T App.12). As such, the 'dislocation of self' simply implies the swapping out of a certain number of ideas and impressions: from being located by everyday pleasures, such as the sight of fresh produce in the market, upon the sudden sight of an enemy, the self is located on the properties of the enemy that cause pain and becomes an angry self.

The calm passions are said to "direct the actions and conduct", and yet they "produce little emotion in the mind", and this is why they have often been mistaken by philosophers as the determinations of reason. They come in two variants: specific instincts, such as "benevolence and resentment, the love of life, and kindness to children", and "the general appetite to good, and aversion to evil, considered merely as such" (T 2.3.3.8). A calm passion is not necessarily a weak passion; for instance, it can become "a settled principle for action" due to the force of "repeated custom" (T 2.3.4.1). In this conjuncture, action itself becomes habitual rather than singular. As such, it is not a specific conjuncture of the passions that would explain why someone acts at one moment or another. Consequently, we will not find a confirmation here of our hypothesis of a specific 'dislocation of self' lying at the origin of

an action. Rather, in these conjunctures there is a general "tendency or incli-
nation" towards certain actions over time (T 2.3.5.1).

Indeed, in Hume's account of the passions, there are some elements that
anticipate a different model of the emergence of action than that of specific
motivations, a model of drives or forces that continually seek to express
themselves in particular behaviours and are only ever prevented by the fortui-
tous counteraction of other drives or forces. Hume identifies some general
tendencies of the passions that could lead to such drives. There is the princi-
ple of the inertia of the passions: he writes, "all passions avoid as much as
possible" any diminution (T 2.2.3.10). Consequently, we seek further im-
pressions and ideas to reinforce our passions. He explains the universal de-
sire for society – which is fundamental to his considerations on justice – in
the following terms:

> I own the mind to be insufficient, of itself, to its own entertainment, and that it
> naturally seeks after foreign objects, which may produce a lively sensation,
> and agitate the spirits. . . . Hence company is naturally so rejoicing, as present-
> ing the liveliest of all objects. (T 2.2.4.4)

As such, there is a native tendency in the mind to not just maintain but also to
increase the intensity of its passions. There are not enough elements in
Hume's treatment of the passions to decide whether he is building some kind
of rough avatar of Spinoza's system, in which the passions are anchored in an
in-built drive to increase the self's power of acting and thinking – the *cona-
tus* – or rather some anticipation of Freud's homeostatic psychology in the
Project for a Scientific Psychology, wherein the organism seeks to maintain
an equilibrium of excitation via a kind of generalized inertia. Yet to go so far
as to actually posit the existence of drives within the human mind may well
have struck Hume as far too metaphysical a gambit. It is enough for his
purposes to recognize the emergence of a certain automaticity, a certain
repetition in the passions and the emergence of action. For Hume, this auto-
maticity goes under the name 'the calm passions'. The automaticity emerges
either from the facilitating work of habit or from being implanted as an
'original instinct'. We can hypothesize that these calm passions find an outlet
whenever an appropriate object comes close or is brought into proximity. In
this case, the key to the emergence of action is the contiguity of the object.

Of the third kind of conjuncture in which action emerges, that of a
"contrariety of motives and passions", Hume is interested in the "great diffi-
culty of deciding concerning the actions and resolutions of men" (T
2.3.3.10). His target of critique consists of those "metaphysicians" who claim
that there is only one principle that motivates action, whether it be interest or
pleasure. In contrast, he argues that people "often act knowingly against their
interest", proving that it is not always the view of "the greatest good" that

determines their will. Symmetrically, he then points out that neither is it exclusively the "present uneasiness alone" of pleasure that determines people to act since they "often counter-act a violent passion in prosecution of their interests and designs" (T 2.3.3.10). He identifies two factors that influence the final determination of the will when there is a contrariety of motives and passions: "the *general* character or the *present disposition* of the person". As an instance of general character, he mentions 'strength of mind', which indicates a "prevalence of the calm passions above the violent" (T 2.3.3.10). With regard to present disposition, he merely indicates that "variations of temper" can overpower any general character at a given moment. Both 'general character' and 'present disposition' are terms for the location of the self in the topology of the passions – the former for habitual location over time, the latter for momentary variations in that location. Here again, we find evidence that action not only emerges from the fabric of the passions but also acquires its orientation from a specific conjuncture of the passions, and that the question of timing is essential.

Hume immediately takes up the question of motivation within the framework of another question – how to govern human beings. He has just argued, as we saw before, that it is "impossible, that reason and passion can ever oppose each other, or dispute for the *government* of the will and actions", since reason has no efficacy in determining the will (T 2.3.3.7, emphasis added). Evidently, it is the passions that determine and govern the will. He then remarks that if, at a second degree, one "would govern a man, and push him to any action, it will commonly be better policy to work upon the violent than the calm passions, and rather take him by his inclination, than what is vulgarly called his *reason*" (T 2.3.4.1). He continues in the 'user's manual' register by explaining how exactly one can 'take a man by his inclination': it is via the placement of an object of pain or pleasure "in such particular situations as are proper to increase the violence of the passion" (T 2.3.4.1). In general, he states, "all depends on the situation of the object". To summarize, any variation in that situation can lead to a transformation of calm passions into the violent passions or vice versa, and the specific variation that allows one to govern someone is that of bringing closer his or her object of pain or pleasure. He then announces the topic of most of the rest of his investigation of the will: "those circumstances and situations of objects that render a passion either calm or violent" (T 2.3.4.1).

When do we act? When an object of passion is close. This is the key that we shall take into the following sections of our investigation: the circumstances and situations of objects.

WHAT IS IT FOR ME TO ACT?

What is an action, and how does it feel to act?

Hume states, "actions themselves are artificial and are performed with a certain design and intention" (T 3.1.2.10). What are designs or intentions? In the previous chapter, I analysed intentions from a third-person point of view, from the standpoint of the appearance of another person's intention. I claimed that intentions were an example of a particular configuration of the passions that I call an 'envelope'. In this chapter, the task is to analyse action from a first-person point of view: what is it for me to perform an action with a certain design? In the *Treatise*, the term Hume prefers to use is 'motive'. He does not make a distinction between 'motivation' and 'intention', between a trigger for action, and the formulation of a specific goal to be realized via particular means. A motive can be a desire to attain a particular pleasure or an aversion to a particular pain. As we saw previously, motives for action can be categorized in different manners: they include interest, pleasure, the violent passions and the calm passions, the latter including a number of 'natural instincts', such as benevolence to children and the desire to inflict harm on enemies.

The first-person experience of motives and of action is directly examined in one place in the *Treatise*: in the treatment of necessity versus freedom in the determination of the will. Hume critiques the metaphysical concept of cause by means of his associationism: he argues that we assume the existence of necessary causation wherever we observe a repeated conjunction of particular events. Bringing this argument to bear on the determination of the will, he points out that this assumption of causation is no different in the world of human action than in the natural world: "as long as actions have a constant union and connexion with the situation and temper of the agent, however we may in words refuse the necessity, we really allow the thing" (T 2.3.1.11). In other words, there is a certain "uniformity in human action" with regard to the union of particular types of people in specific situations and particular kinds of actions. In order to go about our ordinary business, we make all kinds of assumptions about the uniformity and predictability of individuals' actions based on their situation and character: this is what Hume terms 'moral evidence'. What is striking in Hume's analysis of necessity and freedom in human action is the marked dissymmetry between the standpoint of the agent and the standpoint of an observer of the action. Hume argues that "the necessity of any action . . . is not properly a quality in the agent, but in any thinking or intelligent being, who may consider the action, and consists in the determination of his thought to infer its existence from some preceding objects" (T 2.3.2.2). In other words, an action only appears to be necessitated by various conditions for someone who observes the action as occurring from either a second- or a third-person standpoint: you are acting this way

due to these motives, or she or he is acting that way due to those motives. Elsewhere, he writes, "We may imagine we feel a liberty within ourselves, but a spectator can commonly infer our actions from our motives and character" (T 2.3.2.2).

In contrast, what is unique about the first-person standpoint on action is that it is subject to a 'false sensation of liberty'. By liberty, Hume here has in mind what he calls the liberty of indifference, defined as "a negation of necessity and causes" (T 2.3.2.1). With regard to this 'felt liberty' during our performance of actions, he writes,

> Liberty or chance . . . is nothing but the want of that determination [that of the inference of the existence of the action 'from some preceding objects'], and a certain looseness, which we feel in passing or not passing from the idea of one to that of the other. (T 2.3.2.2)

In other words, we feel looseness in passing from the idea of preceding objects to the idea of our action. He explains,

> We feel that our actions are subject to our will . . . and imagine we feel that the will itself is subject to nothing; because when by denial of it we are provoked to try, we feel that it moves easily every way, and produces an image of itself even on that side, on which it did not settle. (T 2.3.2.2)

That is, we can imagine another determination of our will and thus assume that we could have acted otherwise. Hume continues, "This image, or faint motion, we perswade ourselves, could have been completed into the thing itself; because, should that be denied, we find on a second trial, that it can" (T 2.3.2.2). In this passage, it is not clear whether the 'thing itself' refers to the will or to a realized action. In any case, the 'looseness' felt in the passage from the idea of 'preceding objects' to the idea of our action is further concretized through this operation of the will producing alternative images of itself. But these images of the will concern the past; they are images of what I could have willed at a given past moment. That is, this 'false feeling of liberty' is retrospective: during the moment of action itself, my will is determined by particular passions, by a close object of pleasure or pain or by the desire to punish an enemy. Nevertheless, however false the attribution of liberty might be, the 'looseness' in the passage from the idea of preceding objects to the idea of our action is a real phenomenon. We already have a term for a location by the passions that increases our capacity to maintain or develop relationships: it is to be raised by an envelope. An envelope is defined as the most intense object of passion amongst a group of other less intense objects, all of which are bound to myself. To have a feeling of looseness or of alternative connections between one's environment and one's action, between 'preceding objects' of passion and the actualized will, is

clearly to be able to maintain and develop relationships. In contrast to determinism, the self is not sunk in the envelope of its preceding passions. Rather, it is these virtual images of the will, of past options for action, that are sunk in the envelope of the actualized will. The actual will is the greater object whose intensity is increased by the return of the imagination to itself via these lesser virtual objects. Such is the headiness of free will.

In its first-person experience, action thus involves the retrospective projection of having been raised by an envelope; I had a design, an intention; I acted; I was not cemented into this intention by my surroundings, by the precedent passions; and when I think of the past origin of my action, I multiply images of alternative actions, of alternative connections between my surroundings and myself.

This seems paradoxical, the distinctive feature of first-person action being a retrospective illusion: surely, in action, we propel ourselves into the future, sometimes blindly, and open up real future possibilities rather than false past possibilities? This leads to a larger question: that of the relationship between time and action.

THE TIME OF ACTION

In Hume's portrait of Charles I, he frequently remarks upon the latter's imprudence. Charles was inflexible, he lacked foresight and he was easily swayed by the rash judgement of his favourites (HEV, 172, 174, 221). He was often guilty of indiscretion and haste in his actions, such as in the 1642 attempt to impeach the five leading members of parliament (HEV, 365–69). From Hume's presentation of the early years of his reign, it is quite clear that Charles was in a hurry to secure an image of himself as king, an image that would satisfy the desire of the father: not only the desire of his father James I, author of the doctrine of the divine right of kings, laid out in a pamphlet addressed to his sons, but also the desire to be the father of the people, an image engraved and transmitted in that very pamphlet. When Charles acts impetuously to secure financial support for his government, bypassing parliament and imposing extraordinary taxes upon his people, such as the 'general loan', he attempts to erase an undesirable and uncertain present so as to leap into a desirable and certain future. He has an idea of his ideal kingship, and he wants to join a present impression of its existence to that idea. But in reality, his desire is to match the future to an idealized past, to his own retrospective interpretation of his father's rule, and in doing so, he wants to secure the future as a repetition of the past, as an irreversible state of affairs, characterized by the untrammelled exercise of royal authority expressing itself through the timely and salutary interventions of royal prerogative.

In the phenomenon of haste, action occurs as a stitching together of two moments in time: the present, which is considered solely under the figure of isolated will and motive, and an idealized future, in which will is fully actualized with neither obstacle nor adverse consequence. Action provides an immediate bridge for the agent from an uncertain and undesirable present to a certain and desirable future. In haste, action not only bridges but also compacts two parts of time, erasing one under another.

Another aspect of action, closely related to haste – indeed, sometimes caused by haste – is regret: regret for the occurrence of unwanted consequences, regret for an action's misfire or failure or regret for mistakes concerning 'preceding objects', such as other people's passions and actions. Upon the execution of Charles I, Hume reports that the people were struck down with a "flood of sorrow" and an extreme sense of regret amplified to the level of guilt and complicity:

> In proportion to their former delusions, which had animated them against him, was the violence of their return to duty and affection; while each reproached himself, either with active disloyalty towards him, or with too indolent defence of his oppressed cause. (HEV, 541)

Hume also reports the regret, guilt and horror of moderate parliamentarians faced with Cromwell's excesses. The Earl of Essex, Cromwell's early rival in the leadership of the parliamentary army, died in 1647. Hume claims that towards the end of his life, he had become

> fully sensible of the excesses, to which affairs had been carried, and of the worse consequences, which were still to be apprehended, and had resolved to conciliate a peace, and to remedy, as far as possible, all those ills, to which, from mistake, rather than any bad intentions, he had himself so much contributed. (HEV, 491)

Lady Fairfax, the wife of Sir Thomas Fairfax, commander of the New Model Army, found herself in the same position of regret and complicity upon the trial of Charles:

> Being seduced by the violence of the times, she had long seconded her husband's zeal against the royal cause, and was now, as well as he, struck with abhorrence at the fatal and unexpected consequence of all his boasted victories. (HEV, 535)

The experience of regret opens up a chasm between our original idea of our action and motives and the reception and consequences of that action. Regret and guilt are passions that locate the self on the irreversible temporality of action: action brings about a change in the configuration of the passions that cannot be undone. That is, the impact of an action cannot be undone by the

self alone. It is only another person, after all, who may forgive us for our
actions. What form collective forgiveness might take within a topology of
passions would require a whole new enquiry taking us far beyond govern-
mental 'reconciliation commissions'. Note that regret, if it is regret for one
action alone, appears to depend on the retrospective 'false sensation of liber-
ty'. To feel regret for an action, do we not need to feel that we could have
acted in another manner? Given Hume's dismissal of any 'liberty of indiffer-
ence', a more Humean form of regret would be regret for being a certain kind
of person or regret for the entire situation that gave rise to the action. In any
case, what is essential about the passion of regret is that it locates the self on
a discord between the 'design and intention' of an action and its location by
other people's passions.

Another temporal characteristic of action in Hume's *History* is found in
the apparently opposed schemas of restoration and innovation. With its *Peti-
tion of Right*, the House of Commons claims to be restoring the ancient
privileges of parliament against exercises of the royal prerogative that had
trampled on those privileges. The Commons claimed to be protecting and
restoring the status of the ancient constitution – instanced in the Magna Carta
and the statutes of Edward III – as well as redressing present grievances.
Hume, slightly sceptical of this claim, counters that in certain actions, they
were actually innovating and changing the form and practice of government
(HEV, 167, 174). Even in simply securing "the privileges of the people",
they would be constructing "firmer and more precise barriers than the consti-
tution had hitherto provided for them", and thus they would be innovating
(HEV, 160). To innovate is to introduce uncertainty into the present: the
present moment is no longer characterized by its repetition of the past
through tradition and habit but is open to the future in the shape of the
unknown. To surprize observers and adversaries with new objects – such as
Charles's general loan imposed on his subjects – is to cause fear and uncer-
tainty (T 2.3.9.26–27). It is tempting to generalize from these political exam-
ples and argue that if all action is motivated by the contiguity of an object of
pain or pleasure, then either it is a form of restoration, restoring a state of
passions before the intrusion of an object causing pain, or it is a form of
innovation, attaining a new state of passions through the possession of a
promising object of pleasure. A return to the same despite difference or the
assertion of difference against repetition – these would be the two fundamen-
tal temporalities of action, both involving a bridge between two points in
time.

What is characteristic of these political examples is the superimposition
of two different temporalities for one and the same action from two different
standpoints. From the standpoint of parliament, they are restoring the ancient
constitution, yet for the king, they are innovating, and their claim to be
engaged solely in restoration is disingenuous. Hume points out that this

mismatch in temporality was already at work at the level of the very balance of the constitution:

> No one was at that time sufficiently sensible of the great weight, which the commons bore in the balance of the constitution. The history of England had never hitherto afforded one instance, where any great movement or revolution had proceeded from the lower house. And as their rank, both considered in a body and as individuals, was but the second in the kingdom; nothing less than fatal experience could engage the English princes to pay a due regard to the inclinations of that formidable assembly. (HEV, 170)

The king and his executive were unaware of the weight and power of the lower house, which had grown insensibly to the point at which, if calculated in terms of accumulated property and wealth, it outclassed the crown, and thus, in James Harrington's terms – where the balance of power lies with the balance of property – the Commons was well overdue to overtake the monarchy as the predominant branch of government. Hence, in Hume's diagnosis of the situation and from a long-duration perspective, innovation was in any case gradually at work in the very fabric of the English constitution.

Haste, regret, innovation and restoration: these are the temporal aspects of action that are widely present in Hume's *History* of the Stuart era. In each case, action seeks to stitch together two moments in time: the present to an idealized past, avoiding the unpleasantness of the actual present (restoration, regret), or leaping from an undesirable present to a desirable future (innovation, haste). In both forms, action is an idealism in that it seeks to bypass or leap over or extract the self from the material topology of the passions. Perhaps – another hypothesis to test – all action ever manages to do, at the very most, is produce a fold in that topology and bring two previously distant points in that topology much closer. And yet action is not just an ideal operation on time; action is also a part of time: as Hume himself reminds us at several points in the *Treatise*, "actions are by their very nature temporary and perishing" (T 2.3.2.6).

JUDGING THE OTHER'S ACTION

As we saw in chapter 2, action in itself perishes, and that is why, in order to judge action as vicious or virtuous, we must assign that action an agent and assign an intention to that agent, thus giving ourselves something more permanent to judge (T 2.2.3.4; T 2.3.2.6).

Action is perishing because of the incompatibility of the parts of time (T 2.3.7.5; T 2.3.8.10). Outside of the association of ideas and thus beyond the work of the imagination, there is nothing which actually joins together those events that are classed as a global change and termed an 'action'. From this

perspective, action in itself is not part of the fabric of passions precisely because it does not provide any base for their location since location by the passions always works through the association of ideas and impressions: "Actions themselves, not proceeding from any constant principle, have no influence on love or hatred, pride or humility; and consequently are never considered in morality" (T 3.3.1.4). If time is made up of incompatible parts, then action, beneath the attribution of an agent and an intention, manifests time. However, if action is perishing, then its continuity across the incompatible parts of time – beyond and besides the imagination's association of ideas and impressions – is unthinkable, much in the same way as the continuity of the self, apart from being a bundle of ideas and impressions, remains unthinkable for Hume at the very end of the *Treatise*.

As we have seen before, in order to judge an action we must attribute to it an agent and an intention: for "an intention shows certain qualities, which, remaining after the action is performed, connect it with the person, and facilitate the transition of ideas from one to the other" (T 2.2.3.4). The attribution of agency pins the idea of a person – indexed by a proper name or a pronoun – to the idea of an action. Henceforth, that person is seen not only as a cause of the initial action but also, through the 'remaining' intention, as the cause of similar or future actions. The self as a bundle of ideas and impressions is given some stability and duration from the standpoint of the judge who attributes agency. As we just saw, under the heading of 'moral evidence', Hume argues that in our everyday dealings with other people, we always assume a regular conjunction of certain types of character with certain kinds of action (T 2.3.1.5–17; T 2.3.2.4–6). These assumptions – insofar as they are our own and not inherited from others – are gradually built up through habit. The attribution of intention can thus contribute to the 'typing' of a person, thus aiding our integration of her or him into a general scheme of moral evidence through which people's actions become more or less predictable and can be banked on in the determination of our own actions.

In order to judge an action, we must also attribute a value to it, a degree of vice or virtue. Hume claims that we attribute vice or virtue to actions through a schema (T 3.1.1.26; T 3.1.2.3). The actions in themselves – at the level of the 'object' – have no value:

> Take any action allowed to be vicious: Wilful murder for instance. Examine it in all lights, and see if you can find that matter of fact, or *real existence*, which you call vice. In which-ever way you take it, you find only certain passions, motives, volitions, thoughts. There is no other matter of fact in the case. The vice entirely escapes you, as long as you consider the object. You can never find it, till you turn your reflection into your own breast, and find a sentiment of disapprobation, which arises in you, towards that action. Here is a matter of fact; but it is the object of feeling not of reason. (T 3.1.1.26)

The context of this passage is Hume's argument that the foundation of morality is not to be found in reason whereby reason would supposedly discover eternal relations between things, relations of fitness and unfitness. Here, he asserts that the foundation of morality is to be found in a feeling, a passion that we experience upon witnessing the other's action. Already here, we find an indication that judgement belongs to the realm of the passions. The question is then what determines the kind of passion we experience, and this is where Hume's idea of a schema comes in.

A schema is an artificial convention for the judgement of actions, which is shared amongst people through education (T 3.2.1.17). The schema resides not at the level of actions or, in Hume's terms, 'the object' in the passage cited above but rather at the level of prescription, that is, the level of 'ought' and not of 'is'. The passage just cited occurs in the run-up to Hume's famous declaration of a gap between propositions connected by an *ought* and propositions connected by an *is*, a gap pasted over by philosophers who base morality on relationships at the level of being (T 3.1.2.27). In book 3 of the *Treatise*, entitled "Of Morals", Hume continues by showing how the virtues of justice, promise keeping, allegiance, treaty keeping and chastity are all based on a moral sentiment that takes place within a schema. He summarizes his explanation of the schema of justice in the following terms:

> When men have found by experience, that it is impossible to subsist without society, and that it is impossible to maintain society, while they give free course to their appetites; so urgent an interest quickly restrains their actions, and imposes an obligation to observe those rules, which we call the laws of justice. This obligation of interest rests not here; but by the necessary course of the passions and sentiments, gives rise to the moral obligation of duty; while we approve of such actions as tend to the peace of society, and disapprove of such as tend to its disturbance. (T 2.2.11.4)

The schema of justice consists of a set of rules and obligations to obey those rules which restrain individuals' appetites and actions. These rules are necessary for the survival of society. Within this schema, those actions which are useful in maintaining the order of society give rise to a feeling of pleasure and calm and are thus attributed the value of 'just'. In contrast, those actions which disturb and disrupt the normal functioning of society give rise to a feeling of pain and unease and are attributed the value of 'unjust'.

We shall have occasion to come back to the schema of justice and its composition, but let us remark here how Hume's account of attribution – of agency, intention and value – leads him to commit to a distinction of levels. Indeed, the whole framework of Hume's enquiry into morals entails a differentiation of levels inasmuch as he begins his enquiry with the question of the foundations of moral distinction, asking, "*Whether it is by means of our* ideas *or* impressions *we distinguish betwixt vice and virtue, and pronounce*

an action blameworthy or praise-worthy?" (T 3.1.1.3, emphasis in the original). Once he proves that moral distinctions are not based on reason and thus not on our ideas, he turns to the impressions and rephrases this query into foundations: "It may now be asked *in general*, concerning this pain or pleasure, that distinguishes moral good and evil, *From what principles is it derived, and whence does it arise in the human mind*?" (T 3.1.2.6, emphasis in the original).

The first distinction of levels concerns actions and motives: Hume claims, "When we praise any actions we regard the actions as signs of a motive and we praise the motive not the external performance" (T 3.2.1.2). Hence, when we judge actions, they become 'external performances' which serve as signs for an ostensive 'internal motive'. We unavoidably engage in hermeneutics, for we have no access to people's motives apart from deciphering these signs. From the standpoint of judgement, the motives of actions are positioned as a kind of meaning. This first distinction is both epistemological and ontological: actions in themselves are 'perishing' and thus offer no purchase for knowledge; the attribution of a motive provides an anchor for knowledge of action.

The second distinction between levels is axiological, and it concerns the attribution of value to a specific action: that of virtue or vice. Value is attributed not to the action itself but rather to its motive: "all virtuous actions derive their merit only from virtuous motives, and are considered merely as signs of those motives" (T 3.2.1.4). The question is then, 'what makes a motive virtuous?' It is this question that leads Hume to postulate the existence of a third level. He employs a classic form of argument for the distinction of levels, indicating that otherwise one ends up in a vicious circle:

> The first virtuous motive, which bestows a merit on any action, can never be a regard to the virtue of that action, but must be some other natural motive or principle. To suppose, that the mere regard to the virtue of the action, may be the first motive, which produced the action, and rendered it virtuous, is to reason in a circle. Before we can have such a regard the action must be really virtuous, and this virtue must be derived from some virtuous motive. (T 3.2.1.4)

For the sake of the argument, one could actually suppose that somebody performs an action that is recognized in society as a 'virtuous action' without actually possessing that virtuous motive himself. This is what Luther called an 'empty work'. In such a case, the real motive would be one of, say, conforming to social appearances or receiving praise. In Plato's *Republic*, Glaucon provokes Socrates by diagnosing such a motive behind any just action. In Glaucon's scenario, somebody would perform a particular action precisely out of a 'mere regard to the virtue of the action'. But as Hume points out, such a case simply defers the question of what it is that grounded

the virtue of that particular action in the first place – why is returning lost property to its owner, for instance, generally taken by society to be a just action? A source for norms must still be identified (T 3.2.1.8).

At this point in his argument, Hume recognizes two distinct cases: that of natural virtues and that of artificial virtues.

The natural virtues are recognized as virtues in all human communities. His examples include generosity, prudence, temperance, frugality, industry, assiduity, enterprise and dexterity (T 3.3.1.24). It is the "natural motive or principle" of humanity that secures the virtue of the actions of 'relieving the distressed' and 'comforting the afflicted' (T 3.2.1.6). These natural virtues work directly as motives for actions, so they do not yet constitute a clear third level. The problem with the natural virtues, given Hume's theoretical ambitions in the *Treatise*, is that they are limited, as we saw earlier in the case of generosity being limited by partiality. As such, the natural virtues cannot regulate or coordinate the actions of an entire society.

The artificial virtues, in contrast, are developed through design and convention by human beings to resolve problems generated by the passions that threaten the consistency of society. These virtues do not arise naturally in the breast and are thus communicated and inculcated through education. In Hume's analysis, the artificial virtues include respecting the property of others, promise keeping, treaty keeping, allegiance and chastity. They all participate in a general schema of actions termed 'justice'. One of the marked differences between natural and artificial virtues is that good arises directly from any single action motivated by a natural virtue, whereas it is quite possible for a single act of justice to result in harm – for instance, a will might be contested and the judge decide, in line with property law, that it is the miserly and idle son who did not care for his aging father who inherits the fortune whilst the latter's generous and industrious nurse is left with nothing. Rather than the single act, it is the schema of justice as a whole that benefits society through the strict respect of property law.

In the case of the artificial virtues, the motive to act is conformity to a system of norms and artificial rules that has proven to be of general utility to society. Such motives are endowed with virtue from the standpoint of the continuing existence and utility of the schema of justice. I act in a just manner because such actions are useful to society. The schema of justice secures that utility by coordinating all social actions, thus ensuring that as an individual member of society, I will draw maximum benefit. Hume's enquiry into the foundations of the moral distinctions used in judgement thus leads to this third level of a 'general schema for actions'. This schema lies at the foundation of the moral distinction between just and unjust and the moral sentiment of approbation or disapprobation felt upon witnessing an action. I disapprove of an action I judge to be 'unjust' due to a feeling of unease. This unease is triggered by my impression of harm suffered by the victims of that

action, harm I interpret according to the schema of justice as disutility to the victim and to society, disutility being an immediate effect of any transgression of the laws of justice.

Action as sign, motive and general schema of justice: these are the three levels that are at work in the judgement of any action that is seen to put the artificial virtues to work.

A CRITIQUE OF JUDGEMENT ON THE BASIS OF HUME

In my extrapolation and construction of a topology of the passions, I have asserted a kind of monism. Every nameable entity in the field reported in Hume's *History* – whether proper names, selves, actions, reactions, judgements, institutions, relationships or hierarchies – can be reduced to a configuration of the passions, and the passions themselves can be reduced to double associations of ideas and impressions. How can this ontological monism be reconciled with what we have just encountered, a multiplication of distinct levels within Hume's axiology?

These levels have a certain order, progressing from the particular to the more general. There is the initial level, supposedly that of experience, in which we witness a single action or performance; then there is the slightly more general level of the lasting intention and agent we attribute to that action; and, finally, there is the completely general level of the schema of justice. When we judge an action, we assign it an agent, intention and value. As we do that, we obscure the initial singularity of the action behind a series of ever-increasing generalities to the point that it becomes doubtful whether it was ever accurate to weigh Hume's subtle philosophy down with the vulgar epithet of empiricism given the sheer distance between those general rules and passions and prejudices and schemas that produce our knowledge and the actual singularities of human experience.

The judgement of an action as unjust refers that action to a general schema and thus locates the judging self on that schema of justice, property law, obligation and general social utility, and yet the judgement itself is a singular part of the fabric of the passions. Without the basic passional mechanism of sympathy, we would never judge actions that did not directly concern us (T 3.3.1.9). At an even more basic level, the particular sentiment of pleasure or pain that is approbation or disapprobation is always part of one of the primary indirect passions – pride or humility, love or hatred (T 3.1.2.5). This is not merely to say, as if within a critique of some assumed neutrality or objectivity, that judgement is always an expression of these passions. The very term 'expression' suggests a psychological interior within which the passions figure as emotions and a social exterior in which judgement is registered materially in one form of discourse or another. Rather, judgements

in themselves *are passions*, and as passions, they locate both the self and the object of the judgement – and connected objects – on those passions. Recall Hume's dictum that a passion is an original modification of an existence and not a more or less adequate copy of an object such that it might be compared and contrasted with reason (T 2.3.3.5). Judgements may well appear to refer to objects that are separate from the self that is making the judgement, but judgements are modifications of existence that locate both self and judged object on the same plane of existence, the fabric of the passions.

There are thus two sides to judgement. On the operational side, judgement ontologizes an action by assigning it an agent and an intention and then evaluates that intention by means of a hierarchy of levels. In doing so, it treats the action as undifferentiated matter to be formed and distinguished. Indeed, one AM the most important distinctions made by judgement is its distinction of a unitary period of time, the time of the judged action, through the assignation of a starting point, the agent's motive, and an end point, the result. Of course, the precise temporal location of the starting and end points is evidently vulnerable to controversy. Take the starting point: is it a particular state of mind of the agent, when exactly was the intention formed and was that a different moment to that of the impulse to execute the intention? Or was the starting point rather a prior hostile action by an antagonist? Take the end point: what is it to say that just a particular finite set of the action's consequences constitute its 'result' or even its 'goal'? What about its long-term or collateral consequences? The distinction of a discrete time of action by a judgement is evidently a contingent, artificial and motivated affair, less determined by real starting and end points and more determined by the place of that judgement in a passional configuration of appearance. Despite this artificiality, when a unitary time is attributed to an action by means of judgement, it is quite possible for this specific duration to subsequently be taken up and reacted to within further actions and judgements as part of a process of conflict. The attribution of a time to an action may not be ontologically grounded, but it can nevertheless be quite effective.

The other side of judgement is its material side, that is, its place as a concrete part of a determinate topology of passions. A judgement emerges, as does its object, at a specific passional location, and it is received at a specific passional location, both of which are part of the same topology. Judgement is not a neutral operation occurring from the separate standpoint of the universal 'schema of justice', nor is its ostensive object undifferentiated matter. An action, as the object of judgement, possesses its own passional locations. There is thus a gap between the operational and the material sides of judgement. The operational side attributes temporal unity in the form of discrete starting and end points, a value, an agent and an intention. It attributes an ontological unity to action as if by fiat, thus presuming that the matter of action itself – a series of passional locations – is undifferentiated. On the

material side of judgement, given the insertion of the object of judgement within a particular topology of passions, we already have differentiation. The supposition of nondifferentiation and the actual existence of differentiation do not match up – and yet judgement does occur, and so the mismatch, the gap, is put to work.

We shall meet with the work of this mismatch again in chapter 8 in our critique of justice. For the moment, suffice it to say that the consequence of the critique of judgement sketched here is a refutation of the ontological unity of action. Actions are nondiscrete parts of the fabric of passions, constituted by overlapping locations. When the fabric of passions disintegrates – in very particular circumstances, such as the philosophical exercise of scepticism practised in book 1 of the *Treatise* – what is left behind are not discrete unified actions but rather a population of dispersed events. The unity of action is a sheer fabrication on the part of judgement – but a fabrication that has an afterlife.

It is tempting to argue, as many philosophers have, that there is a difference of kind between the first-person perspective on action and the third-person perspective on action involved in judgement. Using the framework developed in earlier chapters, I could claim that all judgement by a third person is partial and thus mistaken, as it filters my actions through the current configurations of appearance that dominate the topology of the passions in which we find ourselves. And in turn, when I act, in my first-person standpoint, I am raised by the action because it opens the possibility of new or maintained relationships, and I directly confront my action's explosion of consequences outside any configuration of appearance. But if an action emerges from a determinate place in a topology of passions, as we saw above, then there is no epistemological privilege of the first-person perspective. I am just as implicated in configurations of appearance and passional locations as anyone else. My own assignation of agency, intention, nature, result and a unitary time – that is, my own judgement of my action – is vulnerable to contestation, as is another's judgement: this is a lesson all lovers learn.

In the *Treatise*, Hume encounters just this problem as one intrinsic to his nominalist position on actions, a problem we already encountered in *Anatomy of Failure* in Locke's account of actions as 'mixed modes'. The problem is simple: mistakes in interpretation occur when people judge actions. With a touch of the burlesque, Hume considers an accidental voyeur who glances through his window and finds him in an intimate embrace with a woman and assumes she must be his wife when in fact it was the neighbour's wife: "'Tis certain, that an action, on many occasions, may give rise to false conclusions in others" (T 3.1.1.15). The problem concerns not only mistaken identity, which may be corrected in relatively nonconflictual situations like a Shakespearean comedy, but also the ordinary reception of actions. If each person

attributes a different nature to an action because they feel different degrees of pleasure or pain and perceive different degrees of utility to society, then the nature of an action is fragmented and multiplied. Hume recognizes this problem under the heading of our sympathy for just actions which have a "tendency towards the good of mankind" (T 3.3.1.14). The problem is that "as this sympathy is very variable, it may be thought, that our sentiments of morals must admit of all the same variations". He draws the following consequence of such variations:

> Every particular man has a peculiar position with regard to others; and 'tis impossible we could ever converse together on any reasonable terms, were each of us to consider characters and persons, only as they appear from his peculiar point of view. (T 3.3.1.15)

So not only does this disagreement between our judgements fragment actions, but it also fragments our perceptions of agents and their moral characters. At the level of pragmatics, it makes communication about actions impossible (EPM 5.41–42). This would be a situation characterized by what I call 'equivocal action', actions subject to plural and conflictual attributions of their identity. We shall meet equivocal actions again, as discovered through our analysis of conflict in the next chapter and in our dual critique of justice and government in chapters 8 and 10.

Hume's solution to the problem of equivocal action lies in habit and custom – but not an individual habit, rather a kind of social habit, that is, a norm:

> In order, therefore, to prevent those continual contradictions, and arrive at a more stable judgement of things, we fix on some steady and general points of view; and always, in our thoughts, place ourselves in them, whatever may be our present situation. (T 3.3.1.15)

Through fixing on 'some steady and general points of view', or norms, stability is acquired in the judgement of actions. It becomes possible for people to communicate about actions despite their different viewpoints. This is how Hume introduces the necessity of the schema of justice. Not only does this schema provide a matrix for government, but it also resolves the problem of the conflictual interpretation of actions. However, to do that, it must be a unified and universal schema, which is no small requirement.

Yet before we turn to the *Treatise* and Hume's construction of the schema of justice, we shall continue our reading of the Stuart volumes of the *History* with one question in mind: that of conflict over action. If, as revealed by the material side of judgement, we are all connected in a topology of passions, even as I inaccurately judge the other to be unjust and myself to be just, what

happens when we disagree and fight, especially in a civil war, "the greatest of all ills" (PE, 5)?

Chapter Six

Conflict and Models of Political Action

CONFLICT ORIGINATES IN SHAME AND USURPATION

On many occasions in the Stuart volumes of Hume's *History*, a judgement of injustice by one party is rapidly followed by a reciprocal judgement of injustice by another party: judgements are judged in turn as unfair, and the product of faction alone and a tit-for-tat pattern of vengeance emerges that itself confirms and cements the appearance of faction. For instance, in 1626, the second parliament of Charles I's reign impeached his prime minister, Buckingham, judging Buckingham to have been neglectful of his duty in guarding the seas and in providing ships to the French king for the persecution of the French protestants and to have been corrupt in the sale of honours and offices (HEV, 169). Parliament had agreed to grant the king financial supply, albeit an amount far below his wishes and needs, but they refused to sign this supply into law until Charles addressed their grievances and made the concessions they desired (HEV, 167). One such grievance was that the executive did not sufficiently enforce the penal laws against the Catholics (HEV, 172). In turn, Hume reports that the lord keeper, in the king's name, reprimanded the House of Commons for

> meddling with [the king's] minister and servant, Buckingham, [and] ordered them to finish the bill for the subsidies and to make it more generous, otherwise the parliament would be closed. Charles himself went so far in a letter to the Commons to threaten that if they did not grant him financial supply he would be forced to abandon parliament and find 'new counsel'. (HEV, 171)

Parliament's "next attack" was to prepare a remonstrance against the executive's imposition of an irregular tax, termed 'tonnage and poundage', which had recently furnished the king with a substantial part of his revenue. Given

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the affront of this remonstrance and their refusal to grant supply and, in addition, their attack on his prime minister and other parts of his prerogative, Charles determined to dissolve the parliament (HEV, 173–74). In response, parliament published and distributed a remonstrance "which they intended as a justification of their conduct to the people" (HEV, 174). The king published his own declaration explaining why he had dissolved parliament "before they had time to conclude any one act" (HEV, 174).

In this brief sequence of conflict between Charles I and his second parliament, we have a series of speech acts – reprimands, threats, refusals, declarations, accusations, statements of grievance and dissolutions – each of which entails judgement of the other's actions and judgements in a serial process that seems not to end even with the dissolution of parliament. Within this hostile exchange, each party takes judgements made by the adversary as objects of their own judgements. In this process, the adversary's judgement is treated not merely as a mistaken representation of the facts but also as an action in its own right. The other's judgement is assigned an agent, an intention and, due to its having provoked the sentiment of disapprobation, a moral value: from being a passion, it is reified into an action. From the perspective of each side, they are doing nothing but reacting to the other's actions and attempting to rectify matters, and if asked, 'who began this conflict?' – as we know even from the playground before reading Hume's *History* – each side will point to the other as guilty of the first provocation, the first action.

In fact, as we know from chapter 3, within this conflict between king and parliament, there is no serial order composed of discrete actions and reactions generating an accumulated responsibility that could in theory be accurately divided and assigned to each party by an ideal objective judge, even on the day of judgement. Rather, a certain configuration of appearance has emerged that covers the entire field of interaction between king and parliament and assigns a global order of reciprocal causality regardless of the particular circumstances of individual actions: faction. Faction is not the only configuration determining the appearance of events – in the mid-1620s, the configuration of rise is starting to emerge around the stature of parliament, and the configuration of conspiracy is also definitely at work around the figure of Buckingham – but faction dominates in those years.

When faction takes hold, one finds oneself in medias res; that is, the sequence of actions has always already begun, with the particular modality of it being the adversary who acted first. The adversary's initial action takes the form of a disqualification or displacement of the self. Disqualification is not the same operation as dislocation, which we postulated as the general topological trigger behind all forms of passional action. Disqualification seeks to remove its target from an entire topology. In disqualification, the self is not merely disturbed but also shamed, located on a place of having no place. In

the historical sequence that concerns us, this action of displacement can be revealed in two steps.

First, there are clearly two logics at work within the conflict: a logic of encroachment and invasion, whether of royal prerogative or parliamentary privilege, and a logic of upping the ante in negotiations. In the logic of encroachment, it is the royal prerogative that is most often invaded: "All these circumstances farther instigated the commons in their invasion of royal prerogative", and, again, "This remonstrance, so full of acrimony and violence, was a plain signal for some farther attacks intended on royal prerogative".[1] In turn, it is parliamentary privilege that is most often 'broached'.[2] As for the logic of upping the ante, any negotiations between the two parties were asymmetrical. For every concession the king made to a parliamentary demand, a greater demand took its place: "Charles, unable to resist, had been obliged to yield to the Irish, as to the Scottish and English parliaments; and found too, that their encroachments still rose in proportion to his concessions", and, again,

> These new concessions, however important, the king immediately found to have no other effect, than had all the preceding ones: They were made the foundation of demands still more exorbitant. From the facility of his disposition, from the weakness of his situation, the commons believed, that he could now refuse them nothing. (HEV, 337, 373–74)

And again, "Charles was enraged to find that all his concessions but increased their demands" (HEV, 364).

The second step is to identify the combination of these two logics. If a logic of upping the ante is added to a logic of encroachment, there can only be one result: a repeated perception, on both sides, of usurpation.[3] To give just one instance, in 1626, Charles feels blackmailed by parliament. On the one hand, they are withholding supply for his financially strapped government. On the other hand, they appear to be holding out for his support or toleration of their attempt, in the absence of any solid evidence, to impeach and prosecute Buckingham, his friend, counsellor and prime minister. Hume imagines Charles's thoughts:

> What idea, [Charles] asked, must all mankind entertain of his honour, should he sacrifice his innocent friend to pecuniary considerations? What farther authority should he retain in the nation, were he capable, in the beginning of his reign, to give, in so signal an instance, such matter of triumph to his enemies, and discouragement to his adherents? To-day, the commons pretend to wrest his minister from him. To-morrow, they will attack some branch of his prerogative. . . . It was evident, that they desired nothing so much as to see him plunged in inextricable difficulties, of which they intended to take advantage. To such deep perfidy, to such unbounded usurpations, it was necessary to oppose a proper firmness and resolution. (HEV, 173–74)

In Charles's perception of parliament's actions, they are proposing to reduce him from all authority to a position without honour: he is to be displaced from his proper rank of the highest political authority in the land and plunged into 'inextricable difficulties'. He is to be not only displaced from the maximum rank of political power and legitimacy – his habitual location – but also placed onto a rank so low that it amounts to no place, a place that does not even belong on the order of ranks because it would amount – through the betrayal of his friend – to having no honour left, to a position of shame, to not even deserving a place in the eyes of the other.

This perception of the adversary attempting to *shame the self* reoccurs throughout this conflict and finds the name of *usurpation*.

Parliament and king respond in turn to the other's action of usurpation, and amidst these responses, certain patterns emerge. Through an analysis of the conflict, we will see how the repetition and concatenation of particular speech acts gives rise to opposing *models of political action*, ossifications, as it were, of speech acts.

THE KING'S MODEL OF ACTION

Hume's account of the conflict between Charles I and parliament begins with the king's actions. He summons parliament and, once disappointed, rapidly dismisses it. He continues his father's military campaigns against Spain and Austria, and he maintains the treaty with France that cements his marriage to a Catholic, princess Henrietta. In particular, when parliament refuses to grant him adequate financial supply to meet his needs, not only does he dissolve parliament but, on separate occasions, Hume records him threatening his second and third parliaments with bypassing their services in the work of government. In 1626, he wrote, "if they should not furnish him with supplies, he should be obliged to try *new counsels*", a threat interpreted and reiterated by his representative as that of 'overthrowing parliament' (HEV, 171). In 1628, he warned the third parliament of his reign, at its opening, that if they did not 'contribute to the necessities of the state' by granting supply, "he must . . . use those other means, which God has put into his hands, to save that which the follies of some particular men might otherwise put in danger" (HEV, 188). He then denied that this was a threat, "for I scorn to threaten any but my equals", being rather "an admonition from him, who by nature and duty, has most care of your preservation and protection" (HEV, 188). These threats, along with the king's rapid summoning and dissolution of parliament, manifested his capacity to not only act but also act alone. They constituted the first moment of a model of political action, the positing of a political subject, a subject who can act.

In Charles's eyes, he acts because he has a uniquely legitimate role to play: he is God's vice-regent on earth. For Charles, the divine right of kings had been announced as the name and law of the father. As mentioned before, he received a pamphlet from his father, James I, entitled *Basilikon Doron*, in which James specifies the role of the monarch via a triple analogy: a king stands as a God to men, as a father to men and as a head to the body (HEV, 154). As the king, author and father, James thus writes a 'manual for princes' for his own sons and their reigns, exhorting them to become fathers to their own subjects. James believed that "in his own person . . . all legal power [was] centred by an hereditary and a divine right" (HEV, 19). Charles lives up to this paternal address when he tells his disobedient subjects, the members of parliament, that it is he 'who by nature and duty, has most care of your preservation and protection'. The divine ground of his action is so evident to Charles that he feels no need to announce it himself: others do that in his stead, both bishops and members of the court. In his speech at the opening of the third parliament, Sir Francis Seymour notes "hath it not been preached in the pulpit, or rather prated, that all we have is the king's by divine right?" (HEV, 189). Bishops Maynwaring and Sibthorpe were known to preach sermons that recommended passive obedience and "represented . . . the whole authority of the state . . . as belonging to the king alone", and "rejected . . . all limitations of law and a constitution . . . as seditious and impious" (HEV, 177). Maynwaring was eventually impeached by the Commons for another sermon "printed by special command of the king", which "taught" that

> though property was commonly lodged in the subject, yet, whenever any exigency required supply, all property was transferred to the sovereign; that the consent of parliament was not necessary for the Imposition of taxes; and that the divine laws required compliance with every demand, how irregular soever, which the prince should make upon his subjects. (HEV, 199)

Maynwaring's sermon provides material evidence of the public circulation of the king's model of political action. In an endnote, Hume finds further evidence for a widespread absolutist model of monarchy during the Stuart era, which made a few concessions to parliamentary privilege but essentially reduced parliament to a consultative role (HEV, 127, 561). The public broadcasting of the Stuart doctrine of divine right by bishops Maynwaring and Sibthorpe filled in the second moment of a model of political action. It declares the ground upon which the king acts – his office as God's lieutenant on earth. Presumably, God being the source of all goodness and right, no further normative specifications were required.

Yet when it comes to the justification of particular actions, a further specification was offered: necessity. For example, in the imposition of three

irregular taxes on the people – the general loan, the ship money and the tonnage and poundage tax – the exercise of royal prerogative is justified by necessity.[4] In the controversy over Charles's imposition of the ship money without parliamentary consent, Charles himself asked the judges,

> 'Whether, in a case of necessity, for the defence of the kingdom, he might not impose this taxation? and whether he were not sole judge of the necessity?' These guardians of law and liberty replied, with great complaisance, 'That in a case of necessity he might impose that taxation, and that he was sole judge of the necessity'. (HEV, 245)

Charles's proclamation of his exclusive position as 'judge of necessity' when it comes to 'the defence of the kingdom' seals the third moment of a model of political action, providing a definitive statement as to who is right about what is to be done. When Charles addresses his first parliament in the summer of 1625 in the hope of securing sufficient supply for his government's needs, he presents all of his military campaigns and operations, the debts he inherited from his father's administration, the alliances he had formed and the expenses of maintaining the fleet and his armies. In this address and 'entreaty', he quite clearly presents himself as the sole depository of authoritative knowledge of the affairs of the kingdom and their successful prosecution (HEV, 162). At the very end of his reign, in the dock faced with the accusation of treason, Charles "represented that . . . those, who arrogated a title to sit as his judges, were born his subjects, and born subjects to those laws, which determined, That the king can do no wrong" (HEV, 536). Thus, in response to the third question, not only is the king alone right about what is to be done but by law he can do no wrong: his authority is absolute.

The king's model of political action privileges one type of action: the exercise of executive prerogative. It takes place as a punctual and timely intervention into the kingdom's affairs that is discretionary, salutary and necessary. It immediately establishes a short circuit between the exceptional one – the king as sole political subject – and the whole – the order and safety of the kingdom. In the context of the arguments for and against the *Petition of Right*, Hume characterizes the position of the court on royal prerogative in the following terms:

> Faction and discontent, like diseases, frequently arise in every political body; and during these disorders, it is by the salutary exercise alone of this discretionary power, that rebellious and civil wars can be prevented. To circumscribe this power, is to destroy its nature: Entirely to abrogate it, is impracticable; and the attempt itself must prove dangerous, if not pernicious to the public. (HEV, 194)

If it is the king alone who judges necessity, who alone possesses entire knowledge of the kingdom's affairs, who anticipates all measures to secure the public, then the king is an instrument of history, history as it manifests God's will. In Hume's account, it is only in the dock, faced with his accusers, when all is lost, that he feels it apposite to publically declare his role, stating that he derives his "dignity from the Supreme Majesty of Heaven" (HEV, 536). In his eyes, his trial was thus impossible: how could an instrument of God be guilty of treachery?

The king's model of political action thus outlines an ontological form: prerogative as a punctual intervention identifying an exceptional one with the whole as the latter's essential expression and support. Hume himself recognizes this when he caricatures the lawyers' conception of royal prerogative under James I "as something real and durable" – in contrast to the sporadic and ineffectual sittings of parliament – and as akin to the scholastic notion of "eternal essences . . . which no time nor force could alter" (HEV, 127). And yet time and force do have their way – in the shape of an alternative model of political action which emerges out of the repetition and concatenation of a different series of speech acts.

THE PARLIAMENTARY MODEL OF POLITICAL ACTION

The first logical moment of parliament's model occurs through the construction of its own 'countermodel', that is, a negative interpretation of the king's model of political action as unconstitutional and 'arbitrary'. One of the more salient moments in this interpretation occurred quite late, in 1637, when member of parliament John Hampden risked prison for his refusal to pay the ship money on grounds of "the laws and liberties of his country" (HEV, 245). His trial became a cause célèbre, a test of the imbalance of the constitution. The executive justified the imposition of the ship money by appeal to necessity. In doing so, it invoked its superior knowledge of the state of the kingdom and what the latter entailed in terms of constraints on action. In return, Hume writes,

> It was urged by Hambden's council, and by his partizans in the nation, that the plea of necessity was in vain introduced into a trial of law; since it was the nature of necessity to abolish all law, and, by irresistible violence, to dissolve all the weaker and more artificial ties of human society. Not only the prince, in cases of extreme distress, is exempted from the ordinary rules of administration: All orders of men are then levelled; and any individual may consult the public safety by any expedient, which his Situation enables him to employ. (HEV, 246)

For Hampden, 'necessity' was a state of affairs in which the very survival of not only the people but also each individual was at stake. Such a state of affairs would be apparent to everyone, and the very idea that it could fall neatly into the exclusive purview of some single judge, such as the king, and be used for justification of his acts alone was absurd. A state of necessity would overspill all areas of competence and accustomed spheres of administration to invade every village and home, putting all on an equal footing: a Hobbesian state of nature in which civil law would disappear. Anything but such an extreme state of affairs, in Hampden's argument, was a "merely factitious and pretended" necessity, an arbitrary exigency that in truth depended on a series of contingent choices that had already been made by the executive (HEV, 246).

Hume explains the political implications of Hampden's critique:

> Expediency, at other times, would cover itself under the appearance of necessity; and, in proportion as precedents multiplied, the will alone of the sovereign was sufficient to supply the place of expediency, of which he constituted himself the sole judge. (HEV, 179)

This is precisely where parliament's 'countermodel' of the king's action emerges: behind the appeal to necessity, the parliamentarians discover the arbitrariness of the king's will. Hampden's court case opened up a direct passage from objective necessity to its opposite, subjective caprice, the will of one person. Once this necessity was revealed to have been feigned, that will could not but appear arbitrary. Hampden's case crystallized opposition to the king through its clear disqualification of his claim to exclusive legitimacy: it opened up other grounds for action, not least Hampden's own action of defending his own property against the king's irregular tax on the grounds of the law.

Parliament itself, including Hampden, a member of parliament, did not wait until his famous court case in 1637 to act and to assert its own grounds for action. The first, second and third parliaments under Charles asserted their rights as a collective political subject and acted: through the refusal of supply or by granting substantially reduced supply, through the accusation and attempted impeachment of Buckingham and through the publication of the remonstrances and the *Petition of Right*. This is the first moment of a model of political action; through action, a subject claims its place and asserts its existence within the field of politics. In the terms of our topology of the passions, a political subject is raised by an envelope, thus increasing its capacity to maintain relationships and create new relationships.

On what grounds did parliament act? Sir Thomas Wentworth, at the opening of the third parliament in 1628, sets out a course of action to 'make whole

the breaches of the constitution' opened by the excesses of royal prerogative and claims,

> We must vindicate: What? New things? No: Our ancient, legal, and vital liberties; by reinforcing the laws, enacted by our ancestors; by setting such a stamp upon them, that no licentious spirit shall dare henceforth to invade them. (HEV, 191)

Here, the temporal schema of action is precisely that of the reparation and restoration of ancient precedent, as mentioned in chapter 5. But what were the liberties and privileges of parliament? At one point, Hume remarks, as part of general diagnosis of the conflict,

> The general question, we may observe, with regard to privileges of parliament, has always been, and still continues, one of the greatest mysteries in the English constitution; and, in some respects, notwithstanding the accurate genius of that government, these privileges are at present as undetermined as were formerly the prerogatives of the crown. (HEV, 358)

Perhaps it is for this very reason of underdetermination that 'parliamentary privilege' became a rallying cry for the London mob around the houses of parliament in Westminster in 1642 following Charles's botched attempt to impeach five of the popular members of parliament for high treason. Despite the mystery surrounding parliamentary privileges, Hume does manage to specify four of them. For instance, he notes that "to grant or refuse supplies was the undoubted privilege of the commons" (HEV, 160). He then mentions three privileges in the context of their breach by the executive: immunity from prosecution for members of parliament, a restriction on the king expressing an opinion with regard to any bill under consideration by either house until it be presented to him for his assent and the prohibition of the House of Lords from interfering in the election of members of the House of Commons (HEV, 171, 366–71, 358). However, our most complete list of parliamentary privileges comes from the last parliament under James I in 1621, protesting his hostile reaction to their own remonstrance, a protest cited by Hume in an endnote:

> The liberties, franchises, and jurisdictions of parliament are the ancient and undoubted birth right and inheritance of the subjects of England, and that the urgent and arduous affairs concerning the king, state, and defence of the realm and of the church of England; and the maintenance and making of laws, and redress of mischiefs and grievances, which daily happen within this realm, are proper subjects and matter of council and debate in parliament, and that in the handling and proceeding of those businesses, every member of the house of parliament hath, and, of right, ought to have, freedom of speech to propound, treat, reason, and bring to conclusion the same; and that the commons in

> parliament have like liberty and freedom to treat of these matters, in such order
> as in their judgment shall seem fittest, and that every member of the said house
> hath like freedom from all impeachment, imprisonment, and molestation (oth-
> er than by censure of the house itself) for or concerning any speaking, reason-
> ing, or declaring of any matter or matters touching the parliament or parlia-
> ment-business. (HEV, 559)

In this declaration, parliament clearly specifies its role, its jurisdiction and
the privileges and liberties of its members. This is a role reclaimed by Sir
Francis Seymour at the opening of the third parliament under Charles I in
1628: parliament presented itself to the king as a faithful mirror of the king-
dom, its function to counsel him, but to do so without flattery or servitude, by
truthfully reporting all of the actual grievances of the people (HEV, 189). It
is the *Petition of Right* itself that gives us the most specific historical ground
for the action and function of parliament as guardian of the laws and of civil
liberties (HEV, 355). The *Petition of Right* cites the Magna Carta and, in
particular, its clause that guarantees "That no freeman may be taken or im-
prisoned, or be disseized of his freehold or liberties, or his free customs, or be
outlawed or exiled, or in any manner destroyed, but by the lawful judgment
of his peers, or by the law of the land" (HEV, 565–66). Mention is made of
the six statutes of the reign of Edward III that interpret and expand upon this
clause, extending these liberties beyond freemen to all subjects "of what
estate and condition" they may be and protecting them from arbitrary impris-
onment with no declared cause or without due process of law and from
attacks on their property. In Hume's account, the 'partisans of the commons'
specified the ground of their action by arguing that "Privileges in particular,
which are founded on the GREAT CHARTER, must always remain in force,
because derived from a source of never-failing authority, regarded in all ages,
as the most sacred contract between king and people" (HEV, 192–93).

   A substantial evolution occurs between 1628 and 1641 in parliament's
thinking concerning the foundation of its action. In late 1641, during a dis-
pute with the House of Lords over the bishops' right to vote in the upper
house, the Commons went far beyond the restoration of ancient liberties:

> Nay, [the Commons] went so far as openly to tell the lords, 'That they them-
> selves were the representative body of the whole kingdom, and that the peers
> were nothing but individuals, who held their seats in a particular capacity: And
> therefore, if their lordships will not consent to the passing of acts necessary for
> the preservation of the people, the commons, together with such of the lords as
> are more sensible of the danger, must join together, and represent the matter to
> his majesty'. (HEV, 360–61, Hume citing Clarendon)

In this 1641 declaration, the temporal schema of the action of parliament is
one of innovation. The innovation at stake is the exclusive claim by the

Commons to be the democratic and representative institution of government. Eight fateful years later, the civil war won, a purged parliament advanced still further towards unicameral democracy, declaring,

> The commons of England, assembled in parliament, being chosen by the people, and representing them, are the supreme authority of the nation, and that whatever is enacted and declared to be law by the commons, hath the force of law, without the consent of king or house of peers. (HEV, 533)

In 1649, the movement towards parliament's exclusive possession of the legitimate grounds to act is thus complete. Henceforth, both king and the House of Lords were superfluous to the operation of government and to the determination of what was to be done.

The question of who is right about what is to be done forms the third moment of a model of political action. Our story of parliament's increasing claims as to the grounds of its action is matched by increasing assertions of its authority to determine the course of national policy. In 1626, when the House of Commons enters its accusations against the king's prime minister, Buckingham, and when it remonstrates with the executive for not enforcing the penal laws against Catholics, it had already proceeded beyond the role of consultancy and advice and claimed full knowledge of what should be done by the executive. In 1628, when Sir Francis Seymour asserts that it is the function of parliament to truthfully report to the king the current grievances of the people, he arrogates for parliament a unique grasp on the truth of what *has been* done, that is, a comprehension of the people's reception of previous political actions (HEV, 189). In 1649, when the rump parliament declares the Commons to be the supreme authority of the nation, it is clear that they have arrogated the sole right to declare the correct course of action.

The fourth moment of a model of political action is its determination of the nature of success and failure. Evidently for parliament, the very nature of success changes as its conflict with the king evolves. In 1628, parliament most definitely succeeds when the *Petition of Right* is passed into law: "The acclamations, with which the house resounded, and the universal joy diffused over the nation, showed how much this petition had been the object of all men's vows and expectations" (HEV, 200). Hence, at this moment, to succeed was to restore and reinforce ancient liberties and privileges against the incursions and transgressions of royal prerogative. For parliament to succeed was not only to gain concessions from the king in exchange for granting supply but also to ensure that the legislation it passed acquired the full force of the law by being applied throughout the country and upon all occasions. In the immediate lead-up to the civil war, the measure of success changes to become the reshaping of the constitution and the institutions of government. In 1640, the Star Chamber and the High Commission are abolished, and

parliament is granted regular terms by the Triennial Act. Already by 1641, according to Hume's interpretation of its intentions, parliament would have been satisfied with no lesser course of action than that of continually invading royal prerogative and enlarging popular authority to the point of seizing sovereignty for itself; he then asserts such to have been the explicit purpose of the party of Independents once they emerged in 1643, alongside the abolition of the monarchy and of the episcopacy, and no less than the securing of "an entire equality of rank and order, in a republic, quite free and independent" (HEV, 348, 443).

However complicated its strategy and tactics may have become during the civil war, especially faced with the New Model Army's entrance into the arena as an independent political subject, for Hume, the ultimate measure of success for the parliamentary model of political action remained the seizure of sovereignty. The eventual abolition of the monarchy in 1650 and the declaration of the republic appear to have definitely met that measure of success, yet given the purge of parliament in 1649 and its diminished and subordinate role under Cromwell's protectorate, one cannot say that it was parliament that succeeded in gaining sovereignty.

The fifth moment of political action concerns the possibilities of alliance: in its original voicing by the Leveller agitators as addressed to Cromwell and the officers of the New Model Army, the question ran, if you and I split now, were we ever united, and to what end? The split at stake for parliament was between themselves and the king. Both parliament and king had named the same end to their action: public safety or "the interest of king and people", but these names were subject to very different interpretations (HEV, 189). In this case, the question of whether these two actors had ever been united became a question about the functioning of the English constitution: did they ever find a satisfactory way to articulate the two parts of the work of government? From the first parliament under Charles in 1625 right up until the civil war, their relationship was determined by a logic of encroachment, upping the ante and perceived usurpation: this precluded any solution to the constitutional problem. The most telling indications of the absence of even a potential unity are found in the repeated breakdowns of negotiations during the civil war. In Hume's records, peace negotiations were attempted in 1642, in early 1643 in Oxford, in late 1643, in early 1644, in January 1645 at Uxbridge and at the end of the war in May 1646.[5] Each time, the sticking points were insuperable: for instance, the parliament demanded command of the militia, the abolition of the episcopacy and establishment of presbytery and control over the war against the Catholic rebels in Ireland. The parliamentary model of political action did not include a stable conception of the role of the king in government. The royal model of political action did not comprise a conception of the parliament's role in government apart from granting supply and subservience to the king's will. These two models of political action

were thus incomplete in that they were incapable of providing a guide for the resolution of conflict with another independent political agent. This incapacity was seen again on the part of parliament when it came to the breakdown of its relationship with its own army in 1647.

HOW WORDS SHAPE TIME AND TIME SHAPES NORMS

In order to make sense of the conflict and eventual war between king and parliament, I have used an interpretative filter generated in my earlier work on Leveller agitator thinking in the New Model Army: a model of political action is built out of answers to five fundamental questions: 'Who acts?', 'On what grounds?', 'Who is right about what is to be done?', 'What does it mean to succeed or fail?' and 'If you and I split, were we ever united and to what end?' The answers to these questions specify norms – grounds of legitimacy, sources of authority, measures of success – and in doing so, they also identify a political agent; they answer the question of 'who?' A new question has arisen: how does a model of political action emerge, and what is its real efficacy amidst an actual political conflict? In other words, how do these norms emerge within political practice, and what effect do they have? So far, I have merely shown that patterns emerge in volume 5 of Hume's *History* in the form of two sets of responses to the questions of political action. It is now a question of analysing the internal coherence and unfolding of a model of political action: a matter left untreated in *Anatomy of Failure*.

In the *Treatise*, Hume already possesses an answer to the question of the emergence of moral norms. It is the universal schema of justice that lies at the foundation of moral judgements concerning the artificial virtues. The schema consists of a particular set of norms that legalize established property relations. Hume asserts that social actions are coordinated by its means, and thus the schema of justice is perceived by all to be of general social utility. We shall look at this schema in chapter 8. What is striking about the *History*'s account of the conflict between king and parliament is the presence of elements that militate for quite a different theory of emergent norms. In contrast to the world projected by the *Treatise*, there is no universal schema for political action at work in English history: there is faction, and there are competing models of action, each with its own efficacy. These models consist of norms in that they prescribe one exclusive answer to the question of 'who?' For instance, it is the king who acts and the king who is right about what is to be done, and success consists in the maintenance of the king's prerogative and gaining financial supply for the king's policies. The second question – who can act on what grounds? – presumes a philosophical argument that derives legitimacy, such as James I's argument on the divine right of kings. However philosophical its preamble, the answer to the second ques-

tion takes the shape of an exclusive election of one ground for action. These exclusive answers lend themselves to a negative formulation in terms of the disqualification of a rival – it is the king and not parliament who acts – or the disqualification of rival grounds – it is divine right that legitimates action and not representation of the commoners. The question is then, how do these exclusive answers emerge and then cohere within a process of conflict?

As reported by Hume, the conflict consists for the most part of a series of speech acts: parliament remonstrates, it protests, it expresses desires and grievances, it vindicates its ancient liberties, it calls for the restoration of its ancient privileges and it invokes historical precedent. The king also invokes precedent or makes an apology from necessity to justify his actions. He summons and then peremptorily closes parliament and threatens to act without their assistance. As I argued in chapter 5, all actions unfold within a topology of passions, and so each of these speech acts must take place in a particular way within a concrete topology. I have already cited above various speech acts as evidence for patterns in answers to the questions of political action. Here, what is at stake is a different exercise. We are going to develop a topological analysis of five kinds of speech act with the goal of determining how they give rise to particular configurations of appearance.

Let's start with the invocation of precedent. The king and his executive invoke precedent for acts of royal prerogative and precedent in customary practices like granting monopolies, whilst parliament refers to legal precedent in the courts.[6] There were even precedents for the specific practice of the general loan, such as in the reign of Henry VIII whereby he "levied a regular supply" in a similar manner (HEV, 176–77, 185). The speech act of invoking precedent places both its subject and its addressee in a present that forms a unity with the past; the action to be justified forms but one instance, one small link in the chain of an ongoing tradition, or a 'group' in topological terms. The speech act locates the self via love and pride on that group, asserts an extended sympathy with that group and asserts the contiguity of that group to its addressee.

Take the king's speech act of summoning and closing parliament: its analysis is a little more complicated. At first glance, the opening and closing of parliament sharply differentiates past and future, especially for members of parliament. The king opens a period of potential cooperation, in which their presence and activity is required, and then he closes it, dismissing the parliamentarians to their constituencies. The strategy of the majority is to delay and defer any decisive confrontation with the king over the granting of supply for as long as possible. In the stretch of time opened up by this deferral, they hope to extract as many concessions as possible from the king so as to reinforce and protect parliamentary privilege and civil liberties (HEV, 160, 167). In contrast, the king and his government are in desperate financial straits and need supply as soon as possible: as long as they make

concessions without gaining supply, they are in a losing game, and so it is in their interest to force an immediate and decisive confrontation and restrict parliament's time of deliberation. The House of Commons wants to elongate the present, a present of multilateral encounter and negotiation, whereas the executive wants to shrink it, close parliament and thereby move into another period of the unilateral and untrammelled exercise of prerogative. The king repeatedly imposes his temporality, his rhythm, by dissolving his first, second and third parliaments before they are ready: these acts of closure are experienced as arbitrary precisely because they do not correspond to the life and tempo of parliament (HEV, 196, 199). In reaction to these closures, members of parliament learn to seize the moment: Hume writes that when the second parliament opens, despite Charles's hope of finding a more pliant audience, it was as though the first parliament had simply continued, and thus they played continuity against interruption (HEV, 167).

Let's look at this material in topological terms. Parliament's refusal to immediately grant supply denies the king the future that he desires and expects and forces him into a different present, a present of cohabitation with a parliament determined to stake out its claims. To desire a particular future is to anticipate pleasure. When this anticipated pleasure is contrasted with a present that is the object of grievances and disappointments and when another party forms an obstacle to the securing of that pleasure, the contrast turns the desired future into an *ideal* and the present into the *nonideal*, or *actual*: in other words, a split emerges between *ought* and *is*. As an expression of his disappointment, the king dismisses parliament. This speech act does a number of things: it dissolves the extended group or alliance of king plus parliament. From locating himself on parliament via a lukewarm passion of respect, the king switches to locating himself on parliament via the passion of contempt, hence locating parliament on a low rank of competence and legitimacy. Finally, by dismissing parliament, the king also puts to work the premise of the fifth question of political action: 'if you and I split now'. The 'now' is characterized by a split in which one party dismisses the other party from a relatively weak partnership. But this dismissal, which is a form of exclusion, is a reaction to a preceding form of exclusion. When parliament positioned itself as an obstacle between the king and his anticipated pleasure, it turned itself into an envelope within which the king's object of pleasure – financial supply – was sunk. Any relation to that object was forced to pass first of all through parliament and its puritan majority. The king thus found himself in the same structural position as the children with regard to their mother in the case of the remarried widow which we saw in chapter 2. There is a greater object to which she is now faithful, and so their own relationship to her is weakened and must pass via this greater object. This is the structure of the gap between *ought* and *is*: once I was located on the object of desire – my mother, or sufficient finance – but no longer. I would be located again on

that object of desire, but I must pass via a greater object – the new husband, parliament – in which my object of desire, its independence decreased, is sunk. This is the primary instance of binary exclusion – of 'you not me', of 'yours not mine'.

Take the speech act of the king's apology from necessity for his actions. In response to parliament's protests, the executive frequently has recourse to an apology from necessity for its exercises of prerogative. Each invocation of necessity projects a single time line joining the present to a desirable collective future, a time line composed from the executive's timely and well-planned actions, with any other course of action leading inevitably to chaos. Oddly enough, Hume uses the same kind of justification with regard to the five titles of property universalized in the schema of justice: 'otherwise there would be chaos'. We should prick up our ears whenever we hear such a phrase in politics or philosophy: its use is suspect; it is a sign of partiality.

The apology from necessity locates the king via pride on what he takes to be the maximal group, the kingdom, at the maximal rank of competency whilst simultaneously locating parliament and its desired courses of action via contempt on a smaller group – the commoners alone – and on a far lower rank of competency. In short, the king locates parliament as a faction. As mentioned above, each apology from necessity supposes that the king alone has knowledge of the state of the kingdom. In the apology, the king alone is located on the whole by the passion of pride. Via this invocation of necessity, the king is located by pride on action that overcomes the kingdom's prospect of present and future pain; as such, the apology attributes to the king that unique agency of being capable of fusing the actual with the ideal in his grasp of the *kairos*, the perfect moment for decisive action. The repetition of this particular speech act solidifies the king's belief in his own singular capacity to intervene and secure the integral interests of what he, in turn, believes to be the kingdom.

Let's turn to parliament and its speech acts. During the first, second and third parliaments under Charles, the House of Commons frequently engaged in remonstrances against his government: the remonstrance against the government's leniency towards Catholics; the remonstrance against the king's levying of tonnage and poundage tax without parliamentary consent; the remonstrance justifying parliament's conduct before the king's closure of the second parliament; the remonstrance against his prime minister, Buckingham, and all the other governmental failings, which in turn led to the closure of the third parliament.[7] The speech act of remonstrance affirms a split between the actual and the ideal. Parliament once possessed an object of pleasure – the enjoyment of civil liberties and regular taxes. Due to the king's excessive exercise of prerogative, parliament no longer possesses that object of pleasure. This loss of an object takes place through a similar locating mechanism to that of the king's disappointment at having his request for

supply blocked. In a parliamentary remonstrance, the king is positioned as the envelope, the greater object, in which the lesser object of civil liberties and regular taxation is sunk. In the creation of the envelope, we again find a primary act of exclusion: the king separates parliament from its object of pleasure, thus causing it pain. Remonstrance involves a judgement which posits the king as the agent of this exclusion and attributes to him the larger intention of not only depriving parliament of its object of pleasure but also of eventually bypassing parliament altogether in the work of government and thus dismissing it from any rank in the order of political competence and legitimacy. That is, a remonstrance takes the object of immediate protest – the king's imposition of an irregular tax – as a metonymy, as a sure sign of a greater long-term intention. Again, we have the same structure of the gap between *ought* and *is*: we were once located by pride on a high rank due to the sure possession of an object of pleasure; we are no longer located on that rank due to the object being sunk in your envelope. At the most basic level, remonstrance imprints a structure of 'yours no longer ours', 'you not us'. Indeed, as we saw in chapter 5, all judgements have a material as well as an operational side, and at the material level of its implication in the topology of passions, the judgement of remonstrance contributes to an extended antipathy between parliament and king via its location of the king on a lower rank of legitimacy and competence. Extended antipathy involves one group anticipating pleasure in the event of the other group's pain and pain in the event of the other group's pleasure. In remonstrance, the hated group is perceived to enjoy its unjust actions and the humiliation it has caused for the first group.

Take parliament's speech act of vindicating its ancient privileges and calling for the restoration of ancient liberties. Like the invocation of precedent, this speech act locates parliament on a past moment of pride and intense pleasure – that of the Magna Carta and Edward III's statutes. In contrast to the invocation of precedent, there is no living tradition or group that unites the present with that past moment. The present workings of government have fallen from the high standards fought for and erected by our ancestors, standards prey to forgetting, abandon or corruption: an entire past time line is buried but within reach, struck with oblivion yet remembered by the few, and it must be grasped and reanimated, brought closer and eventually joined to the present. Parliament would locate itself by extended sympathy on this group that is the 'ancient privileges and liberties of parliament', but it is prevented from doing so by the king's exercise of prerogative and nonrecognition of these privileges and liberties. The king has interrupted what would have been parliament's tradition. The king's actions again separate parliament from its past object of pleasure. There is a difference, however, between remonstrance and vindication, and it involves independent self-location.

In vindication, parliament locates itself through pride on a past rank of power and legitimacy quite superior to its current rank, the fall in ranks being largely a result of the actions of the king. Parliament thus locates itself upon its past self via the passion of humility. This is in inverse proportion to the king's supposed present location of himself on a superior rank of power and legitimacy compared to the rank of previous kings with regard to parliament. Parliament thus locates itself on a configuration of fall with regard to the king's rise. Furthermore, when it locates itself on that past superior rank, it perceives itself as having once been an agent that fused the ideal with the actual in that it possessed the object of pleasure: liberties and privileges.

Five speech acts animate the conflict between parliament and king: the invocation of precedent, the summoning and dismissing of parliament, the apology from necessity, remonstrance and vindication. What are the results of the topological analysis of these speech acts? The first result is that both on the side of parliament and on the side of the king, we find the opening of a gap between *ought* and *is*, a gap structured by what Freud would term the castration of one group by the other group, the sequestering of its object of pleasure, whether that object be located in the past or the future. We called this a 'primary exclusion' and saw how it emitted and reinforced simple structuring interpellations, such as 'yours no longer mine' and 'you not us'. The second result is that these speech acts fuel the emergence of a configuration of extended antipathy between parliament and king, with a mutual inversion of ranking on orders of political competence and legitimacy. The third result is that on both sides, due to accumulated apologies from necessity and vindications, there is an election of an agent, whether past or present, who fuses the actual with the ideal, that is, an agent in whose capacity we can believe, who will always be right about what is to be done.

On the one hand, each individual speech act is a microconfiguration of appearance, a microtwist or deformation of a topology of passions. On the other hand, a model of political action is nothing but a complicated macro-configuration of appearance which organizes a series of actions within a topology of passions. Individual speech acts converge to make up a macro-model of political action if they repeat the same microconfigurations of appearance, the same structures of exclusion, the same election of one agent. Subsequently, the model of political action elects one agent and disqualifies another. The measure of success and failure emerges from the repeated projection by speech acts of an agent's exclusive capacity to bridge the gap between 'is' and 'ought', repossessing the object of pleasure by either restoration or innovation. As Hume says, it is habit that governs human beings, and habits spring up through repeated associations of ideas. A model of political action is thus a kind of habit.

Individual speech acts thus coalesce over time and ossify into static models of political action, into norms that declaim their own permanence. In their

claim to permanence, they obfuscate their origin in the passional configurations of specific speech acts.

Two questions remain unanswered: what is the impact of the explicit declaration of a model of political action, for instance, in documents such as the *Petition of Right*? The second question is, what happens when two rival models of political action encounter each other: how can we theorize the clash of different forms of efficacy?

Hume was quite aware that models of political action are artificial and clumsy constructions presented and discussed in forums often quite separate from the fluidity and give-and-take of actual political practice. Indeed, in his earlier *Political Essays*, he took great delight in portraying and then dismantling the 'philosophical theories' of government practised by the political parties of his day: the Tories with their doctrine of passive obedience and the Whigs with their doctrine of the social contract. In the middle of the conflict he describes in the *History*, parliament and king openly declare their models of ideal government – in the *Petition of Right* and in the king's 1641 declarations mentioned above, if not in James I's original letter to his sons, *Basilikon Doron*, setting out the doctrine of the divine right of kings.

What happens when a model of political action is brazenly asserted within a conflict? The simple answer is that it cements faction. At the opening of the third parliament, in 1628, in the lead-up to the *Petition of Right*, Sir Francis Seymour calls out public sermons promoting divine right as justifications of the recent royal transgressions of law and liberty (HEV, 189). When the parliament, recently having celebrated the king's ratification of the *Petition of Right*, asserts that any levying of the tonnage and poundage tax without parliamentary consent amounts to a transgression of parliament's ancient liberties vis-à-vis the question of who can act, who can impose a tax, and constitutes a violation of the petition of right, the king reacts in extreme hostility by dissolving the third parliament (HEV, 202).

By assigning limits to who can act and to the grounds that can be offered for that action, a model of political action may well be employed to the end of reducing or even resolving conflict. Yet in the heat of the political process that gave rise to these antagonistic models of political action, the explicit declaration of norms does nothing but worsen and rigidify the conflict. Indeed, here it seems that we rehearse one of the most difficult lessons of the *Treatise*: reason does not govern the passions – it ought to be the slave of the passions. Perhaps for reason to intervene so as to reduce this conflict, at the very least, it should first take measure of the intensity and orientation of the passions, of the conjuncture of force, before it shapes its own prescriptions.

THEORY OF FACTIONAL CONFLICT: EQUIVOCAL ACTIONS

What happens when two different concepts of efficacy meet in a conflict? As recalled in the previous chapter, one of the main arguments of *Anatomy of Failure* turns on a weakness in Locke's nominalist theory of actions. Well before Hume, Locke argued that the agent, nature, value and end of an action resided not in the action in itself but rather in attributions by juridical institutions, or the 'court of opinion'. He also recognized that there was no ultimate standard for the adequacy of these attributions apart from normal usage within a linguistic community, that normal usage being incarnated in a subject of supposed practical knowledge: someone who knows how to name controversial actions. Locke pointed out that political conflicts were often organized around disputes as to the adequate word to apply to certain actions: courage or recklessness, cruelty or justice. The problem with Locke's account is that it does not explain what happens with these attributions when an action traverses two different linguistic communities, or contexts. The hypothesis advanced in *Anatomy of Failure* is that the same action would be subject to rival nominations, to different identifications of its agent, its nature, of the intention behind it, its value, and its consequences, including the distinction between its end, and its lateral and accidental effects. I call these contested events 'equivocal actions'.[8]

This line of argument finds confirmation in Hume. Not only does Hume explicitly identify models of political action, but he also critiques the philosophical cogency and practical impact of the Whig and the Tory models. In the *History*, he tells the story, as we have seen, of the clash of two models of political action. He also advances a nominalist theory of action in the *Treatise* and briefly considers the occurrence of equivocal actions, as we saw in chapter 5. It is clear that there are sufficient elements in play in Hume's philosophy to justify an extension of the concept of equivocal action to the analysis of political conflict.

From what we have seen of their conflict, parliament and king are evidently locked into the form of passional disjunction we call a configuration of faction. Here, by the way, we find one answer to a question raised in chapter 4 concerning the relationship between models of political action and passional configurations of appearance. I just argued that all models are themselves macroconfigurations of appearance, but they can also lock into other configurations. For instance, if a model lacks an answer to the fifth question of political action, the question of alliance, then it will most probably fall into a configuration of faction. In accordance with the exaggerations of factional judgement, parliament and king repeatedly evaluate each other's actions as 'arbitrary' or 'subversive'. Hume's position on actions is nominalist: in our knowledge and judgements of action, we unavoidably refer to norms. But as we have seen, the conflict between parliament and king

evolves to the point that they develop two explicit models of political action, two sets of norms. Our analysis of the speech acts at the basis of these models showed that their election of a single legitimate agent was founded on the exclusion and disqualification of one other agent in particular. For this reason, we can say that both king and parliament have 'countermodels' of political action. For parliament, it is the countermodel of the arbitrary exercise of executive prerogative which leads to the breaching of parliamentary privilege and the nonrecognition of civil liberties. For the king, the countermodel of political action is disobedience, subversion and the dismantling of hierarchy, and it is incarnated by the actions of parliament.

For these reasons, one and the same action is attributed different natures and intentions by king and parliament. For the king, the impositions of the ship tax and tonnage and poundage tax were acts that saved the kingdom by securing sufficient finance to protect England's international interests. For parliament, these impositions were unconstitutional acts of arbitrary government. The locked-down antagonism of the two models of political action ensured the endless multiplication and exacerbation of equivocal actions to the point that even the identity of the agents was transformed for each side: for the republicans, the king ended up being no longer a king but a 'man of blood'. For the king, the parliament in combination with its army were no longer his loyal servants and advisors but religious fanatics and traitors.

It is important, however, to qualify the standpoint from which parliament's and the king's actions were equivocal.[9] From the standpoint of a faction, no action is equivocal: each action is univocal as judged. The actions are equivocal solely for a spectator, such as Hume's 'impartial observer' of book 3 of the *Treatise*, unable to decide which side is right in a contest over sovereignty. The advantage of the spectator, however, is that she can evaluate the multiplication of equivocal actions, the intensity of conflict and perhaps any patterns of events.

One last point about the proliferation of equivocal actions between two models of political action. To attribute, via judgement, a different agent, nature and end to an action is to locate that action in a different timeline, as we saw towards the end of chapter 5. When judged from different sides, the same action does not match up with itself; it has different times. When not only time lines differ but also the agents to which they are attached, then history itself is divided: the two sides are not part of same history, hence the ongoing conflict even up to the present day over the meaning and the name of those events we call the 'English revolution'.

THE LOSS OF TIME

When individual speech acts and their passional configurations coalesce and ossify into a model of political action, something is obfuscated and lost: time. A model of political action offers static norms and asserts their permanence whereas each speech act momentarily twists, folds and unfolds time in its own image. Each individual action, whether it has the general schema of restoration or innovation, opens up its own neighbouring topology to new locations and a different spatiotemporal articulation of the passions.

Take a speech act like the expression of a desire or of a grievance: these expressions open up a gap between the actual time line and an ideal time line, stretching into either the future or the past; they reveal an abyss between what is and what ought to be. A model of political action, on the other hand, is phrased solely in terms of what ought to be: who ought to act, what ought to be the grounds of her/his/its action, who ought to be the authority on what is to be done. The gap between *is* and *ought*, a gap constitutive of political process, is lost in the declaration of norms: the entire problem of 'application' is thus external to the king's and the parliament's models of political action. These models project a flat and simplistic sphere of action. When they are asserted in the midst of a conflict, they attempt to smooth out the topology of passions and can articulate only one time line, one linear series of temporal locations.

There is one exception to this rule concerning the loss of time in models, and that is the fifth question. It is exceptional on two fronts: I forged the five questions from a close reading of the pamphlets written by the Leveller agitators in the New Model Army's revolutionary year of 1647, but it is the fifth question that is most peculiar to their experience, and it is also the fifth question that meets with no answer in both the king's and the parliamentary model of political action. In asking, 'if you and I split now, were we ever united, and to what end?' it opens up the possibility of multiple time lines and the problem of their proximity or remoteness. It opens up an enquiry into the precise moment of a split between former allies and an enquiry into the nature of their political unity, and in doing so, it cannot but admit the occurrence of division between the ideal and the actual. A model of political action that provides an answer to this fifth question proceeds not solely at the level of what ought to be but also at the level of what is. In answering the first four questions of action, a model does flatten the topology of passions, but if it opens up the fifth question, it also launches an enquiry into the history of that topology.

Part III

Government

Chapter Seven

The Problem of Faction and Three Partial Solutions

THE CONTEMPORARY PROBLEM OF FACTION

In the nine political essays published in 1741, Hume's main object is to rescue the young 1688 constitution from the storms of faction. He writes, "I would only persuade men not to contend, as if they were fighting *pro aris & focis* ['for altars and fires', Bolingbroke's republican motto], and change a good constitution into a bad one by the violence of their factions" (PE, 14). He identifies a threat to the constitution in the very first shape that the parliamentary politics of opposition took in the opening decades of the century. Thanks to the founding and flourishing of the free press in these very years with the regular publication of news journals, such as *The Craftsman*, *The Spectator*, *The London Journal*, and the *Daily Gazetteer*, the much-touted 'public sphere' emerged, Hume amongst its heralds and supporters, yet to his consternation, its rise saw antagonism communicated to all corners of the realm, and polemics sharpened to the point of character assassination and wholesale condemnation of the very functioning of institutions. This threat was personified in the figure of First Viscount Bolingbroke, the philosopher-politician, former Tory member of parliament in French exile dallying with the Jacobites, now apparent republican and head of the Country Whigs, most famous side switcher in British politics before Churchill, chief of the opposition, founder and frequent contributor to the oppositional newspaper *The Craftsman*, defender of public liberty and first critic of Prime Minister Robert Walpole. In line with Aristotle's two-thousand-year-old diagnosis, Hume identifies faction, not despotism, as the chief malady of politics, writing, "The influence of faction is directly contrary to that of laws. Factions subvert government, render laws impotent, and beget the fiercest animosities

among men of the same nation, who ought to give mutual assistance and protection to each other" (PE, 34). In short, factionalism is the kind of division that destroys the whole; it is a centrifugal force of fragmentation.

We have already developed our own topological concept of faction as a configuration of appearance at work in Hume's *History*. The project of this chapter is to briefly outline Hume's own conception of faction in his early political essays in order to then situate his various solutions to it.

If philosophy begins in stupefaction, as Aristotle claims, it is fair to claim that Hume's political writings begin in his amazement and hostility towards the phenomenon of faction. He distinguishes three kinds: those based on interest, on principle and on person. Factions created around a common interest do not trouble Hume, as they can be accommodated. What confounds him, to the point of calling them "unaccountable", are factions based on a principle and factions based on fidelity to a particular family or person, such as a would-be king in exile (PE, 36, 39).

Across these three types of faction, the same characteristics can be found: a false metonymy of the public good, the assignation of hostile intention – as we saw in our analysis of the *History* – and the interminability of the dispute. A faction operates a false metonymy of the public good by passing off its particular interest as the public interest (PE, 12). By consequence, any interest assigned to an antagonistic faction is not just combatted as partial but dismissed as illegitimate, as having no place whatsoever in the whole (PE, 24). Just as we saw in our analysis of the schema of faction in the *History*, there is no place for pluralism within faction, only an exclusive dichotomy of 'us or them'. The ordinary claims of morality and honour are disregarded because there is only one evaluating mechanism that can be admitted (PE, 17, 24). In their judgement of actions and events, factions exacerbate the hostile intentions they attribute to the other faction, they exaggerate in their praise or blame and they create personifications of injustice and harm (PE, 12, 15). The controversies of faction are interminable in that it is impossible for the impartial to decide the justice of the quarrel (PE, 42). Just as we saw in our own analysis, the controversies are all the more interminable because faction ensures the disqualification of any common ground or third position from which they might be adjudicated; that is, from the standpoint of each side, anyone seeking to take a neutral or conciliating position thus proves directly their allegiance to the other side. In other words, within faction, there is no allegiance to peace or public order but solely to the dispute itself. If we are to go on naming theorems, this would be the mayor of Verona's theorem, Montague and Capulet blood darkening his streets: faction as blood knot.

In the essays "Of Parties in General" and "Of the Parties in Great Britain", Hume asks whether the recently emerged political parties named 'Whigs' and 'Tories', or 'Court' and 'Country', constitute factions. He finds that despite their protestations, neither the Whigs nor the Tories can be

defined by their attachment to specific principles and that rather it is their actions during the 1688 revolution that define them (PE, 44). On the basis of the latter, he defines a Tory as

> a lover of monarchy, though without abandoning liberty, and a partisan of the family of STUART. As a WHIG may be defined to be a lover of liberty though without renouncing monarchy; and a friend to the settlement in the PROTES-TANT line. (PE, 45)

In his time, the most active parties are the 'Court' and 'Country' Whigs, one attached to each part of the constitution: the court to the executive and the king, the country party to the House of Commons. Hume explicitly identifies these parties as factions based on a mix of principle and interest (PE, 40–41).

In Hume's pragmatics of political obligation, the only effective ground of government he is willing to recognize is the force of opinion. The problem with Bolingbroke taking aim at the constitution itself is that he creates a chasm in public opinion about the very framework of political action.

THE SOLUTION OF CONSTITUTIONALISM

In the *History*, Hume again insists on the destructive power of faction, as we saw through its emergence as a dominant configuration of appearance in chapter 3. In his longest disquisition on the status of the constitution, he argues that just as James I and Charles I clearly transgressed the law upon occasion, so did parliament encroach upon royal prerogative to the point that its own actions "were equally capable of destroying the just balance of the constitution" (HEV, 561).

At the same time, he recognized that it was the popular faction of parliament which had driven a process of reform that had the fortunate consequence of introducing legal limits to the constitution. He identifies a threshold in the conflict, just prior to the outbreak of war in late 1641, during which a limited and free constitution – an ideal constitution in his eyes – had actually been secured, with permanent and regular sittings of parliaments and the correct mix of authority and liberty and the rightful abolition of various despotic institutions, such as the Star Chamber and the High Court (HEV, 355–56, 524). He seizes on this moment as encapsulating a 'constitutionalist' solution to the conflict between king and parliament and hence a solution to faction in general, as we shall also see in the *Political Essays*. From the outset, the ambivalence of constitutionalism is explicit: the 'just balance of the constitution' is the first victim of faction, and yet a free and limited constitution is also the institutional remedy to faction.

Where exactly would the 'just balance' of an unwritten constitution lie? In Hume's own analysis, the epoch of the Stuarts was a period in which the

constitution was generally imbalanced because, as Hume remarks, "The sovereign had already lost that independent revenue, by which he could subsist without regular supplies from parliament; and he had not yet acquired the means of influencing those assemblies" (HEV, 137, 569). The constitution consists of a heteroclite mix of precedents, customs, statutes and documents, each covering particular matters, but it left certain questions – which became crucial in Charles's reign – entirely unclear. Indeed, in a passage cited earlier, Hume remarks,

> The general question . . . with regard to privileges of parliament, has always been, and still continues, one of the greatest mysteries in the English constitution . . . privileges are at present as undetermined as were formerly the prerogatives of the crown. (HEV, 358)

More than a decade earlier, in the *Political Essays*, a limited, free and balanced constitution is also championed. Hume engages in an almost republican praise of the legislator, of the constitution builder (PE, 11–12, 33). It is the "system of laws and institutions" that secures the peace, prosperity and liberty of future generations. There are two reasons for his praise. First, in an optimistic moment, he claims that systems of laws provide a constant in political life that can be used as an objective basis for a political science, although in a later essay, he doubts whether we have had enough experience of history to advance theorems in these matters (PE, 5, 51–52). Second, like Kant after him, he sees certain institutional forms as 'checks and balances', that is, as a guard against individual avarice, depravity and bad administration (PE, 5, 11, 12). In particular, he champions a 'free' constitution and the rule of law, dismissing both absolute monarchy and direct democracy as bad constitutions.[1] A "free government" is superior because it is a necessary incubator of commerce and of the arts and the sciences (PE, 54–55). He identifies the British constitution as just such a free constitution and also as mixed in that it combines monarchy, aristocracy and democracy. The liberty of the press has a role to play in the maintenance of the republican part of this constitution and also the rule of law by raising the alarm amongst the people if ever "arbitrary power would steal in upon us" and by providing a "curb [to] the ambition of the court" (PE, 3). The British constitution also has the advantage of providing a legitimate place and role for both court and country parties.

Yet such a constitution does not provide a complete remedy to the malady of faction – far from it. In the very first sentence of the essay "Of the Parties in Great Britain", Hume claims that these court and country factions are actually spawned by the constitution itself because the latter is a mix of monarchy and republican liberty. This renders faction a particularly endemic malady. The constitution is supposed to work as a remedy to faction, and yet

it must also be defended from faction; not only that, but at least in the time of the *Political Essays*, these court and country factions animated the separate branches of the constitution.[2]

Yet Hume identifies a solution to this ambivalence in the life of the constitution itself. In the essays "Of the Independence of Parliament" and "Whether the British Government Inclines More to Absolute Monarchy or to a Republic", Hume anticipates the position he takes in the *History* on the 'just balance of the constitution' by developing a dynamic and pragmatic analysis. He premises this analysis on the claim that modern politics distinguishes itself from antiquity by one discovery:

> I must observe, that all kinds of government, free and absolute, seem to have undergone, in modern times, a great change for the better, with regard both to foreign and domestic management. The *balance of power* is a secret in politics, fully known only to the present age; and I must add, that the internal police of states has also received great improvements within the last century. (PE, 55, 67–68, 25)

He develops his analysis of the contemporary balance of power by showing that there are two countervailing tendencies at work in the constitution: on the one hand, the share of power of the House of Commons is so great "that it absolutely commands all other parts of government"; on the other hand, he argues that "the power of the crown, by means of its large revenue, is rather on the increase" (PE, 25, 31). Against Harrington's theory, he points out that there is no simple balance of property securing the balance of force; otherwise, the combined wealth of the Commons would have long ago overcome that of the monarch (PE, 18, 28–29). Consequently, the balance of power is fragile.

The balance of power is not only a long-duration question concerning the balance of property; it is also a question of momentary conjunctures and of customary practices. Bolingbroke and the Country Party accused Prime Minister Walpole's executive, which was appointed by the king, of corrupting members of parliament by offering them lucrative offices, thus turning them into 'place-men'. For Hume, this practice was not to be condemned, providing as it did a necessary check which created helpful dependencies. By means of the multiplication of place-men, any tendencies on the part of parliament to encroaching on the executive would actually contradict the interests of a majority of its members. His general position on the balance of power is as follows: "In all governments, there is a perpetual intestine struggle, open or secret, between authority and liberty; and neither of them can ever absolutely prevail in the contest" (PE, 22). Hume is thus led to a consequentialist view of the customary or habitual operations of the constitution. That is, constitutions cannot be abstractly ranked from good to bad; rather, "A constitution is only so far good, as it provides a remedy against mal-

administration" (PE, 52, 14). We might repeat after Hume that a constitution is only so far balanced as customary practices are allowed to operate since it is not the laws alone that secure order and balance, and contra the judgements of the factions – contra Bolingbroke's public denunciation of Walpole's 'corruption' – the public utility of these hidden practices is indifferent with regard to variables of personality or virtue and vice.

In these essays, it is as though Hume is advocating a certain *pudeur*, a reticence with regard to what is actually required to maintain the balance of power. He writes,

> The just balance between the republican and monarchical part of our constitu-
> tion is really, in itself, so extremely delicate and uncertain, that, when joined to
> men's passions and prejudices, it is impossible but different opinions must
> arise concerning it, even among persons of the best understanding. (PE, 40)

Open judgement as to the nature of this balance will only fuel the work of faction. In the *History*, he makes a similar point. In his remonstrances and declarations on the very eve of civil war, Charles I went further in concessions than many a republican writer and asserted that the English constitution was a mixed regime of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy (HEV, 568). Hume judged as follows:

> It must be confessed, that the king in this declaration touched upon that
> circumstance in the English constitution, which it is most difficult, or rather
> altogether impossible, to regulate by laws, and which must be governed by
> certain delicate ideas of propriety and decency, rather than by any exact rule or
> prescription. (HEV, 568)

In short, one should leave the veil intact over those areas in which it is peculiar practices and not rules that secure the trembling balance of participation in government (HEV, 358, 568). But such a determining instance of shame and the need for a veil turns the constitution into something monumental and sacred. In the previous chapter's analysis of conflict, shame is pinpointed as the moment of the emergence of a logic of usurpation and endemic conflict, and moments of shame proliferate. It is as if Hume would quell faction through the recognition of just one ruling instance of potential shame.

If the 'just balance of the constitution' is said to be 'extremely delicate and uncertain', perhaps it is because there is no balance per se of a mixed constitution: rather, any balance is temporary, conjunctural and contingent – it could be lost today or tomorrow. To add a further twist to his analysis, Hume shows how the very attempt to assign the balance of the constitution may be interpreted as the work of faction. In other words, the subjectification of this balance – coming to an opinion on it – necessarily causes political

division. There is thus no impartial political subject of this constitution qua balance: the constitution itself divides. There is an issue to this dilemma, and that is to lose all passion and prejudice to become an impartial spectator, but this, as we see of the philosopher in the *Treatise*, condemns one to an inability to decide political questions (T 3.2.10.15).

To return to the *History*, if the 'just balance of the constitution' can be secured only by a fortuitous combination of circumstances or the prudential exercise of 'delicate ideas of propriety and decency' and if it can be identified through neither law nor precedent, then it is nothing but a name, a name for an ideal entente between these two rival models of political action, a kind of cease-fire. If faction is endemic to the very composition of the mixed constitution, if the balance of power is so fragile that even its identification fuels the work of faction and if the practices that guard the balance should remain out of public sight, what can actually be done about the threat of faction? The problem is even more complicated from the position of the philosopher. Both the Whigs and the Tories employ philosophical theories of political obligation; philosophy helps them justify their positions and shore up their polemics. This is why Hume writes two critical essays, "Of the Social Contract" and "Of Passive Obedience", in which he dismantles those theories. If a philosophical theory of legitimate government, once adopted by a faction, does nothing but intensify conflict, what is an impartial philosopher to do? How can a philosopher contribute to the emergence of civil peace?

Hume is never at a loss when it comes to difficult questions: he has three answers. The first solution to faction is constitutionalism, as we have seen above, that is, the defence of a free and limited constitution and in particular the defence of those delicate hidden practices that ensure the dynamic balance of power. The second solution is a pragmatic theory of political obligation designed to avoid the kind of explicit normative declaration which fuels faction, as we shall see below. His third solution to faction is to apply a lesson of moderation to public conversation about politics by writing a history of England.

THE SOLUTION OF A PRAGMATICS OF POLITICAL OBLIGATION

At the very end of the fifth volume of the *History*, after painting in vivid colours the execution of Charles I, Hume engages in a brief survey of the question of obligation. He opens this survey with the following remark as to the principle of the right of resistance:

> All speculative reasoners ought to observe, with regard to this principle, the
> same cautious silence, which the laws, in every species of government, have

> ever prescribed to themselves. Government is instituted, in order to restrain the
> fury and injustice of the people; and being always founded on opinion, not on
> force, it is dangerous to weaken, by these speculations, the reverence which
> the multitude owe to authority, and instruct them beforehand, that the case can
> ever happen, that they may be freed from their duty of allegiance. (HEV, 544)

If it should prove impossible to prevent philosophers from arguing about
political obligation, Hume's second-best recommendation is to promote and
"inculcate" the doctrine of obedience, arguing that despite this doctrine, peo-
ple will never find themselves in abject servitude since when the time does
come for a people to revolt against a tyrant, they will do so in any case, thus
overcoming the restraint preached by the philosophical doctrine (HEV, 544).
In Hume's eyes, the question of political obligation is not an abstract enquiry
into the right model of citizenship or government but rather a practical ques-
tion of the actual effects upon a people of the divulgation of a doctrine of
obligation. With regard to the doctrine of the social contract, he exhibits a
certain theoretical indifference in the *History*, remarking that it may seem
reasonable but that it is "perhaps too perfect for human nature". At a practical
level, the level of power, he insists that this doctrine "must be regarded as
one effect . . . of that spirit, partly fanatical, partly republican, which predom-
inated in England" (HEVI, 83).

Long before he writes the *History*, Hume advances an abstract theory of
political allegiance in the *Treatise*. Proving his consistency in this matter, his
approach in the earlier work is also practical. In the *Treatise*, he claims that
the active or effective ground of the submission of a people to a government
is opinion: opinion of right and opinion of property in government. Self-
interest generates a natural obligation to submit to the convention of govern-
ment per se, but it is not the citizen's individual self-interest that determines
who in particular should govern, for that would lead to endless dissension (T
3.2.10.3). It is in our long-term interest to submit to government, but it is not
in that selfsame interest to allow everyone to choose the particular form and
agents of government. Rather, once government has been established for
generations, we are born into submission and "imagine that such particular
persons have a right to command, as we are on our part bound to obey" (T
3.2.10.3).

But what are the general rules that determine our imagination, our opin-
ions of the right to rule and possession of government? Hume distinguishes
five historical "foundations of the right to magistracy" that give "authority to
almost all the established governments of the world". They are, first, the long
possession of a particular form of government, for instance, on the part of
one family through a succession of princes. The second right to authority is
found in the fact of present and constant possession. The third "title of
sovereigns" is the right of conquest or "successful violence" (T 3.2.10.8).

The fourth is the right of succession, which takes effect when the very first sovereign who seeks to establish a monarchy dies, and it is a question of establishing kinship or descent as the principle that determines to whom the crown will pass. The fifth "source of authority" is found in "positive laws; when the legislature establishes a certain form of government and succession of princes" (T 3.2.10.14). In this case, any recent legislative activity that just so happened to completely overturn the ancient form of government would not receive the sanction of the people's opinion of right and property. The people's opinion of the authority of positive laws would extend solely to the "fundamental laws" of government.

In listing these five historical grounds of people's opinion of a government's right to rule, Hume is not in any way engaged in the question of the best form of constitution. Here, it is not a question of right in a foundational philosophical approach but rather one of the historical efficacy of various kinds of the opinion of right. Indeed, faced with a controversy over the right to sovereignty in which various pretenders present competing claims based on mixes of these five different grounds of authority, the philosopher is unable to decide:

> In this particular, the study of history confirms the reasonings of true philosophy; which, showing us the original qualities of human nature, teaches us to regard the controversies in politics as incapable of any decision in most cases, and as entirely subordinate to the interests of peace and liberty. (T 3.2.10.15)

If it is the interests of peace and liberty that lie foremost for the philosopher as an "impartial enquirer, who adopts no party in political controversies", then, in the absence of tyranny, her approbation of a government would depend on its capacity to maintain the people's opinion of its right to govern (T 3.2.10.15). But recent English history has presented Hume with a far more complicated case on which he feels called to take a position in the *Treatise*, and that is the revolution of 1688, including the deposition of James II, who had been the rightful but hugely unpopular Catholic heir to the throne, and the assumption of that throne by a foreign king, the Protestant William of Orange. In this case, all opinion of right to govern has been overthrown and a right to resistance practised.

Hume's reasoning is quite delicate here. Although the philosopher can never specify "particular rules" that decide in all cases when resistance is justified, he does find it possible to declare that in a mixed government, resistance is lawful in cases of self-preservation of each branch of the constitution when the chief magistrate "encroach[es] on other parts of the constitution" (T 3.2.10.16). In this reasoning, he comes perilously close to directly justifying the acts of an earlier parliament in its conflict with Charles I. He then disingenuously disavows any purpose of applying this consideration "to

the late revolution" and instead proceeds to "indulge . . . in some philosophical reflections" (T 3.2.10.17). These reflections concern none other than the grounds of the rightful choice of a successor, once an unjust king has been deposed, and the exclusion of his heir. But this is precisely the burning question between the Jacobites and their sympathizers and the supporters of the new Hanoverian succession after 1688, a question still alive in the factional conflict over the nature of the new constitution which so occupies Hume in the first political essays he publishes in 1741. Here, in book 3 of the *Treatise* published in late 1740, he argues that the choice of succession exercised by parliament was "founded on a very singular quality of our thought and imagination", namely, that of finding it natural to continue once engaged in a path of innovation and transgression if those tremendous actions have already met with fortune and secured the public good (T 3.2.10.18). The indignant reader may object that success is no guarantee of legitimacy, yet Hume asserts, in true consequentialist terms, that "when the public good is so great and so evident as to justify the action, the commendable use of this licence causes us naturally to attribute to the *parliament* a right of using farther licences" (T 3.2.10.18). In short, given success, our minds acquire a new habit. Parliament, rightly in Hume's opinion, took advantage of this 'property of the imagination' and its immediate effect "on the judgements of the people" by choosing "the magistrates, either in or out of a line, according as the vulgar will most naturally attribute authority and right to them" (T 3.2.10.18). This consideration makes most concrete Hume's pragmatics of political obligation: if the ground of government is opinion, then government must always pay careful attention to 'the judgements of the people' and shape and orientate its decisions so as to harmonize with the people's tendencies to attribute authority and right.

His second 'philosophical' reflection concerns the contestation over the royal succession that was current at the time of his writing. He argues that although the Prince of Orange's title might have been disputed when he first succeeded to the throne, since "three princes . . . have succeeded him upon the same title" – Queen Anne, George I and George II – it "must have acquired sufficient authority" (T 3.2.10.19). Again, he founds this claim on a singular quality of our thought and imagination. Through the royal family's long possession of the throne and their own right of succession, the successors to an original usurper are seen by the people to be legitimate. Any amateur of history will object that the succession after William of Orange was a little more complicated than Hume allows, but let's follow his 'philosophical reflections' a little further.

The imagination unites the successive generations with their ancestor, and so legitimacy is retrospectively bequeathed upon the original usurper. Hume concludes, "Time and custom give authority to all forms of government, and all successions of princes; and that power, which at first was founded only on

injustice and violence, becomes in time legal and obligatory" (T 3.2.10.19). Here again, it is a question of a habit contracted over time, and we know that habit is a configuration of the passions. The habit of the opinion of the right to govern will quell and eventually silence faction. This is the shape that Hume's pragmatic theory of political obligation takes in the *Treatise*. Its limits as a solution to faction are soon revealed, as his essays published a year later make very clear.

The configuration of the passions at stake in the opinion of the right to govern is an envelope, namely, the envelope of the proper name of a dynasty as title to the throne: after the 1701 Act of Settlement, the Hanoverian dynasty. This envelope creates a dominant time line, intensified in its locations through the repeated attributions, on the part of the vulgar, of right and authority. The Jacobites, however, located themselves on an alternative time line, strengthened by its incarnation in the Old and Young Pretenders in exile in France. Despite Hume's hopes in the *Treatise*, that time line is located and revived in England, and factional contestation over the succession and the constitution continues through Lord Bolingbroke's furious and expertly publicized opposition to Horace Walpole's government.

Hence, neither constitutionalism nor a pragmatics of political obligation provide full solutions to faction.

THE SOLUTION OF A LESSON IN MODERATION: WRITING A HISTORY

In his *Essays*, Hume announces that he would "teach us a lesson of moderation in all our political controversies", one that he practises by example in his evaluations of various historical and normative claims by the opposed factions (PE, 32, 12). This is also his first tactic as historian: he attempts to curb the enthusiasm of the Country Whig and Tory writers by countering their historical claims with evidence drawn from the archives. In particular, he practices a form of mixed or mitigated evaluation. For instance, with regard to their speculative systems of political obligation, he says,

> I shall venture to affirm, *That both these* systems *of speculative principles are just; though not in the sense, intended by the parties*: And, *That both the* schemes *of practical consequences are prudent; though not in the extremes to which each part, in opposition to each other, has commonly endeavoured to carry them.* (PE, 186, emphasis in the original)

He debunks common assumptions concerning the lack of liberty in monarchies and lack of executive power in republics (PE, 1–2). These mitigated evaluations take forms such as 'although *X* may be good (as many claim) it does have the negative effect *Y* (which few realize)', with one example being

his judgement that free governments (which many deem good) have often been ruinous for their provinces (a consequence few realize) (PE, 7). According to James Harris, Hume mixed his evaluations to the point of employing a Tory description of the trial and execution of Charles I within an "overall Whig history".[3] As Harris notes, Hume himself claims the use of such tactics in writing the *History*, stating that he followed "Whig Principles" in his "views of things" and yet "Tory prejudices" in his "representations of persons".[4] This type of mitigated evaluation is designed to remove the springs of factional judgement and action. If a reader shares any of the factional views that Hume seeks to dismantle and if she also remains sympathetic to Hume's *History*, then the intensity of her factional views will be lessened by these complicated judgements. She will no longer have an intense motivation to act along factional lines. Mitigated evaluations help create what Alain Badiou terms an 'atonal world' – a world of polite, liberal, learned discussion – out of the 'tonal world' of decision and immediate action.[5]

Hume's lesson of moderation also has a positive side. He champions historical actors who exemplify moderation and prudence. As we saw in chapter 4, Aristotle identified prudence as practical knowledge, as knowing how to be virtuous in a complicated situation. In his terms, that meant steering a middle road between two extremes of vice. Ever since Aristotle, the concept has required incarnation in lieu of a precise definition. In fact, it is quite impossible to define a knowledge that supposedly bridges the universal and the particular: how can one identify a rule that tells people how to apply rules? When he hit this obstacle in book 6 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle sidestepped it by offering a historical model of such knowledge, a prudent man or *phroninom*: Pericles. The famous Athenian statesman was widely recognized as possessing practical wisdom.

When Hume advocates prudence in political action, he gets caught up in precisely this mechanism. He starts out by refusing to identify the rigid principles usually found in models of political action. But the problem with avoiding principles is that expediency alone does not give people any guide as to *what* is to be done in a particular conjuncture. To construct a guide for action, Hume thus has to identify various *phronimoi* as role models. Relying on the historical record, Hume presumes that those agents who managed to not only survive the civil war period but also have their fortunes increase must have possessed practical wisdom or skill. As we saw at the beginning of chapter 4, General Monk is the chief figure celebrated in the *History* for his prudence, timing, discretion and success in bringing about the conditions for the restoration.

But as we also saw, some of Hume's role models turn out to be not just *phronimoi* but also apostates. Whose is the greatest rise in the Stuart volumes? Who is the most successful actor but Cromwell? Yet Cromwell is the figure of deception, betrayal and hidden designs. By way of consequence, the

very virtue that Hume champions as a flexible rule for moderate political action is incarnated in his own antihero – oh irony of history, again! If Hume's *History* is designed to inculcate a love of prudence amongst its readers by creating celebrated figures of prudence, such as Monk, then this tactic is subject to too much ambivalence: success is a key ingredient for the attribution of prudence, yet success can be secured by deception.

As we shall see in chapter 8, in the *Political Essays*, Hume tries out a fourth solution to the problem of faction: he creates a 'science of politics' in the shape of a political economy, a discourse designed to give access to a sphere of objectivity beyond opinion and controversy. Without such a sphere of objectivity, moderation alone is nothing but the ancient virtue of prudence dressed up in modern clothing. But modernization cannot save prudence from its fatal flaw as Hume recognizes:

> All questions concerning the proper medium between extremes are difficult to be decided; both because it is not easy to find *words* proper to fix this medium, and because the good and ill, in such cases, run so gradually into each other, as even to render our *sentiments* doubtful and uncertain. (PE, 27)

As we saw, the problem of prudence as moderation is that there is no rule that stipulates how a general rule should be applied to a particular situation. But Hume's problem is not only that of deciding the proper medium but also that of personally occupying the medium. He admits in his autobiography that he did not succeed in getting various factions to recognize any middle ground by writing the *History*:

> I thought I was the only historian, that had once neglected present power, interest, and authority, and the cry of popular prejudices; and as the subject was suited to every capacity, I expected proportional applause. But miserable was my disappointment: I was assailed by one cry of reproach, disapprobation, and even detestation; English, Scotch, and Irish, Whig, and Tory, churchman and sectary, freethinker and religionist, patriot and courtier, united in their rage against the man, who had presumed to shed a generous tear for the fate of Charles I and the Earl of Strafford; and after the first ebullitions of this fury were over, what was still more mortifying, the book seemed to sink into oblivion.[6]

Attacked and vilipended from every side, Hume's mitigated evaluations made an enemy out of him for all parties. Apart from the comedy of this situation, these polemical reactions throw into serious doubt the viability of the historian's project of applying a lesson in moderation to political discussion. If history remains an arena of dispute, if disputes calm down or disappear only when events are no longer important in the motivation of political agents or when political agents no longer care about the very existence of

historical facts, then this purported lesson of moderation will not provide a sufficient brake for faction.

We can guess why Hume's tactics in the *History* enraged so many different kinds of reader. In assuming for himself the part of moderation, Hume sometimes positions himself in the 'middle' solely through the virtues of hindsight and sometimes by casting others in the role of extremists: see the litany of epithets, such as 'fanatics', 'zealots' and 'enthusiasts'. This latter tactic is a piece of knavery, a heuristic for the weak at heart: it projects the political scene that it needs but fails to comprehend the real motivations at stake for the people it casts as extremists, as we saw in Hume's gesture of stupefaction at the 'unaccountable' existence of modern factions based on principle or person. Yet at least in his lesson of moderation, Hume recognized and addressed a configuration of appearance in the 1730s–1740s topology of passions within which he found himself. Perhaps his mitigated evaluations did have a calming effect on some of his faction-bound readers, those whose 'general character' already saw a prevalence of the calmer passions over the violent or those with little interest at stake in the present quarrel (T 2.3.3.10).

One way to follow in some of Hume's footsteps would be to write a history for a topology of passion but a history that did not reduce its parallel hierarchies to just three configurations of appearance or lock events down in the expression of just one differential order of rank. Such a history would bind impressions and ideas to deep-valleyed hierarchies of pride and humiliation innumerable beyond our single-ordered images of power, wealth and legitimacy.

In the end, constitutionalism, a pragmatics of political obligation and a lesson of moderation in writing history prove to be no match for the faction Hume saw as a threat to political stability. He requires further measures, as he had already anticipated in the *Treatise* with an entire theory of government based on pragmatics, and as he presents more than a decade later with his 1752 essays introducing a discourse that will secure access to objectivity supposed measurable beyond all discord: political economy.

Chapter Eight

Schema of Justice, Its Critique, and Political Economy

SCHEMA OF JUSTICE

Antagonistic models of political action are not only glimpsed but also thematized by Hume on several different registers: in volume 5 of the *History* in his analysis of the deepening conflict between Charles I and parliament but also in his disquisitions on the pragmatics of political obligation and on the just balance of the constitution in both the *History* and the first edition of the *Political Essays*. But what happens in the *Treatise*: what does Hume have to say there with regard to the more general questions of how actions can be organized and be subject to norms?

It just so happens that the entire third book of the *Treatise* is devoted to the orientation and organization of action. By far the longest section of this book focuses on the artificial virtue of justice. Justice is defined as a necessary schema for the coordination of all action within society: "the whole plan or scheme is highly conducive, or indeed absolutely requisite, both to the support of society, and the well-being of every individual" (T 3.2.2.22). Hume's theory of justice rivals social contract theories in its account of the genesis and consistency of society. For this reason, it appears to refer to a more fundamental and general level of action than models of political action. For Hume, justice concerns how "property must be stable, and . . . fix'd by general rules", and so it coordinates social and economic actions rather than directly political actions (T 3.2.2.22). In addition, Hume's entire theory of government as developed in the *Treatise* presupposes this schema of justice as its object or, rather, as a kind of matrix. But then, that is the entire point: justice as a schema for coordinating action provides a matrix for government understood as *action upon action*. Consequently, Hume's schema of justice

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in the *Treatise* is not merely analogous to models of political action; it also forms the foundation of government, and so its characteristics must be carefully studied.

In the *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, Hume insists on the general necessity of rules for any social interaction whatsoever (EPM 4.18). He also claims that repeated interactions will unavoidably lead to the creation of such rules due to considerations of utility: "Common interest and utility beget infallibly a standard of right and wrong among the parties concerned" (EPM 4.20). What he offers with his schema of justice is a pragmatic account of the emergence of norms, or rules for action, within social practice. These rules will provide a solution to the problem we identified at the end of chapter 5 – that of conflictual or mistaken interpretations of action. Hume's nominalist account of action cannot identify a supposed true nature of action against which mistaken interpretations can be corrected, but judgements of action can be stabilized through reference to emergent norms.

Yet it is precisely the universality of such norms which will become a question for us. In any pragmatic account of the emergence of norms from social practice, one inevitably derives an *ought* from an *is*, prescriptions from a state of affairs. The problem is that Hume appears to derive his norms of justice from quite particular states of affairs, from certain historical practices amongst others. Our response to the question of the coordination of action was to take the road of plurality by extracting a variety of norms for political action through an analysis of accumulated speech acts. There is a definite tension between our analysis of rival models of political action in the *History* and Hume's account of the emergence of norms via the universal schema of justice in the *Treatise* and the *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*. This tension is but a variant on a well-known problem in the interpretation of Hume – that of whether he maintains a coherent position on whether human nature remains the same across geographical and historical sites or whether it is historicized to a degree within those sites.[1] Hume's schema of justice in the *Treatise* serves as a proxy for any philosophy that claims that there is only one set of norms that regulates action in society. Just as our critique of judgement aimed to undo the apparent ontological unity of action created by the nominalist attributions of judgement, here our critique of justice will aim at undoing the evaluative unity of Hume's apparently universal schema.

In the *Treatise*, the object of the schema of justice is the regulation of property. "Justice derives its origin", Hume writes, "only from the selfishness and confin'd generosity of man, along with the scanty provision nature has made for his wants" (T 3.2.2.18). So the origin of justice lies in the passions and in their encounter with a material condition: the scarcity of the objects of the passions, or, to be precise, the scarcity of certain qualities that give pleasure. Elsewhere, he writes that the origin of the laws of justice is "self-love" (T 3.2.6.6).

He lists three laws of justice: "*stability of possession . . . its transference by consent*, and . . . the performance of promises" (T 3.2.6.1, emphasis in the original). He then goes on to claim,

> 'Tis on the strict observance of these three laws, that the peace and security of human society entirely depend; nor is there any possibility of establishing a good correspondence among men, where these are neglected. Society is absolutely necessary to the well-being of men; and these are necessary to the support of society. Whatever constraint they may impose upon the passions of men, *they are the real offspring of those passions, and are only a more refin'd and artful way of satisfying them*. (T 3.2.6.1, emphasis added)

In chapter 3, we saw how judgements of individual actions emerged at the level of the passions. In this passage, we see how the laws of justice operate as refinements of the passions. They are not external curbs or brakes imposed by reason but rather reorientations of the passions. Freud would speak of sublimation. The rules of justice are adopted due to their evident utility – they appeal to self-love. At the most basic level, Hume writes that "a convention [is] entered into by all the members of the society to bestow stability on the possession of those external goods, and leave every one in the peaceable enjoyment of what he may acquire by his fortune and industry" (T 3.2.2.9). He explains that this convention "arises gradually, and acquires force by a slow progression, and by our repeated experience of the inconveniences of transgressing it" (T 3.2.2.10). In other words, we soon end up paying a price in pain, humility and hatred for failing to ensure that everybody respects the conventions of property.

If the schema of justice emerges at the level of the passions and also operates through modifying them, then it is a kind of reflexive fold in the topology of the passions, perhaps similar to action itself in this regard, as we saw back in chapter 5.

The schema of justice is marked by universality. Under its conventions, "every single act is performed in expectation that others are to perform the like" (T 3.2.2.22). So the schema creates a horizon of expectations that each individual shares with everyone else concerning how one acts. Rendering my own action uniform and predictable is a way of giving others security for my future conduct. Take actions such as abstaining from using other people's property without permission or restoring other people's property if lost or stolen: the schema ensures the repetition of such actions not just by neighbours due to good will but also by strangers due to habit, to the point that these actions become an "invariable method of operation" (T 3.2.6.9). In turn, the schema regularizes and simplifies the attribution of agency, nature and purpose to actions to the point that their overall utility is assumed and never investigated. Abstaining from using the possessions of others becomes

one of a set of "general inflexible rules" (T 3.2.6.10). So much for teaching children to share.

Once the rules of justice are inflexible, the actual recipient of one's action – the individual person involved – should have no effect on the performance of that action. The schema programs a universalism that is indifferent to individuals. The price of coordinating actions by making them regular is the evacuation of individuals and their replacement with roles or personae, such as buyer and seller.

The schema's universality opens up a possible gap between the general rule and the specific circumstances of a particular case. To illustrate this gap, Hume speaks of "a man of merit, of a beneficent disposition [who] restores a great fortune to a miser, or a seditious bigot". Here, it would seem as though an injustice has taken place. According to the schema of justice, Hume notes, "[the judge] has acted justly and laudably, but the public is a real sufferer" (T 3.2.2.22). His conclusion is that a single act of justice may prove of no public utility whatsoever and could even harm the public interest, and yet the schema as a whole is of maximum public utility, and the schema can work only if every single action with regard to property and promises is regulated by its conventions (EPM App3.3).

The schema of justice is artificial, which also means it is contingent, a point Hume does not explore, preferring to insist on its necessity. It is artificial in that it is an invention, a human design "purposely contrived and directed to a certain end" (T 3.2.6.6). There are no natural instincts to respect the possessions of others or keep promises (T 3.2.1.17–19; T 3.2.5.13). The rules of "property, right and obligation", Hume claims, "have in them no marks of a natural origin, but many of artifice and contrivance. They are too numerous to have proceeded from nature: They are changeable by human laws" (T 3.2.6.6). If certain rules of property can be changed by human laws, then the particular form they take is contingent upon the historical evolution of society. A schema of justice may well be a necessary condition for the existence of society, and its reach may be universal, but in its detail it may be modified. Artificiality and contingency also characterize any human action whatsoever: in this respect, the laws and rules of justice may be understood as long-term actions.

The schema is marked by completeness and integrity. It is the origin of all rules concerning property, right and obligation (T 3.2.2.11). It provides a foundation for all social interactions. In Hume's eyes, the only alternative would be chaos: "without justice, society must immediately dissolve, and everyone must fall into that savage and solitary condition, which is infinitely worse than the worst situation that can possibly be supposed in society" (T 3.2.2.22). Chaos would take the form of endlessly conflicting individual judgements concerning which good belonged to which person and the utility of each good to each person. In contrast, "justice, in her decisions, never

regards the fitness or unfitness of objects to particular persons, but conducts herself by more extensive views" (T 3.2.3.2). Not only does justice evacuate the individual and proceed through general inflexible rules, but it is also the case that no individual action escapes its prescriptions; its coverage of society is integral, and there are no exceptions.

By creating a horizon of expectations for all social actions, the schema also programs the detection of anomalies and disturbances, triggering our actions of judgement. As we saw in chapter 5, under the schema, people are quick to perceive injustice. The operation of sympathy causes us to experience pain not only on the behalf of other individuals who have suffered harm due to acts of injustice but also on behalf of society. Actions of injustice cause disutility and make us uneasy. This is how the schema of justice offers a foundation for the attribution of vice or virtue to particular actions (T 3.2.2.24). Recall that in Hume's axiology, there are three distinct levels: action understood as external performance and sign, the motive for the action and then the schema of justice which grounds the value of vice or virtue attributed to the motive.

This axiological distinction of levels accompanies an ontological distinction of levels. On the one hand, there is the "ordinary course of human actions" occurring at the level of particular situations, elegantly described by Hume in the following terms: "as each action is a particular individual event, it must proceed from particular principles, and from *our immediate situation within ourselves, and with respect to the rest of the universe*" (T 3.2.6.9, emphasis added). On the other hand, there is the schema of justice, which consists of 'general inflexible rules' that evacuate any reference to particular circumstances or the individual. Hume also characterizes this split between actions and the schema in terms of the continuous and the discrete: in the everyday run of actions, "all kinds of vice and virtue run insensibly into each other", whereas "right itself is not susceptible of any such gradation, but is absolute and entire, so far as it extends" (T 3.2.6.7).

Despite this deep ontological split, judgement is made both in cases of ordinary morality and within the legal system: each particular case is subsumed under the universal. Hume recognizes that these subsumptions occasionally give rise to anomalies. When civil arbitration is used between opposing parties in controversies over property, the arbitrators "commonly discover so much equity and justice on both sides, as induces them, to strike a medium, and divide the difference between the parties" (T 3.2.6.8). In contrast, civil judges enjoy no such flexibility and must decide according to the law for one side or another, and so they

> are often at a loss how to determine, and are necessitated to proceed on the
> most frivolous reasons in the world. Half rights and obligations, which seem
> so natural in common life, are perfect absurdities in their tribunals; for which

> reason they are often obliged to take half arguments for whole ones, in order to terminate the affair one way or another. (T 3.2.6.8)

Within the absolute categories of justice, judges are incapable of taking into account the precise balance of vice and virtue between each side in a dispute. In her decisions, a judge cannot recognize the existence of mixed degrees of titles to property amongst the plaintiffs, and yet judgement must be made and the case fitted to the law, and so sophistry and casuistry – 'half arguments' – are used to justify a decision and cover over this mismatch. Hume admits that "the controverted case is ranged under [imperfect and indirect precedents], by analogical reasonings and comparisons, and similitudes, and correspondencies, which are often more fanciful than real" (EPM App3.10).

In coming to judgement, the fine degrees of right and obligation, vice and virtue found on each side of the case are treated as so much plastic matter to be given form in the 'fanciful' arguments and chicaneries of lawyers. The decision itself is a composite of form and matter, in the manner of Aristotle's concrete substances, in which form has the priority over matter as the only component accessible to reason and the universal. We could go so far as to identify a kind of *hylomorphism* at work in the operations of justice. Hume himself allows that the gap between the ordinary actions judged in each case and the schema of justice is so wide that "jurisprudence is, in this respect, different from all the sciences; and that in many of its nicer questions, there cannot be properly said to be truth or falsehood on either side" (EPM App3.10). The judge's decision "is often founded more on taste and imagination than on any solid argument" (EPM App3.10).

Let's call this institutional mismatch between the universal and the particular, the discrete and the continuous, the *rule-case gap*. If decisions are continually made by judges despite the rule-case gap, then this must be to ensure the ongoing operation and utility of the schema of justice. In other words, the schema must function at the cost of erasing singularity. What is at stake in the schema of justice is thus a kind of *functionalism* defined by the priority, in every instance, of the integrity of the schema.

The schema of justice is applied and put to work by what appears to be a *hylomorphic functionalism*. This recalls our critique of judgement in chapter 5, the divide between the operational and material sides of judgement and the imposition of differentiation upon supposedly undifferentiated matter. What implications does this echo have for the critique of justice?

A CRITIQUE OF JUSTICE ON THE BASIS OF HUME

This analysis of the schema of justice in terms of its origin in the passions, its universality, its artificiality and contingency and the foundation it provides for judgement has done much more than furnish us with an abstract *analogon*

for models of political action. It has unearthed the mechanism supposed to hold society together, the mechanism that forms the very object of politicians' actions in Hume's conception of government: "politicians, in order to govern men more easily, and preserve peace in human society, have endeavoured to produce an esteem for justice, and an abhorrence for injustice" (T 3.2.2.25).

Hume's schema of justice in the *Treatise* provides an alternative to the account of the emergence of norms within social practice we developed in chapter 6. There is no concern with the accumulation of speech acts and their temporal schemas in book 3 of the *Treatise*. If we compare our conception of antagonistic models of political action with Hume's schema of justice, the most striking difference is the latter's universal and monolithic status. Hume admits that the schema has a contingent origin in particular historical conditions of scarcity of goods, and an absence of "extensive generosity" on the part of humans, since the latter "would . . . destroy the very idea of justice [and] render it useless" (T 3.2.2.20). However, there is an unstable oscillation between contingency and universality in Hume's account of the origin of the schema. He clearly asserts the "selfishness and confined generosity of man" in universal terms, yet the passion of extended generosity characterizes any expanded group, especially in the New Model Army phenomenon of enthusiasm, as we will see in chapter 11, and he already recognizes that property distinctions vanish in the small groups of friends and families (T 3.2.2.17; EPM 3.7). Later, when identifying the rules that allow the attribution of property to particular persons, he selects a series of practices taken from particular moments in European history – present possession, occupation, prescription, accession and succession – and asserts their inclusion in the schemas of justice underlying all societies.

When it comes to the universality of the schema of justice, he also prevaricates: sometimes he says it is "infinitely advantageous", or "highly conducive" to the "support of society" – which holds open the possibility of societies without this schema – and yet in the same breath, he says it is "absolutely requisite" (T 3.2.2.22). Indeed, it is impossible for Hume to demonstrate that just these five practices of property ownership lead to the maximum overall utility for any society whatsoever. On occasion, Hume does present these rules for distinguishing property via practical problems generated by the rules, problems solved by subsequent rules. For example, present possession alone does not allow any transfer of property. As such, we get a glimpse of a possible dialectical history of property forms, but his references remain gestural, incomplete and ahistorical. Adam Smith goes far further than Hume in the analysis of the actual evolution of property law.

The schema of justice consists of a set of heterogeneous historical practices; it presents an amalgam of particular ways of tying persons to goods. In the *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, Hume can show the rela-

tive utility of property rules in general compared to a set of hypothetical situations in which these rules are not necessary, but he is unable to show the superior utility of just these five specific property rules. As Elinor Ostrom has shown, there have been many property regimes that allow for the sustained usage and management of common property.[2] As Nigel Leask shows in his book on Robert Burns, in Hume's Scotland there was a widespread 'runrig' field system whereby neighbouring farmers alternated in using a juxtaposed field that was owned by no one in particular.[3] These forms of the usage of commons, though widespread and evidently practicable, do not find a place in Hume's schema of justice.

Let's take Hume's example of a single action of justice proving harmful to the public – a 'great fortune' is 'restored to a miser'. He returns to such examples in the *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals* in order to highlight the difference between natural and artificial virtues. As we saw, unlike the natural virtues, the utility of the artificial virtues is most consistently found at a global level and not always at the level of each particular act. One particular court case concerning a property dispute could well be decided in accordance with the law yet result in public disutility. Hume's response to such eventualities at an individual level is to assert that a rational agent will maximize his global utility by always following the schema of justice. In other words, every individual will benefit more overall from the rigid and integral application of the rules of justice in all cases: "every individual must find himself a gainer, on balancing the account; since, without justice, society must immediately dissolve" (T 3.2.2.22).

Such a calculation is entirely abstract with regard to the actual topology of passions that constitutes a society. Societies are not level playing fields, and individuals are not equally located by the passions. Hume actually recognizes this – to a limited extent – when he says that government has to take men as they are and harness the natural passions that are already at work in a society. It is even the case that the very imposition of Hume's schema of justice on a society will consolidate an unequal playing field for the reason that at least four of its five rules for attributing property – present possession, prescription, succession and occupation – pragmatically legalize a preexistent distribution of property, a distribution which most probably involves a degree of inequality. Hume himself admits the existence of an unequal playing field at the end of his description of present possession, occupation and succession, noting that these rules may legalize 'inconveniences' in the distribution of property (T 3.2.4.1).

Imagine the following scenario: people are involved in one of these court cases in which a rigid application of property law leads to public disutility. Given the protagonists' superior knowledge of events in the case, would it not be evident to them, and not just the philosopher, that the judge's decision was 'founded more on taste and imagination than on any solid argument'?

Through the workings of sympathy, a group could form out of all those individuals who had not only seen but also suffered from the disutility of the legal system. What if such public disutility were judged through the lens of faction? It is not too far-fetched to imagine such a group coming to think that the legal system often favours the rich against the poor. From the standpoint of such a faction, the ideal calculation that maximizes global utility for each individual would no longer hold, and so nor would the schema. What is more, through such judgements, the schema's hylomorphic functionalism would become explicit: the specific circumstances of individual cases and actions would be clearly seen as marginalized and dismissed by the judge's application of the 'general inflexible rules' of justice, rules seen to ensure the overall utility of the schema not to society as a whole but to a part of society.

Of course, the latter is just a hypothetical scenario, with no historical modelling, but it has the virtue of introducing the schema of justice to its real field of application: a topology of passions.

Hume introduces justice as a schema for the coordination of social actions. It consists of a set of rules that determine the attribution of goods to particular persons and regulate certain transactions, such as inheritance or the buying and selling of property. By creating rules for transactions, the schema of justice does not directly create unity or inclusion in a group. Indeed, if it consolidates an unequal playing field, as we noted above, then it will lead to the reinforcement of differential social ranking and forms of social exclusion. And yet, the schema of justice is said to provide the matrix for government. Consequently, Hume's conception of government cannot presume the prior existence of a unified society: it may well interact with a determinate topology of the passions, but the workings of justice will not have generated a unity within that topology. We shall encounter quite a different conception of justice in chapter 11.

THE SCIENTIFIC DISCOURSE OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

We saw in the previous chapter that Hume develops three solutions to the problem of faction in his *History of England* and his 1741 *Political Essays*: constitutionalism, a pragmatics of political obligation and a lesson of moderation in political judgement. In his oeuvre, there are two other solutions to faction: the theory of government in the *Treatise* and, more than a decade later, the invention of a sphere of political objectivity through the construction of a new kind of discourse that promises measures of the actual efficacy of different governments. This invention takes two forms in Hume's essays. The first is a political science through which he, on occasion, hopes to deduce consequences "almost as general and as certain . . . as any which the mathematical sciences may afford us" (PE, 5). Its second form is the dis-

course of political economy, consisting of nine essays published under the title *Political Discourses* in 1752. Our focus will be the construction of political economy and its implications for political action.

Hume's essays in political economy provide government with its object: commerce. Political action hence becomes transitive. Rather than an affair between two or more subjects, from sovereign to foreign sovereign or from sovereign to his or her subjects, political action is attributed a distinct separate object and thus becomes, according to Aristotle's categories, a form of production. Adam Smith draws all the consequences of this radical shift in the conception of political action, positioning political economy as midwife for the birth of a new commercial society, yet this transformation had been long in its conception and gestation, already anticipated in Locke's version of social contract theory with his distinction between the cohesion of society and the cohesion of the state. It is Hume's task to clear the ground and justify the election of commerce as the primary object of government. He does this in three ways, with an argument from the increase in sovereign power, an argument from the convergence of interests and an argument of collateral improvement in the arts and sciences.

The argument from the increase in sovereign power is made in his opening essay, "Of Commerce". It is based on a simple conversion: "a public granary of corn, a storehouse of cloth, a magazine of arms" and all other forms of "trade and industry" can be comprehended as "a stock of labour" (PE, 100). Given the conditions of commerce, certain nations can possess a stock of labour that is surplus to immediate requirements, a "superfluity" with regard to the provision of "the necessaries of life" (PE, 99). Any surplus stock is available to be converted into military force given a "public exigency" (PE, 101). He writes that "the persons engaged in that [surplus] labour may easily be converted to the public service" (PE, 99). Any increase in the surplus stock of labour hence increases the power of a state. Surplus labour provides a kind of plastic utility that may be redirected as the government wills in response to circumstances. In turn, the increase of the surplus stock of labour can be secured only by an increase in commerce. Hence, commerce becomes the object of government and its facilitation the purpose of government. In the opening sally of his essay "Of Money", he points out that this surplus stock can take the form of money: "It is only the *public* which draws any advantage from the greater plenty of money; and that only in its wars and negotiations with foreign states" (PE, 115). A mass of stored money does not, in itself, aid the development of domestic commerce and industry, but it will always prove useful as a resource when the government decides to express its sovereignty in a military venture. It is for this reason that Hume can announce that "trade is now an affair of state" (PE, 52).

What is odd about this argument is its anachronism. On the one hand, Hume has brought about a radical shift in the nature of governmental action,

assigning it a new purpose and even removing it, as we shall see from his critique of mercantilism, from zero-sum games in international affairs whereby one nation increases its wealth and power at the expense of another. On the other hand, he retains the ancient concept of sovereignty as expressed through the capacity to occupy territory, dominate peoples and assert authority – and this despite the fact that, regardless of all the blood spilt in wars of conquest, "The bounds of all European kingdoms are, at present, nearly the same as they were two hundred years ago" (PE, 108). At least in this first argument for the importance of commerce, Hume does not grasp the full implications of his new discourse of political economy for the conception of political power.

The second argument for commerce as the primary object of government draws on Montesquieu's motto of *le doux commerce*:

> The natural effect of commerce is to bring peace. Two nations that negotiate together become mutually dependent: if one has an interest to buy, the other has an interest to sell, and all unions are founded on mutual needs.[4]

In Hume's terms, commerce brings about a 'convergence of interests' in that it involves a non–zero-sum game. He offers two versions of this argument, one involving the classic exercise of comparing the ancients with the moderns, with the added benefit of distinguishing his political philosophy from that of republicanism. It focuses on the relationship between rulers and subjects. The other version of the convergence-of-interests argument focuses on the relationship between two national economies in international trade and is developed via a critique of mercantilism.

Hume remarks that "the greatness of a state, and the happiness of its subjects . . . are commonly allowed to be inseparable with regard to commerce" (PE, 94). He justifies this remark through a comparison of ancient republics and modern states. He claims that in ancient republics, such as Sparta and Rome, there was no coincidence between the greatness of the state and the happiness of its subjects. Despite the great military power of such republics in proportion to their population, their citizens were forced to live a life of austerity with no "ease and delicacy" (PE, 96). In these republics, there was a divergence of interests between the rulers and the subjects. Indeed, their relationship seemed to have been characterized by a zero-sum game: superfluous hands could be employed either in the production of luxuries or in public and military service. If they produced luxuries, the state would have a small army at its disposal and never become great. If superfluous hands were employed in military service, the state would have a large army and conquer much territory, but its subjects would suffer in their everyday lives from the lack of any commodities or conveniences. In such a situation, Hume remarks that there "seems to be a kind of opposition between

the greatness of a state and the happiness of its subjects" (PE, 95). This is one reason that ancient republics cannot serve as exemplars for modern states in Hume's eyes. The other reason is that the geopolitical situation of these small republics was exceptional and dependent on very particular circumstances.

In developing his contrast, Hume goes so far as to state that the policy of these ancient republics was "contrary to the more natural and usual course of things" (PE, 97). In contrast, when rulers do encourage commerce and the production of luxury, "industry and arts and trade increase the power of the sovereign as well as the happiness of the subjects" (PE, 98). Hume's model is contemporary England, characterized by "the happiness of so many millions" due to its riches being "dispersed amongst the multitudes" and the products of its many mechanical acts being shared amongst a "great number of persons" (PE, 102–3). His conclusion is that when government encourages commerce, a non–zero-sum game develops between rulers and subjects. Through this argument, Hume presents political economy to the reader as that discourse which discovers and promotes such "happy concurrence of causes in human affairs" (PE, 116).

The same argument for commerce as bringing about a convergence of interests is made with regard to international trade. In his essays "Of the Balance of Trade" and "Of the Jealousy of Trade", Hume begins by critiquing mercantilist political economy on international trade:

> It is very usual, in nations ignorant of the nature of commerce, to prohibit the exportation of commodities, and to preserve among themselves whatever they think valuable and useful. They do not consider that in this prohibition, they act directly contrary to their intention. (PE, 136)

Mercantilism understands international trade as a zero-sum game in which a nation's goal is to amass precious metals through an excess of exports over imports (PE, 148, 150). An increase in money within the nation is incorrectly seen as a way of safeguarding its people and industry (PE, 137). In contrast, Hume argues that international trade takes place through a non–zero-sum game. He conjectures that if a nation has been engaged in commerce for longer than its trading partners and to a greater extent, then its labour and raw materials will necessarily prove expensive, and eventually manufacturers will "gradually shift their places, leaving those countries and provinces which they have already enriched, and flying to others, whither they are allured by the cheapness of provisions and labour" (PE, 98, 116). This facility of transfer enables a return of equilibrium between the larger and smaller trading nations. In any case, whatever temporary disequilibria occur, imports furnish "materials for new manufactures" and exports encourage industry in the production of "commodities, which could not be consumed at home", and

so international trade increases the stock of surplus labour in a nation in line with the first argument (PE, 101).

The caveat regarding convergences of interest between trading nations is that they are neither permanent nor particularly stable, being purely conjunctural and contingent on many circumstances. Consequently, the art of government lies in facilitating the emergence of such conjunctures and in expanding and sustaining them when they do occur.

The third argument for commerce as the primary object of government concerns the growth of the arts and sciences. Hume makes this argument again through his critique of republicanism, a critique which requires a re-evaluation of luxury and refinement. He characterizes the republicans as "severe moralists declaiming against refinement in the arts", who vaunt ancient Rome's "poverty and rusticity, virtue and public spirit", celebrate the heights of "grandeur and liberty" to which it rose and then diagnose its fall as due to the importation of "Asiatic luxury" from its conquered provinces which led to "every kind of corruption", civil wars and eventually "the total loss of liberty" (PE, 110). Hume makes two points against the equation of luxury and corruption. The first is anthropological, identifying human beings as creatures of infinite needs and wants which, as soon as some are satisfied, do nothing but multiply. As Didier Deleule points out, this natural multiplication of needs cancels in advance any possible distinction between 'necessaries' and 'luxuries'.[5] Hume's second move is to equate luxury with refinement and refinement in turn with improvement in the mechanical arts, which leads to improvement in the liberal arts, in manners, in sociability and in humanity (PE, 107, 109). A society in which commerce and industry are encouraged by the state is a site of continual 'improvements'. International commerce between independent states brings about not only peace but also improvements in learning and manners, the arts and the sciences (PE, 64–65).

Hume does not construct a stadial theory of history as Adam Smith does, nor does he assign a general orientation to history, such as progress, but in this argument against republicanism, he identifies a trigger for improvement in the arts – the taste for luxury and refinement, perhaps acquired thanks to foreign commerce – and he also identifies a massive political outcome of improvements in the arts – a desire for "equal laws" and an increase in political liberty if not the emergence of a free government (PE, 101, 111). Hence, the encouragement of trade leads not only to international peace but also to the emergence of free government – the case for commerce as the primary object of government does seem quite strong.

But now that government has been provided with an object, what is the nature of that object? How does it condition the efficacy of governmental action? Commerce is understood by political economy as a system of micro-actions, a massive ramified set of coordinated and motivated actions. In the

essay "Of Money", Hume sets out to "trace . . . money in its progress through the whole commonwealth", and its passage reveals a tissue of interlocking practices of investment, import, manufacture, export, the payment of wages and the purchase of goods. Normal quantities – prices, wages, the amount of money in circulation – emerge spontaneously from this tissue of practices. Interlocking dependencies prevent any variable from being artificially raised or lowered without a consequent effect on related variables, which in turn has the effect of returning the initial value back to its normal level:

> Suppose four-fifths of all the money in BRITAIN to be annihilated in one night. . . . Must not the price of all labour and commodities sink in proportion. . . . What nation could then dispute with us in any foreign market, or pretend to navigate or to sell manufactures at the same price, which to us would afford sufficient profit? In how little time, therefore, must this bring back the money which we had lost, and raise us to the level of neighbouring nations? Where, after we have arrived, we immediately lose the advantage of the cheapness of labour and of commodities; and the farther flowing in of money is stopped by our fullness and repletion. (PE, 138)

Any deviation from normalcy, understood as a state of equilibrium, is followed by a temporary state of affairs which is then gradually, through the natural convergence of various factors, brought back to normalcy again if no obstacles are placed in the way of trade, that is, if there is communication between markets (PE, 138–39). There is thus a 'natural' or, rather, an autonomously balanced state of commerce within a nation and between nations.

The nature of commerce is that it is a self-regulating action-system. This has direct consequences for governmental action. The quantity of money circulating in a nation is determined primarily by the number of commodities in circulation, which in turn is determined by the amount of industry. Nations are communicating vessels through which money and investment flow like water, levelling out (PE, 138–39). Harris puts it this way: "There is a 'natural' state of the economy which cannot be artificially improved by legislative activity".[6] At a more banal level, there is also an empirical limit to the sovereign's activity, and that is the subject's concealment of taxable income and property (PE, 175). In Hobbes's model of the action of the sovereign, it was the opacity of individual conscience that marked the ontological limit to the efficacy of the laws.[7] In Hume, it is the supply of money that marks the ontological limit to the efficacy of the laws.

By way of consequence, although governmental action becomes a type of production through it being given an object, this is not production in the sense of creation. As Hume remarks in his polemic against Mandeville, government does not create and inculcate moral distinctions and the schema of justice; rather, it harnesses the already established moral distinctions at work in the fabric of society (T 3.3.1.11; T 3.2.8.1). If commerce possesses

its own independent organization and operation, the attempt to reshape it as if by fiat would be disastrous: a system of actions is not plastic matter. Hence, another ancient meaning of production is at stake in government, one already present in Plato and diagnosed all the way through to Rousseau if not Lévi-Strauss by Derrida: technical production is a *supplement* to natural force; it does not create but rather harnesses the forces of nature much like a dam. [8]

But how can a government harness the natural forces of commerce? What guide does political economy provide? Political economy furnishes knowledge of the comparative state of health of a nation's commerce. It does so by tabulating measurements of key variables of economic practice. For instance, low interest rates on capital are understood to be a sign of "a small demand for borrowing, great riches to supply that demand; and small profits arising from commerce", all of which taken together indicate "the increase of industry and commerce" (PE, 127, 132). Political economy bases such causal reasoning on statistical regularities. Hume claims in an earlier essay on progress in the arts and sciences, "What depends upon a few persons, is, in great measure, to be ascribed to chance, or secret and unknown causes: What arises from a great number, may often be accounted for by determinate and known causes" (PE, 58). In the introduction to his essay "Of Commerce", he announces that "general principles, if just and sound, must always prevail in the general course of things, though they may fail in particular cases" (PE, 94). The task of political economy is to identify these general yet determinate principles at work in society with the aim of advising the government as to the best policy.

When Hume originally advances the idea of a science of politics, he announces a proof or test of such a science: the willingness of a prudent man to engage in prediction (PE, 28). In his essay "Of Public Credit" concerning the growth in the state's debt, he engages himself in the prediction of the death, either natural or violent, of public credit given the inexorable rise of the public debt beyond all capacity of repayment (PE, 176–77). This capacity for prediction is a sign of the epistemological and ontological independence of the discourse of political economy from the phenomena of faction: "The events here will depend little upon the contingencies of battles, negotiations, intrigues and factions. There seems to be a natural progress of things, which guides our reasoning" (PE, 174).

Based on the identification of general yet determinate causes behind regular phenomena, political economy engages in predictions and evaluations that allow it to take the philosopher's traditional position of advisor to the prince. A change, however, has occurred in the kind of advice that is given: it no longer concerns the sovereign's relation to rival powers or to her or his subjects but rather the health of an object: a nation's commerce. The goal of policy is to facilitate the emergence and duration of favourable conjunctures for the growth of commerce, but these conjunctures are measured not stati-

cally but dynamically. For instance, it is not the absolute quantity of money in a country that matters but rather the rate at which it is decreasing or increasing and the speed of its circulation. A gradual increase in money supply is a sign of a favourable conjuncture since it will not immediately lead to inflation in the prices of both goods and wages, and it will encourage industry (PE, 124–25). Hence, what interests the political economist is not a static state of affairs to be attained but rather thresholds and rates of change.

Political economy aids government in its work of harnessing the natural forces of commerce by identifying and measuring the emergence of favourable conjunctures. But how exactly are these conjunctures to be expanded and sustained? In an odd move Hume for some reason finds a need to reinforce his discourse of political economy with a theodicy: a theodicy of national characters and customs. In the essay "Of the Balance of Trade", he recommends the destruction of "bars, obstructions, and imposts" on trade since "they deprive neighbouring nations of that free communication and exchange which the Author of the world has intended, by giving them soils, climates, and geniuses, so different from each other" (PE, 148). In the following essay, "Of the Jealousy of Trade", he makes a similar point: "Nature, by giving a diversity of geniuses, climates and soils, to different nations, has secured their mutual intercourse and commerce, as long as they all remain industrious and civilized" (PE, 151). The differentiation of national characters and resources which give rise to the differentiation of commodities is thus a sign that God or Nature had destined humanity to the very same end that political economy proclaims – the maximization of trade. Henceforth, in international as in domestic trade, the overall purpose of government is to encourage the growth of commerce by destroying all obstacles to the "open communication" of goods and money between markets so as to liberate their passage (PE, 150).

Mind! We have just uncovered another answer to the original question of this book: what is political action in Hume? We found an implicit answer in his *History*. But what explicit figure of action did he send forward to us from the eighteenth century?

To act is to destroy and liberate. Government acts to increase commerce by destroying all obstacles to its operation and liberating its natural forces. In the following chapter on the theory of government, we will discover the exact techniques at work when a government seeks not only to remove external obstacles to the workings of an action system also but to fine-tune and ameliorate the coordination and motivation of economic actions. Hume's doctrine of government is not one of simple nonintervention in the economy: indeed, he invents a very particular form of intervention so as to secure the efficacy of government.

Yet not every piece of his puzzle fits together perfectly: a suspicion was raised around his anachronistic use of a theodicy of national characters and

resources to reinforce the purpose of political economy. The object of that suspicion is whether the unit of analysis proper to this new discourse is indeed the nation. Hume argues for the internationalization of trade and the opening up of corridors of communication between national markets and the removal of tariffs and duties and subsidies on imports and exports. If the state of a nation's economy subsequently depends so closely on that of its trading partners and if supply chains are international, as he suggests with one nation's manufacturers working up raw materials sourced from another nation, then how is it possible to delimit a single national economy? Is the identity and integrity of a national economy not just an illusion projected by the state with its attachment to territorial boundaries and its single legal, fiscal and administrative system?

Hume uses his analysis of manners to definitively declare the existence of discrete self-identical nations: "The same national character commonly follows the authority of government to a precise boundary" (PE, 83). The little grain of the real in this theodicy is found in Hume's caveat that 'mutual intercourse' will occur 'as long as all nations remain industrious and civilized'. The rosy future painted by political economy dissolves when confronted with a simple historical question: what happens when a massive volume of trade occurs between geographical destinations – as it had in Hume's time for many centuries – that are not universally recognized as 'industrious and civilized', indeed some of them are not even recognized as independent nations since such trade takes place within a colonial framework?

At the very beginning of his positive argument in the essay "Of Commerce", Hume stipulates that labour lies at the basis of political economy: "Every thing in the world is purchased by labour; and our passions are the only causes of labour" (PE, 99). As Didier Deleule remarks, the very first action that emerges from the 'matrix of passions' for Hume is labour.[9] Hume conceives of political economy as the science of human action. This is why political economy, despite its imperfections, forms one of the instruments of government since Hume defines government as action upon action. A government thus acts upon labour; perhaps we could go so far as to hazard that it intervenes with regard to the social distribution and organization of labour.

This brief excursion into Hume's essays in political economy began by treating them as part of his fourth solution to the problem of factionalism: the solution of creating a sphere of objectivity in politics. Far from securing a sphere of objectivity, Hume's political economy leaves us with two questions concerning political action:

> If not a variant of the ancient concept of sovereignty, what is the nature of political power concomitant with this new object of governmental action: commerce within a nation?

> How is it possible to delimit this object 'commerce within a nation', and what role do techniques of delimitation play in the dynamics of European colonialism?

In the next chapter, we will begin our enquiry into the nature of political power within the framework of the fifth solution to the problem of faction to be found in Hume's oeuvre: the theory of government. It just so happens that in chronological terms, this was the first solution he came up with since it appears in book 3 of the *Treatise*.

Theory of Government

In the *Treatise*, Hume addresses the question of necessity versus free will in the determination of actions. He points out that in everyday life, we constantly assume necessity in the determination of other people's behaviour. Hume's approach to the question is thus from the standpoint of practice. He remarks that we cannot act in society without assuming the predictability and uniformity of other people's actions based on their type and their station in life. The constant conjunctions we experience between kinds of people and kinds of behaviour are what he calls 'moral evidence'. The existence of moral evidence – the predictability of other people's actions – is the result of the operation of principles that generate the social fabric, in particular, the differential ranking system that we saw in the topology of the passions. In explaining moral evidence, Hume says,

> The skin, pores, muscles, and nerves of a day-labourer are different from those of a man of quality: So are his sentiments, actions and manners. The different stations of life influence the whole fabric, external and internal; and these different stations arise necessarily, because uniformly, from the necessary and uniform principles of human nature. (T 2.3.1.9)

He then immediately makes the following hyperbolic claim about government:

> Men cannot live without society, and cannot be associated without government. Government makes a distinction of property, and establishes the different ranks of men. This produces industry, traffic, manufactures, law-suits, war, leagues, alliances, voyages, travels, cities, fleets, ports, and all those other actions and objects, which cause such a diversity, and at the same time maintain such an uniformity in human life. (T 2.3.1.9)

According to Hume's own theory of passions, it is the passional operations of pride and humility, respect and contempt that create social ranks. In this passage, in contrast, that entire creation is assumed to be the work of one single agent: government. Furthermore, in this passage, government is also attributed the operations of the schema of justice which create the distinctions of property. Government is thus presented here as a synthetic recapitulation of operations that Hume had previously assigned to other agencies. If this passage is to be believed, then government is a kind of meta-agent without which society itself would not exist.

But how does this hyperbolic agent come about in the first place if not within society?

GENESIS OF GOVERNMENT

The first phenomenon that ought to stupefy the philosopher in the question of government is the sheer unlikeliness of so many people being governed by so few (PE, 16). How is it possible?

In the *Treatise* and in the essay "On the Origin of Government", Hume argues that government is a necessary supplement to the schema of justice given the latter's frequent dysfunction. Individuals, though quite aware of the rules of property and their general utility, nevertheless estimate the individual cost of obedience to those rules to be higher than the prospective disutility to society if they break one of those rules (PE, 20). They thus engage in future discounting with regard to public utility. Of course, these calculations of utility can prove quite incorrect and are due to individuals being governed more by their imagination and the apparent value of objects than by their real interest (T 3.2.7.12). The origin of government thus lies in a problem with the individual, to be precise, with the individual understood as a utility maximizer and with his inability to imagine a collective future and project himself into it. For Hume, the individual is indeed an 'animal in need of a master', continually making exceptions to the law for himself, as Kant will remark later, but an individual who is precisely incapable of carrying out the kind of reasoning involved in the categorical imperative, in which one universalizes one's action and imagines the future consequences for society.[1] We can call this the problem of the 'bad citizen'. Hume identifies a further problem of the 'bad magistrate', a magistrate who makes a similar calculation to the bad citizen and whilst performing his office acts according to self-interest, hence breaking the rules of justice (PE, 21; T 3.2.7.3–4). In both cases, the origin of government – just as with the schema of justice and the activity of judgement – lies in a configuration of the passions.

Government emerges as a solution to the problems of the bad citizen and the bad magistrate. Hume argues that it is impossible to change human na-

ture, by which he means the phenomenon of future discounting, but one can design and build specific institutions and so change the 'circumstances and situation' of certain individuals. Concerning the bad magistrate, Hume notes that there is a love of dominion in human nature, and institutions can be created which allow individuals to both enjoy dominion and secure their own interest in the impartial administration of justice (T 3.2.7.6–8; PE, 21). The judiciary, unlike the schema of justice, is not characterized by impartiality, universality and inflexibility. Once its institutions are staffed, it is a group of individuals, by Hume's own admission, who enjoy exercising dominion over others.

With regard to the bad citizen, in his theory of the passions, Hume claims that humans have an intrinsic tendency to "esteem . . . the rich and powerful" and to respect social rank and high birth (T 2.2.5.1–21). It so happens that government provides a central instance of "birth, rank and station" (PE, 21). This respect for rank provides the main anchor for obedience in the early days of government. Over time (the second phenomenon), the public utility of having a ruler will become evident to a people, and the opinion of such utility will provide a further source of obedience (T 3.2.7.8). Finally, after a few generations have passed, obedience to government will become a habit amongst a people, a habitual opinion as to who possesses the right to govern (T 3.2.10.3; PE, 22).

In his consideration of the utility of government, Hume immediately excludes any calculations of the utility of particular policies for particular individuals: such calculations would lead straight to anarchy in his estimation. Here, we find the same erasure of the singular case as we found in the schema of justice (T 3.2.2.22; T 3.2.6.9; T 3.2.10.3). The ground of submission to government is general – it is the "public utility" of government per se, not of a particular government (PE, 16). Let's call this the 'functional account' of the origin of government.

What is striking in both the essay and the *Treatise* is that Hume feels it necessary to add a second historical account of the origin of government (PE, 22). In the *Treatise*, the context is Hume's disqualification of social contract theories and their claims that the origins of government are accessible to rational individuals in the form of universal reasons for obligation. He draws up the following portrait:

> Government commences more casually and more imperfectly. . . . It is probable that the first ascendant of one man over multitudes began during a state of war. . . . The long continuance of that state . . . enured the people to submission. . . . If the chieftain possessed as much equity as prudence and valour, he became, even during peace, the arbiter of all differences, and could gradually, by a mix of force and consent, establish his authority. (T 3.2.8.1–2)

Note that during this hypothetical sequence, the utilities at stake are quite different: that of the military defence of a city and that of the adjudication of social controversies by law. These practices require quite different skills, which Hume recognizes under the terms 'equity', 'prudence' and 'valour'. The transfer of perceived utility from a general to a judge involves a considerable step. If the ruler were to become a judge solely by virtue of her capacities as a general, without having demonstrated a capacity for equity, then this would be a case of usurpation. This passage gestures towards government being a historical amalgam of different practices, here idealized by being unified under one and the same term.

The historical account splits the origin of government from the question of political obligation. The origin is found in the conduct of a war and thus, in topological terms, in an extreme form of disjunction between two groups, if not in expulsion. This finding opens up a prospect of government being, in essence, an extended and transmuted military action. The question of whether government returns to its origin in disjunction is answered in the case of imperial conquest and colonialism.

The virtue of the historical approach to the origin of government is that it offers an explanation of a people's allegiance to a particular ruler. Despite his prevarications in the *Treatise* concerning the philosopher's inability, as an 'impartial observer', to decide competing claims as to rightful sovereignty, in the essay "On the Protestant Succession", Hume admits that the question of *who* to obey is primary for the people and does manage to come to his own position on Hanoverian versus Jacobite succession. According to the historical approach, "a chieftain . . . gradually establish[es] his authority" over time, and submission to a particular family becomes a habit over the generations. In remarking on "the attachment which all nations have to their ancient government", Hume notes that the frequently violent origins of a government are forgotten (PE, 16). In this way, *time as continuous past duration* particularizes allegiance: it is not government per se that is perceived as generally useful but rather a particular government. One anchor of a stable government is thus its projection into the past as a single continuous agent. This would require, as we have seen, a uniformity in the attribution of its agency to a plurality of actions that were seen to have been of general utility to society. In simple terms, the 'who' of government must be felt – by the people – to have been present in the past.

Despite its advantages, the historical approach to the origins of government runs into normative trouble. Habit binding a people to a particular ruler does not allow one to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate forms of government. Admittedly, Hume is adopting a practical account of government, as remarked earlier, designed to embrace both the British mixed constitution and the French absolute monarchy.[2] However, he does use prescriptive language in both the *Political Essays* and the *History* when he promotes

a limited and free constitution, the rule of law and freedom of the press. The advantage of the functional account of the origin of government is that it does not encounter normative trouble. A government is legitimate if it performs its function well. As Hume stipulates, the "principal object of government is to constrain men to observe the laws of nature", namely, the three laws of justice, those of abstaining from other people's possessions, transferring property by consent and keeping promises (T 3.2.8.5). But the functional account cannot answer the question of who should govern, of whom a people should obey. In turn, that question can be answered by a historical account of government – but at the price of silence on whether a particular government is legitimate. If Hume is to distinguish political obligation from blind submission, the British subject's relation to the government from that of a subject to a despot, he will need to distinguish between 'good' and 'bad' habits of submission. Given the residues of his functional account in the historical account, that requirement could be met only with a secure distinction between perceived public utility and real public utility. Given the plasticity of utility, making such a distinction is a complicated affair, as we shall see later in our exploration of consequences of principles.

Before Hume even treats the question of the genesis of government in the *Treatise*, he had already explored the question of how government works as an organic outgrowth of his theory of the passions and, in particular, of motivation.

TECHNIQUE OF GOVERNMENT

As we saw in chapter 5, Hume begins his entire treatment of the question of motivation by dismissing the doctrine that reason can and should govern the passions. Recall that Hume declares, "When we would govern a man, and push him to any action, twill commonly be better policy to work upon the violent than the calm passions" (T 2.3.4.1). The calm passions are what are often mistaken for 'reason'. In this passage, Hume specifies the activity of governing not as preventing certain actions or enforcing passivity – and thus as neither prohibition, repression nor domination – but rather as 'pushing a person to action'. As we glimpsed before, to govern is to incite someone to act in a particular way, to orientate her or his behaviour. In short, to govern is to act on people's actions. Government requires two separate levels of action: that of its own actions and that of its object; the everyday actions of the people.

The second crucial move in this passage is the identification of the means of government, that is, its immediate object and lever: the violent passions. When Hume first distinguishes calm and violent passions, he identifies the

latter as love and hatred, grief and joy, pride and humility (T 2.1.1.3). So the question becomes how to act on these six passions.

In the section entitled "Of the Causes of the Violent Passions", Hume identifies a "remarkable property of human nature", that is, the existence of a 'prevailing affection' or 'predominant passion'. When two or more passions are present, however 'separate their causes', "they readily mingle and unite, tho they have but one relation, and sometimes not any". This mixing into a unity occurs through one passion "swallow[ing] up the inferior, and convert[ing] it into itself" (T 2.3.4.2). His first example is that of lovers' petty quarrels and misunderstandings adding to the intensity of their love, a predominant passion which clearly preexists and lasts longer than the brief annoyance or irritation or wounded pride that occurs in a quarrel.

His second example, drawn from politics, is quite different since the predominant passion does not preexist but is created. He describes a "common artifice of politicians"; namely, with the intention of 'raising a particular passion' in an audience, they first excite the latter's curiosity, anxiety and impatience by delaying as much as possible the revelation of an urgent matter (T 2.3.4). He implies that this anxiety and impatience will subsequently be swallowed up by the prevailing passion excited by the politician's speech: they serve as appetizers or intensifiers. Four further ways are identified of intensifying a predominant passion: this list provides an instruction manual of political technique. The first technique is to place "good or evil" in a situation: the resulting desire or aversion will be added to the predominant passion. The second is the introduction of external or internal prohibitions with regard to a desire: the presence of an interdiction intensifies the desire. The third technique is to provoke uncertainty in the shape of the rapid alternation of different views: the resulting agitation can again intensify the predominant passion. Finally, the veiling or partial concealment of an object of desire introduces a kind of uncertainty as to its complete nature and so intensifies that desire (T 2.3.4.4–9).

At this point a question arises: in Hume's theory, does government always act so as to stimulate the same general passions, does it ever seek to introduce new passions or does it solely harness the particular passions prevalent within a society during a particular historical conjuncture?

In the essay "Of Commerce", Hume appears to opt for government acting on the same general passions regardless of the nature of a society. The context is Hume's attempt to construct an alternative to republicanism and its moral psychology of love of the fatherland and tolerance of austerity. In contrast, he asserts, "It is requisite to govern men by other passions, and animate them with a spirit of avarice and industry, art and luxury" (PE, 100). This directive to incite the passion of avarice does not imply its inexistence prior to the action of government. As mentioned earlier, Hume takes quite a strong line against what he sees as Mandeville's or Hobbes's position that

government manufactures and imposes the sentiments, such as those of justice and injustice: "Any artifice of politicians may assist nature in the producing of those sentiments, which she suggests to us . . . but it is impossible it should be the sole cause of the distinction between vice and virtue" (T 3.2.2.25). In our example, a taste for art and luxury may well have already sprung up in a population through the work of nature and circumstance: the politicians' project is simply to assist nature in the further propagation of such passions. In the essay "Of the Independency of Parliament", Hume considers collective action problems in his analysis of behavior and motivation in the field of politics and concludes, "It is, therefore, a just *political* maxim, *that every man must be supposed a knave*": that is, people have "no other end, in all [their] actions, but private interest". Consequently, Hume states that "it is by [private interest] we must govern [man]", a dictum that comes with the caveat that people often mistake their real interest due to the work of the imagination (PE, 24).

The selection of passions to be encouraged is determined by the general goal for government identified in the essays on political economy: to augment commerce and commercial sociability. The great advantage of the commercial passions, in Hume's eye, is that once encouraged, indeed liberated, they have a tendency to spread and propagate themselves (PE, 130–31, 150–52).

More evidence of Hume's commitment to government always acting on the same passions is found earlier in the same essay where he states, "It is [the legislator's] best policy to comply with the common bent of mankind, and give it all the improvements of which it is susceptible" (PE, 98). We can hypothesize that the 'common bent of mankind' is best understood as the predominant passion. The legislator's task is thus to harness the natural forces that are already at work within a population in the form of this predominant passion: this provides another way of understanding Hume's infamous dictum that reason ought to be the slave of the passions. However, if this directive is to work for a specific legislator with regard to a particular population at a particular moment in time, then surely this 'common bent' must be understood in more specific terms, as a prevailing passion that is situation dependent.

Nevertheless, in the *Treatise*, we find further evidence for a universalizing diagnosis of humanity's 'common bent' when Hume demonstrates how the entire schema for the coordination of social actions called 'justice' operates via "an alteration of the direction" of the "interested affection" that is the "love of gain" (T 3.2.2.13). With regard to this predominant passion of the love of gain, he also says that politicians cannot pretend to correct it; rather, "All they can pretend to, is, to give a new direction to those natural passions, and teach us that we can better satisfy our appetites in an oblique and artificial manner, than by their headlong and impetuous motion" (T 3.2.5.9). In

other words, the schema of justice works by inserting delay into the love of gain with the promise of greater accumulation as a result. Substantial evidence can thus be found throughout Hume's oeuvre for government always acting to harness the same passions: the love of gain, avarice, private interests – in short, the commercial passions.

Hume shows that the need for government arises due to a breakdown in the universal application of the schema of justice. He shows how humans are governed more by their imagination than by their real interest, more by the lure of present pleasure than by distant gain, and as such they are led to transgress the rules concerning property. But if humans are governed more by their imagination than by their real interest, it is of very real import to government to pay attention to the specific configurations of the passions that are wrought by the work of the imagination amongst a people. Any demagogue is aware of this lesson.

So let's explore the alternative hypothesis: that government acts by harnessing those passions specific to a society during a particular historical conjuncture. We can return to our own analysis of the reception of political action in the Stuart volumes of Hume's *History*. At the level of society, the predominant passion would thus take the form of what we call a configuration of appearance. It is clear that politicians in the revolutionary period met with success and amplification if their representations and actions were in tune with the configurations of faction, conspiracy and rise and fall. If, in contrast, as Hume often remarks, their representations and actions were in tune with a configuration of moderation and prudence, then they would have been met with a lack of adherence, with silence and indifference. If governing a people requires amplifying or at most redirecting their passions and if interest is always dominated by the imagination and its temporal discounting as Hume shows, then one cannot govern in a general manner: one must pay attention to the specific work of the imagination in shaping the collective topology of the passions. That is, action not only emerges from the spatio-temporal fabric of the passions but also arrives and is received and interpreted – as we saw with the case of judgement – within the fabric of the passions or from particular locations within that fabric.

It just so happens that Hume is attentive to the particular manners, customs and circumstances of countries as crucial to the determination of policy; he even writes an essay entitled "Of National Characters".[3] However, these differences are not remarked at the level of configurations of the passions, and they are subordinated to the general governmental goal of encouraging commerce. They are 'weak' differences that can be subsumed within a general theodicy of international commerce. As we saw, God has distributed the talents and the natural conditions amongst diverse nations such that they specialize in manufacturing different products and thus will engage in international trade, which itself encourages peace between nations (PE, 148, 151).

There is one place in Hume's oeuvre where he directly considers the possibility of a 'strong' difference at the level of the organization of the passions with regard to moral judgement, and that is in the "Dialogue", often included by editors as an appendix to the *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*. In this text, Hume imagines a traveller, 'Palamedes', reporting his experience of a distant country, 'Fourli', in which there is a complete inversion of moral judgement. Behaviour and speech that Palamedes judged to be offensive if not criminal was in fact perceived by the inhabitants of Fourli as "obliging" and honourable (EPM D.2). Palamedes speaks of his incredulity at such inversion, and we can take this incredulity as the index of the encounter of two contexts in which not only different customs and mores reign – that much Hume was happy to admit in his essay "Of National Characters" – but in addition an entirely different ranking system. For instance, Alcheic, the host of Palamedes in Fourli, is praised rather than condemned for having assassinated his benefactor. But rather than admitting the possibility of an entirely different passional basis for moral judgement, Hume reels back this hypothesis in three different ways. First, the hypothesis is constructed in a simple manner whereby it is possible to translate the Fourli moral system into Palamedes' system by an operation of inversion: what he praises they condemn; what they condemn he praises. It is enough to know how we judge an action to determine how the Fourlians would judge it – in the opposite manner. Evidently, it is possible to conjecture far more complex differences between two systems of morality. Indeed, the 'strong difference' or 'disjunction' of separate topologies of passion would entail excessive difficulty in the translation of moral judgements from one topology to the other.

The second way in which Hume domesticates this hypothesis is by having Palamedes reveal it to be one more exercise in the comparison between the ancients and the moderns; it is "the Athenians, whom I have couched, all along, under these bizarre names" (EPM D.13; EPM 7.18). If this inverted morality lies at the very origin of the European philosophical tradition, then it already enjoys a relationship of belonging to the same tradition as the modern Palamedes.

It is Hume's third tactic of domestication that is of interest for his theory of government. In response to Palamedes' critique of ancient Greek and Roman morality, the narrator takes a position of moral pluralism or toleration: "You have no indulgence for the manners and customs of different ages. Would you try a Greek or Roman by the common law of England? Hear him defend himself by his own maxims and then pronounce" (EPM D.18). In response, Palamedes directly assumes a position of moral relativism: "I only meant . . . to convince you, that fashion, vogue, custom, and law, were the chief foundation of all moral determinations" (EPM D.25). Nevertheless, he retains a concern for the universal, asking the narrator, "What wide difference . . . in the sentiments of morals, must be found between . . . nations

whose characters have so little in common? How shall we pretend to fix a standard for judgments of this nature?" (EPM D.25). The narrator's response is that a higher principle must be identified from which different moral evaluations are derived. He claims "the principles upon which men reason in morals are all the same; though the conclusions which they draw are very different" (EPM D.36). Those principles, lying at the basis of both modern European and ancient Athenian moral judgements, are the usefulness or agreeableness of a quality to an individual or to others. He then admits that the utility of a particular quality – such as courage and valour – will vary according to the historical conjuncture and whether, for instance, a nation finds itself to be continually at war. This is how Hume finally comprehends all difference in moral evaluation, all variations between nations separated by centuries, under the metacategory of the universal principle of utility. Utility, in the terms of the passions, is a particular variant of self-love, a form of lasting pleasure.

In this text, Hume dismisses the possibility of any 'strong difference' at the level of the moral organization of the passions. In doing so, he considerably reduces the range of potential differences between societies from the standpoint of government. Here again, he takes the position that government harnesses a general passion: self-love in the form of utility. This simplification of the operation of government fits well with his description of the precise tactics to be used in harnessing this passion.

ANALYSIS OF TECHNIQUE: OBJECTS OF PLEASURE

We have already met with four techniques for intensifying a predominant passion – add good or evil, prohibit an object, introduce uncertainty and veil the object. When Hume analyses the efficacy of laws in changing human behaviour, he writes,

> It is certain that as all human laws are founded on reward and punishment, it is supposed as a fundamental principle, that these motives have an influence on the mind, and both produce the good and prevent the evil actions. (T 2.3.2.5)

Reward and punishment consist in bringing an object of pleasure closer to the self or further away from it or, conversely, in bringing an object of pain closer to the self or distancing it. Government acts upon action by targeting the individual motivation for action.

We find examples of this tactic scattered throughout Hume's writings. In section 2 of the *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, he uses the criterion of public utility to judge the efficacy of various actions:

> Giving alms to common beggars is naturally praised; because it seems to carry relief to the distressed and indigent: But when we observe the encouragement thence arising to idleness and debauchery, we regard that species of charity rather as a weakness than a virtue. (EPM 2.18)

The object of pleasure consists of 'alms', and Hume's recommendation here seems to be that of distancing this financial reward. In the essay "Of the Populousness of Ancient Nations", Hume makes the following observation with regard to the provision of welfare in the form of orphanages:

> When [Hospitals for foundlings] open the door to every one, without distinction, they have probably a contrary effect, and are pernicious to the state. It is computed that every ninth child born at Paris, is sent to the hospital; though it seems certain, according to the common course of human affairs, that it is not a hundredth child whose parents are altogether incapacitated to rear and educate him.[4] (EMPL, 399)

Again, his recommendation is to distance that object of pleasure which for the parents would consist in relative security for their unwanted children. In his essay "On Taxes", Hume identifies one welcome consequence for government of a consumption tax – an object of pain if there ever was one – and that is "the poor [would] increase their industry, perform more work, and live as well as before, without demanding more for their labour" (PE, 161). In his essay "Of Public Credit", Hume points out the dangers of an ever-increasing state debt and counsels its reduction, if necessary, by violent means, namely, a "voluntary bankruptcy in England". This would be to bring an 'object of pain', namely, bankruptcy, very close indeed to thousands of public creditors, but it would ensure the "safety of millions" (PE, 175–77). In "Of the Balance of Trade", Hume advises the removal of all those objects of pain that prove obstacles to international trade – custom duties, tariffs and impositions – and which were constructed with the ill-advised aim of amassing money within a nation (PE, 148).

In Hume's essays in political economy, the application of this tactic of distancing or bringing closer objects of pain and pleasure is evident: it is simply a matter of applying or removing particular taxes, welfare provisions and other financial incentives. For this tactic to work across all domains of governmental action – such as foreign affairs, education, health, police and religion – other objects of pleasure and pain must be identified apart from financial incentives. Hume does not take this task on himself save in a flippant remark as to the gullibility of the public and the demagogic tricks of politicians:

> And though men are more commonly governed by what they have seen than by what they foresee, with whatever certainty; yet promises, protestations, fair

> appearances, with the allurements of present interest, have such a powerful influence as few are able to resist. Mankind are in all ages, caught by the same baits: . . . the heights of popularity and patriotism are still the beaten road to tyranny; flattery to treachery; standing armies to arbitrary government; and the glory of God to the temporal interest of the clergy. (PE, 176)

Here, the implied objects of pleasure and pain are various: belonging to a superior and beloved group, whether it be a national people or the favourites of the ruler, the enjoyment of salvation and reconciliation with God and the distancing of the fear of invasion by a neighbouring country. We should also note that pleasure and pain enter not only into the calculation of financial interest but also into the composition of love and hatred, pride and humility, which passions, in turn, enter into the composition and dissolution of groups and various configurations of passion, as hinted above: a self may be brought closer to pleasure by the promise of its future location on the group of the kingdom of heaven established on earth.

Whether the pleasure involves the love of gain or belonging to a group, it is clear that government operates across its domains by modifying the spatial and temporal contiguity of an object of pleasure or an object of pain.

It is at this point that we have found Hume's second explicit answer to the question of this book concerning political action. To act is not only to destroy and liberate, it is to govern, and to govern is to act on actions by reshaping the topology of passions through the distancing or bringing closer of objects of pain and pleasure.

Do we now possess two separate answers as to the nature of political action in Hume? Or is it the case that one is subordinate to the other, acting on action being a variant of destroying and liberating or vice versa? In Adam Smith's development of political economy, it is the case that certain artificial privileges – such as membership in guilds or monopolies over the production of certain goods – are destroyed by bringing an object of pain closer, namely, competition. The aim is to liberate the commercial passions of industry, efficiency and innovation. The technique of acting on action by placing objects of pleasure and pain can easily be harmonized with destruction and liberation. Yet it is destruction and liberation that is primary since its dual object – obstacles to commerce and commerce itself – creates the framework for acting on action. What is more, destruction and liberation orientates action by positing a foundational faction: there is the faction of obstacles to commerce, and there is the faction of liberated commerce.

There is an interesting variant on Hume's model of acting on action, and it involves another relationship between governing and time. In the *Treatise*, Hume writes that "government forces [people] to seek their own advantage, by a concurrence in some common end or purpose", with his examples being precisely the construction of essential infrastructure for commerce: bridges,

harbours, canals as well as military infrastructure, such as ramparts, fleets and armies (T 3.2.7.8). In such cases, government does act on people's actions since it encourages them to cooperate in a large-scale project. However, at the same time, this action on the part of government has a single concrete result: the existence of a new piece of infrastructure. Of course, the imposition of a new tax has a result in the form of an aggregate of modified individual economic behaviours, but the advantage of infrastructure is that it is easy to communicate its existence through its physical incarnation. Government appears to act directly when it sponsors the construction of a new transportation system. For Montesquieu – who had a deep influence on Hume, publishing *L'Esprit des lois* in 1748 – the exemplar of political action is precisely the creation of infrastructure for commerce: Alexander the Great's attempt to open a new trade route between Egypt and India.[5]

This form of action is not so much a variant as an exception in Hume's theory of government when it comes to the question of time. When government forces people to cooperate towards their own advantage, it creates a new or separate form of collective motivation. According to the functional account sketched above, government operates as a supplement to the schema of justice when the latter dysfunctions due to temporal discounting on the part of individuals and due to their failure to imagine a collective future. As Hume remarks in this very section, "There is no quality in human nature, which causes more fatal errors in our conduct, than that which leads us to prefer whatever is present to the distant and remote, and makes us desire objects more according to their situation than their intrinsic value" (T 3.2.7.8). In contrast, with these common projects, government constructs the opposite of temporal discounting: it acts to encourage people to attain a greater pleasure through the delay of gratification. Furthermore, these common projects allow people to imagine their collective future: infrastructure as incarnation of the people!

There are two ideas to be retained from the initiation of these common projects. The first is that government acts to create collective durations that individuals cannot attain on their own. The second is that the greatest possible common project would be the creation of a people rather than the measurement of a population. Yet government, reposing on the functional schema of justice, cannot create passional unity. The reason for its impotence lies in its technique for harnessing the passions.

ACTING ON ACTION AS A FUNCTIONALISM

One of the most striking characteristics of Hume's essay "Of the Populousness of Ancient Nations" is the kind of knowledge that it proposes as the basis of its conclusions concerning comparative population density. Each

time, it is a question of making inferences and conjectures concerning the impact of one or more causal factors on the increase of one sole variable: population. Take Polybius's account of the pasturing of great herds of swine in northern Italy: does this not imply an absence of enclosures and developed agriculture and hence a low population compared to the present? (EMPL, 437). Take Dionysius Halicarnasseus, Juvenal and Pliny's accounts of habitation size and the number of floors in Rome: what might they imply about population? (EMPL, 430–31). What is the probable frequency of the plague and its subsequent impact on the population? (EMPL, 382–83). In Hume's own words, one of his questions concerns "the influence of slavery on the populousness of a state" (EMPL, 388). Another set of questions concerns "the political customs and institutions of both ages, and the [weighing] of their influence in retarding or forwarding the propagation of mankind" (EMPL, 400).

Hume allows that his conjectures in this essay are uncertain due to lack of information. Yet his style of reasoning gestures towards a new kind of knowledge that he names in an earlier essay a 'science of politics', a knowledge that would be secured in cases in which sufficient information was available. This knowledge will consist of "general principles", "general truths" or "universal axioms", and in turn these principles will concern "the concurrence of a multitude of causes", the "general consequences" of laws, and take the form of "universal propositions, which comprehend under them an infinite number of individuals" (PE, 5, 7, 94). In short, this kind of knowledge consists of a catalogue of the more or less constant conjunctions of certain kinds of events – causal factors – and an evaluation of their impact on one chosen variable, such as the quantity of circulating money in a nation, interest rates or population.

The goal for the accumulation of such knowledge is assigned in the essay "Of the Populousness of Ancient Nations". He asserts that a "wise legislature" must remove any restraints on the people's desire of generation and that the sign of "wise, just and mild government" is that a country "abound[s] most in people, as well as in commodities and riches" (EMPL, 385). This type of knowledge which identifies the key factors that affect population growth is thus the knowledge of government. That is, not only must a state possess such knowledge in order to achieve its end, but government is positioned within society, within a topology of passions, by means of the mechanisms of such knowledge. Government is the scholar of society, the political economist for whom 'all other things are equal' in the measurement of the impact of one variable upon another. In Hume, society finally becomes a secure object of political action inasmuch as it is grasped as a series of variables. When political action becomes transitive and gains an object, the state is no longer a sovereign that acts vis-à-vis other political subjects but rather becomes knowledge of rates of change – change in population, in

interest rates, in the growth of commerce. Such knowledge is then to be applied via interventions into these rates of change. I call the accumulation and application of such knowledge 'functionalism'.

As we saw with the schema of justice, one of the characteristics of functionalism is its indifference to individuals. In complete contrast to what Hume calls 'factions of person', which are organized around loyalty to a particular ruler or royal family, governmental functionalism ignores the qualities and characteristics of individual persons. Functionalism focuses rather on the aggregation of measurable qualities amongst a population. Hume gestures in this direction when he outlines the initial promise of a science of politics. He asserts,

> Effects will always correspond to causes. . . . And so little dependence has this affair on the humours and education of particular men that one part of the same republic may be wisely conducted, and another weakly, by the very same men, merely on account of the difference of the forms and institutions by which these parts [of a republic] are regulated. (PE, 11)

Hence, the science of politics will discover invariants in the experience of governments, and the basis for such discoveries will lie in the comparative fortunes of different systems of laws and institutions, not of individuals. On a similar note, he stresses the independence of institutional operations from individuals when he develops an analysis of the felicity of speech acts involved in property ownership. He dismisses the criterion of authentic intentions as the sole determinant of the validity of a speech act and insists on the validity of formulaic expressions in the workings of the schema of justice (EPM 3.38n13). In the case of analysing the effects of an increasing public debt on a country's commerce, industry and foreign policy, Hume asserts, as cited above, "The events here will depend little on the contingencies of battles, negotiations, intrigues, and factions. There seems to be a natural progress of things, which may guide our reasoning" (PE, 174). He goes on to illustrate this 'natural progress of things' as leading to a fork: "either the nation must destroy public credit, or public credit will destroy the nation" (PE, 174). In this analysis, the progress of the phenomena not only is indifferent to individuals but is even removed from what was previously taken to be the very sphere of politics: 'battles, negotiations, intrigues, and factions'.

Indifference to the complexity of individual persons and their conflicts is a component of the second characteristic of government as a functionalism: its operational closure. We have already met with this characteristic in the shape of the 'general inflexible rules' of the schema of justice, which are upheld and applied across all cases, despite the rule-case gap. At the level of government, this operational closure takes the form of the proliferation and self-reproduction of measurement. A long list of phenomena are proposed for

comparative measurement in Hume's essays on political economy: a state's funds and expenses, public debt, interest rates, the cost of labour, the price of commodities, the profits of manufacture, the percentage of population living in cities compared to the countryside, the percentages of the population who are either "laborious" or "idle people, who live on their revenue", taxes, the unequal distribution of wealth, the fertility or yield of land and so on (PE, 170–71). These measurements are then surveyed to find correlations between the rise and fall of selected variables: "it is of consequence to know the principle whence any phenomenon arises, and to distinguish between a cause and a concomitant effect" (PE, 133). The discovery of correlations leads to further measurements and to the calibration of governmental policy via measurement.

But operational closure does not consist solely in the repetition of measure; it also involves the foreclosure of any other kind of discourse or information as part of its methodology. In other words, in the analysis of the correlation of measurements, Hume employs a ceteris paribus clause. In the essay "Of the Populousness of Ancient Nations", he asserts,

> In general, warm climates, as the necessities of the inhabitants there are fewer, and vegetation more powerful, are likely to be more populous: but *if everything else be equal*, it seems natural to expect that, wherever there is most happiness and virtue, and the wisest institutions, there will also be more people. (EMPL, 385)

He does cast his net uncharacteristically wide here by using the vague variable of 'happiness and virtue', but the use of the clause 'if everything else be equal' merely makes explicit what was already at stake in his other analyses of the causal correlations of variables. For the sake of the accumulation of state knowledge, 'everything else' is excluded from the scope of any one enquiry. Without such exclusion, it would not be possible to identify simple correlations that may occur between a small set of variables. Of course, any analysis, whether of correlations or of a literary text, proceeds via exclusion, but what is unique about this new political-economic reasoning that Hume advocates is its systematic and massive evacuation of complexity so as to reduce judgement to the comparison of a few measurable variables.

One sure sign of this drive to reductionism in the judgement of government is the elevation of certain variables as more important than others in determining a government's comparative 'power'. As we saw above, in the opening essay "Of Commerce", Hume identifies one crucial factor that determines a nation's sovereign power: the quantity and availability of a surplus stock of labour for public service (PE, 100). Within this optic, the function of government is simplified to augmenting and, if need be, redirecting and reemploying a country's surplus stock.

In line with our earlier critique of judgement and our critique of the schema of justice, we shall develop a full critique of government in the following chapter based on both our topology of the passions and on our analysis of political conflict in the *History*. A key to that critique lies in one last characteristic of government as a functionalism, a characteristic we glimpsed earlier: its incapacity to create unity.

As we have seen, in his theodicy of international trade, wherein God originally distributed the diverse climates and talents, Hume makes much of the distinctive unit of the nation. In his conception of political action as transitive, taking society as its object, he must presume the interdependent unity of social interactions: economic actions must cohere and form one distinct action-system. However, the functionalism of government cannot, of itself, produce such unity despite the hyperbolic claims of our epigraph. The artificial distancing or bringing closer of objects of pleasure and pain cannot create a maximal all-embracing group in a topology of passions. Government as a functionalism enjoys unity at the level of the type of information it can evaluate and at the level of its measurements, but its permanent operational employment of a ceteris paribus clause precludes it from possessing any grasp of – or even figure of – the whole of society.

HUME'S DISAVOWAL: GOVERNMENT IS NOT ANOTHER MODEL OF POLITICAL ACTION

Hume opens his essay "Of the Original Contract" with a definition of what I call 'models of political action':

> As no party, in the present age, can well support itself, without a philosophical or speculative system of principles, annexed to its political or practical one; we accordingly find, that each of the factions, into which this nation is divided, has reared up a fabric of the former kind, in order to protect and cover that scheme of actions, which it pursues. (PE, 186)

For Hume, a model of political action is a kind of alibi for a party's activity. In the case of both the Whigs' appeal to social contract theory and the Torie's use of the doctrine of passive obedience, these 'systems of principles' are employed to throw a veil of legitimacy over what is nothing other than the workings of faction. As we saw in chapter 7, the philosophical construction and advertisement of a model of political action contributes to the continuation of conflict. Indeed, in our earlier analysis of the conflict between king and parliament as presented in the *History*, it became evident that the explicit declaration of a model of political action often exacerbates conflict and rigidifies antagonists in their positions. Hume may well want to avoid presenting his theory of government as an alternative model of political action for just

this reason. He presents his account of government in practical terms, separate from the persons and principles of faction.

According to my concept of a model of political action, the real test of whether Hume succeeds in differentiating his concept of government from normative models is to apply the five questions of political action. Does his theory of government provide a coherent set of answers?

Both the functional and the historical accounts of the genesis of the state provide an answer to the first question, 'who can act?' The one who can act is whomsoever has been designated as ruler by the people's opinion of right and of the possession of power. However, this practical approach precludes Hume from offering any definitive answer to the second question of the grounds upon which that ruler may act. Recall that in the *Treatise*, the philosopher as 'impartial observer' is incapable of deciding the rightful sovereign faced with pretenders who possess rival titles. In fact, in his political essays and then in the *History*, Hume shows that it is this very question – *who can act and on what grounds?* – that furnishes the first fuel of faction. In his own context, given Bolingbroke and the Country Whigs' contestation of Walpole's method of rule, given the Jacobite's contestation of the Hanoverian succession, if Hume were to offer a definite philosophical definition of the legitimate grounds of political action and if that definition led to an exclusive identification of the proper kind of ruler and thus, given the limited field of candidates for rule, to a rough indication of who in particular should rule, then he would have done nothing more than enflame the very faction that he sees as the main danger to the constitution.

When he finally accepts the task of identifying the preferable line of succession in the essay "Of the Protestant Succession" – an essay whose publication was deferred from 1748 to 1752 to avoid exacerbating the tensions over the Jacobite rebellion in 1745 – Hume chooses practical and consequentialist criteria for his judgement, avoiding reference to normative grounds for a title to sovereignty. In the opening of the essay, he allows, in contrast to his position in the *Treatise*, that the question of *who rules* is unavoidable:

> It is in vain to say, as many have done, that the question with regard to *governors*, independent of *government*, is frivolous, and little worth disputing, much less fighting about. The generality of mankind will never enter into these sentiments; and it is much happier, I believe, for society, that they do not, but rather continue in their natural prepossessions. How could stability be maintained in any monarchical government . . . unless men had so passionate a regard for the true heir of their royal family? (PE, 213)

To be precise, the question of who rules is unavoidable at the level of the people, a level from which the philosopher distinguishes herself by the following warning: "Consequences, mixed and varied, may be foreseen to flow

from every measure: And many consequences, unforeseen, do always, in fact, result from every one" (PE, 216). Hence, "political questions are infinitely complicated" and the deliberation of the philosopher will be characterized by "the sentiments" of "hesitation, and reserve, and suspense", in drastic contrast to the "ignorant multitude, who are always clamorous and dogmatical, even in the nicest of questions, of which, from want of temper, perhaps still more than of understanding, they are altogether unfit judges" (PE, 216). Bolstered by this antidemocratic judgement, the philosopher indulges herself in one passion alone: that of "derision against the ignorant multitude" (PE, 216).

To decide this political question of succession Hume employs a consequentialist criterion: the impact of the religion of the royal family on English society. The "religious persuasion of the House of Stuart" is the main reason that the protestant succession is preferable. Roman Catholicism entails the inconveniencies of excessive expense, of institutionalized practices of intolerance, and a division of religious and civil authority where the former is attributed to a foreign leader. Indeed, upon an abstract consideration of utility, Hume momentarily entertains the hypothesis that Catholicism "were . . . ever so advantageous to society", yet upon a specific evaluation, it is clear "it is contrary to that [religion] which is established among us, and which is likely to keep possession, for a long time, of the minds of the people" (PE, 219). When Hume weighs the advantages and disadvantages of succession in the two different lines, the aggregated advantages fall on the Hanoverian side yet most persuasively since "the settlement in the house of Hanover has actually taken place", and, furthermore, they have "displayed, in all their actions, the utmost mildness, equity and regard to the laws and constitution" (PE, 220).

Another distinctive feature of Hume's theory of government is that it conflates the third and fourth questions of political action: 'who is right about what is to be done?' and 'what is it to succeed or fail?' It does this through the construction of a supposed objective schema of efficacy. By means of the knowledge of political economy, the goals and the methods of government are established: the goal is to increase commerce and industry, stock more surplus labour and increase the population. The methods are policies that encourage and facilitate such growth. The evaluation of the impact of these policies uses quantitative measures such as those mentioned above: rates of interest, of exports and imports. Hence, it is no longer a question of authority, of *who* is right about what is to be done, but rather of *what* policies have proven effective in their actual unfolding in society. A government succeeds when it guards "public liberty, with internal peace and order" (PE, 217). A government succeeds when the arts and sciences flourish (PE, 217). A government succeeds when it increases the nation's commerce and industry,

and this success can now be precisely measured thanks to the construction of this science of political economy.

This functionalist response to the third and fourth questions of political action seals a great historical loss. At the same time, it initiates an adventure – that of industrial modernity – that has long since gone astray. In the village where I live, a statue of the Virgin Mary stands on a pedestal above the attic windows of an apartment building on the main street. She looks down on us, and her stone eyes embrace passersby, deliverymen and pensioners alike, all goings-on beneath the roof that has become hers: what must it have been, I wonder, to have lived in an age when God was not dead, to have lived wrapped in her understanding, her mercy, to have been given shelter or to have been shamed by her love alone! In contrast, over a motorway near the fields where my grandmother played, the 'Angel of the North' stands over the remnants of the mining community, people who were in deep need of recourse and consolation, but unlike Mary, the Angel's gaze is blind, its strutted wings too rigid to embrace anyone: it evokes the splendour of technique and industry fuelled by those dark utilitarian mills over which it stands: an equivocal angel, stretched across unbridged contexts.

The fifth question of political action asks, 'if you and I split now, were we ever united, and to what end?' It is the question of alliance. Here it is evident that despite himself, Hume is offering another model of political action. In his political writings, any splitting in government concerns the relationship between the king and parliament. Admittedly, the theory of government does not include any specific rules as to how these two institutions should interact. But, as noted in the previous chapter, Hume repeatedly promotes a limited, free and balanced constitution, a system of institutions and laws, along with those peculiar and particular practices that intervene in the permanent task of balancing the constitution. Not only does Hume identify the ends of government but, as we saw above, he prescribes a constitutionalist model for the alliance that holds together the parts of government, and he finds the exemplar for this model in the post-1688 British constitution: "The true rule of government is the present established practice of the age" (PE, 210). The maintenance of the balance of the constitution is Hume's guide in distinguishing two forms of political conflict: that which can be accommodated and that which must be avoided and repressed at all costs. He writes,

> The disputes between privilege and prerogative may easily be composed by laws, and votes, and conferences, and concessions; where there is tolerable temper or prudence on both sides. . . . Among contending titles, the question can only be determined by the sword, and by devastation, and by civil war. (PE, 218)

He opens the essay "Of the Coalition of Parties" with the same point:

> The only dangerous parties are such as entertain opposite views with regard to the essentials of government, the succession of the crown, or the more considerable privileges belonging to the several members of the constitution; where there is no room for compromise or accommodation, and where the controversy may appear so momentous as to justify even an opposition by arms to the pretensions of antagonists. (PE, 206)

It is this distinction between conflict that can or cannot be constitutionally accommodated that provides the pragmatic response to the fifth question: 'You and I were united, across the different branches of the constitution, inasmuch as we composed our differences through laws, votes, conferences and concessions; all these differences being resolved towards the common ends of internal peace and order, civil liberties, increased commerce, industry, surplus labour and population, and the flourishing of the arts and sciences'. In short, all differences can be composed as long as they occur within the general framework of the theory of government.

Hume's practical approach does give him trouble with the individuating and normative questions of 'who can act on what grounds?' and 'who is right about what is to be done?' Yet unlike the king's model and parliamentary model as described in the *History*, his account of government provides an answer to the crucial question of alliance. To dig a little deeper into this answer, let's look at Hume's uncharacteristic acceptance of the classic speculative and prescriptive exercise of determining the best regime in the essay "Of the Perfect Commonwealth". In a moderately detailed schema of the composition and processes of this commonwealth, he maintains a balance between a centralized executive senate, with its 'protector' and councils, and a decentralized and divided legislative: one hundred county assemblies. The composition, representativity, powers and roles of all institutions are designed to ward off the twin evils of combination and division. For instance, in the senate, combination is prevented through the annual election of all senators. Their power is limited in that they have only a few offices to attribute, and an official counterpower or opposition is instituted in the form of a 'court of competitors' which inspects public accounts and can accuse any public official of corruption. The danger of division is avoided through the low number of senators – only a hundred – and via their dependency on the people for their election, rendering them less vulnerable to separate interests. Factious senators may be expelled from the senate into the court of competitors, and all senators must obey rules concerning limited terms of office and service requirements before acceding to higher positions. At the level of the one hundred county assemblies, Hume extends decentralization to the point of proclaiming, "Every county is a kind of republic within itself" with its own county laws. Yet he avoids the fragmentation of Swiss cantons by stipulating that either the senate or any other county may annul another

county's law if it manifests a separate interest. The curious reader is free to pursue the details of the number and nomination of magistrates.

The crucial point for the question of alliance is that Hume is designing this constitution with an eye to stable working relationships between institutions, such as the county assemblies and the senate, not to alliances between groups. In his system, heteroclite groups would be formed, such as representative assemblies, for a limited period, but their relationship to other temporary groups would be determined by rules and procedures. These rules would stipulate the regular dissolution of these groups to supposedly prevent the natural emergence – at the level of the passions – of the phenomena of combination and division.

In our current age of social media–fuelled ethnonationalist populism, one may be forgiven for doubting whether even a frequently updated set of stipulations concerning the franchise, equality of representation, limited terms and the circulation of information could ever provide adequate remedies to the dangers of combination and division. Don't love and hate always find a way?

A stronger remedy to the two dangers can be found in another of Hume's answers to the question of alliance. As we saw above, through the apparatus of government, a duration can be created wherein you and I are united in an effort to halt our individual temporal discounting, to learn to defer gratification and to imagine and construct a common future by means of a project.

Hume's theory of government provides answers to the five questions of political action, and so, despite his advertised practicality, it constitutes a model of political action and entails normative claims. The third and fourth questions concern authority over what is to be done and the definition of success: their fusion under political economy's objective measures of the efficacy of government is a mark of this model's functionalism. As made clear in the critique of judgement and the critique of the schema of justice, any action and any model of action take place not at some higher level which is separate from society but rather as part of a determinate topology of passions. It is that participation or material insertion in the passions that will decide the actual efficacy and fate of government.

Part IV

Beyond Government

Critique of Government

There are two relationships between time and government in Hume's philosophy. The first, as we saw, was that of long duration: the longer a form of government is in place, the more secure its authority and the people's obedience. Political obligation becomes an old habit. The second relationship between time and government emerges at the very end of Hume's only speculative and prescriptive essay on politics, "Idea of a perfect commonwealth". Hume remarks:

> It is needless to enquire, whether such a government would be immortal. . . .
> The world itself is probably not immortal. Such consuming plagues may arise
> as would leave even a perfect government a weak prey to its neighbours. We
> know not to what length enthusiasm, or other extraordinary movements of the
> human mind, may transport men, to the neglect of all order and public good.
> Where difference of interest is removed, whimsical and unaccountable factions often arise, from personal favour or enmity. Perhaps rust may grow to the
> springs of the most accurate political machine, and disorder its motions. Lastly, extensive conquests, when pursued, must be the ruin of every free government. (PE, 233)

Government is mortal. Each government has a time span, a duration proper to it alone. In this passage, Hume identifies five factors that could bring an end to even a perfect government such as he prescribes. Of these factors, three are evidently internal to the workings of government itself: rust in its machine, the pursuit of conquests and factions based on persons. Enthusiasm appears to be an external factor, a product of the volatile humours of the public mixed, perhaps, with religious fanaticism. Yet the terrain of governmental action for Hume is nothing other than the customs and mores of the people; if religious passions begin to dominate a society, then the action of

facilitating the growth of the commercial passions must have failed. As such, some responsibility for the so-called disorder of enthusiasm must be laid at the government's door, and so again, in such a scenario, government plays a part in its own demise. What about the first factor Hume mentions that could bring an end to government: an all-consuming plague? Is this not a completely external factor? It is an attack by another species after all! Yet in Hume's theory of a perfect commonwealth, government would be responsible for public health. Not only does public health form part of the security of the people, but a disease-ridden population can hardly increase its commerce and industry. A plague arises and spreads partly due to the failures and gaps in governmental action. In this scenario, government yet again plays a part in its own demise.

If it is the case that even the most perfect government, designed by Hume himself, would be vulnerable to internal factors bringing about its own demise, then it is perhaps the case that the latter are not extreme phenomena that take place punctually, bringing government to a sudden end, after a long period of functional operation. Perhaps it is the case that these internal factors are always at work but below certain thresholds of perceptibility and dysfunction. Perhaps a government is mortal precisely because it ages and it ages due to the unwanted and uncontrollable side effects of its own operations.

The critique of Hume's model of government offered here is not so much a normative critique as a critical diagnosis. It aims to outline the intrinsic dysfunctions of government once it is put to work within an actual society, that is, within a determinate topology of passions.

This critical diagnosis consists of five arguments: action upon action implies hylomorphism; in government of general utility, political obligation is a trap; hylomorphic functionalism is an exercise of power that tends to become a domination; hylomorphic functionalism is an idealism; and, finally, this idealism tends to exacerbate disjunctions in a topology of passions.

ACTION UPON ACTION ENTAILS HYLOMORPHISM

The first argument is an argument from the topology of passions. The idea is very simple: the principle of acting upon people's actions by harnessing their passions regardless of the implication of such passions in concrete configurations of appearance treats such passions as a kind of plastic matter – *hyle* – which must be endowed with a form – *morphe*. Hence, governmental functionalism is *hylomorphic*. There is a long history of hylomorphism, of the dominance of form over matter, in European or, to be more geographically accurate, Mediterranean philosophy. The most influential example is found in Aristotle's ontology of individual concrete substances. The premise of

Aristotelian hylomorphism is a separation of kind between form and matter; they are ontologically different. Matter is plastic or transformable, relatively undifferentiated and yet also subject to an infinity of accidental characteristics and devoid of intrinsic unity. Form, on the other hand, is determinate, it can be entirely captured in rational discourse by means of a definition and it has intrinsic unity.

What exact elements of Hume's theory of government fit this diagnosis of hylomorphism? At first glance, the diagnosis applies to the entire relationship between government and society. Just as in the relationship of form to matter, government supposedly resides at a separate level to society, there is a difference in kind between government and society and the relationship is nonreciprocal. As the supplement to the schema of justice, it is at the level of government alone that dysfunctions in social interaction are corrected or prevented. Knowledge of the workings of society, in the form of political economy, is retained and put to work by government. Government applies those norms – security of property, increased commerce, increased population – that in its eyes guarantee not only society's survival but also its well-being. That is, at the level of government alone, prescriptions are determined concerning a desirable state of affairs in society and a desirable organization of social actions. Government seeks to produce that desirable state of affairs within society by acting upon people's actions and harnessing their passions. In Hume's theory, it is never a question of the people acting upon the actions of government, as one might expect, say, in a theory of democracy. In this nonreciprocal relationship, society is characterized as a set of passions amongst which certain passions will be facilitated and encouraged and others discouraged by the manipulation of objects of pleasure and pain.

But a separation of levels and kinds and nonreciprocity is not sufficient to justify a diagnosis of hylomorphism. What is also required is a lack of active form: in this case, on the side of society. But this is not quite the case in Hume's theory of government. In his essay "Of National Characters", he makes it quite evident that each society possesses a distinct set of characteristics, important enough to warrant an investigation into the causal factors behind the variations in manners and customs between nations (PE, 79–83). According to his theodicy of international trade, nations are destined to differ in their character so that they will specialize in the manufacture of different products and thus be impelled to trade. Not only that, but the very mechanisms that drive commerce and its expansion are held to be intrinsic to society: it is the 'commercial passions', such as greed and the pleasure of acquisition, that are to be encouraged. But the most important objection is that from the standpoint of political economy, which is the knowledge of government, commerce is a self-regulating action-system. Hence, from the perspective of government, the differentiations of society do give rise to an

organizing intelligence. Subsequently, the relationship between government and society cannot be diagnosed as a hylomorphism.

The second candidate for the title of hylomorphism is the matrix of government, that is, the schema of justice and its enforcement. As revealed by our critique of justice, here again we find a differentiation of levels and kinds and a nonreciprocal relationship. The rule-case gap reveals an ontological divide: on the side of the law, the universal and the discrete, on the side of society and its cases, the particular and the continuum of degrees of virtue and vice. But here again, the diagnosis meets with an obstacle. Despite the rule-case gap, Hume admits that explicit signs of this gap emerge at the level of the judicial institution: the difficulty of applying laws to certain cases gives rise to chicanery and sophistry in the reasoning of judges and lawyers to the point that certain decisions become a question of taste rather than reason. Hume's concept of the schema of justice and its inflexible rules concerning universal forms of property title is evidently quite different to the system of the common law in which the singularity of certain cases goes so far as to actually set legal precedent and generate general rules. Yet to correct the rough analogy I tried in chapter 8, the emergence of explicit sophistry and chicanery in fitting cases to these inflexible rules is enough to prevent a clear-cut diagnosis of hylomorphism. With regard to the rules of justice, the differentiation within individual legal cases is not entirely passive but also active to a certain degree.

The third candidate for the diagnosis of hylomorphism is the actual technique of government: action upon action. When government attempts to harness the passions by placing objects of pleasure and pain so as to motivate the accumulation of specific social actions, it assumes the role of cultivating a distinct form within society. In this operation, government ignores the specific configurations of passion at work in society, it ignores all other passions apart from the commercial passions and it even ignores the actual actions of human beings since it targets solely the latter's motivations by its placement of objects of pleasure and pain. Society becomes plastic matter for government insofar as it is reduced to measurable levels of pleasure and pain. Finally, we have a clear-cut diagnosis! It is in its technique that functionalist government installs a hylomorphism.

The difficulty of this diagnosis and its narrow target reveal a fundamental ambiguity in Hume's theory of government. On the one hand, the very idea of acting upon action implies a certain productivism since it endows action with a separate object, it assumes that actions can be treated as objects and it assumes a separation of levels between governmental action and social actions, as if there could be some kind of 'meta-action'. On the other hand, commerce as an action-system can never be treated as passive matter. Hume is caught between two different acceptations of production: Aristotle's hylomorphic model of production and Socrates' earlier conception of production

as a supplement to nature. This ambiguity is present in the very metaphor of 'harnessing the passions'. Does harnessing mean reorientating, channelling and transforming passions, like the damming of a river to create electricity, or does it mean using nature's force without transformation, such as in a light machine, surfboard, sailboat or bicycle? This ambiguity is deeply set in Hume's conception of government.

Besides, let it not be thought that topologies of passion are always something precious to be saved from the instrumental machinations of government. As we saw with the configurations at work in the Stuart volumes of Hume's *History*, there is no innocence in passion. From our standpoint, the question of the relationship between a model of political action and a topology is more subtle than that of form and matter, instrumentalization and precious object, with one side to be rescued from another. Yet from the standpoint of a Humean government, in its actual technique of acting on action, a hylomorphism is put to work – if society does suffer at its hands, then the call of the passions is for rescue!

Of course, one could claim to speak from the side of 'practicality' and object that government *works*, that it has an efficacy with a long history behind it. At least Hume's theory of government identifies an instance that will not only safeguard but also pursue the public interest; moreover, it identifies an objective method for measuring the success or failure of governmental initiatives. Over the past two hundred and fifty years, there have been some governments that have taken after Hume's model and encouraged commerce and population growth, and it just so happens that there are also some nation-states in which commerce and population have grown significantly in a manner that can be more or less correlated to the actions of those governments – alongside a thousand other factors, of course, since everything else is never equal.

But this objection simply repeats the initial argument for functionalism. The question is, rather, what are the side effects of this apparent efficacy? At a deeper level, what does it even mean for an illusion – the illusion of a separation of levels and of a difference between form and matter – to be interpreted as having a certain efficacy? It is not as though hylomorphic functionalism is a necessary fiction for practical reason like Kant's regulative ideas of freedom, the immortality of the soul and the existence of God. Hylomorphic functionalism is but one contingent model of political action amongst others; moreover, it is one based on an ontology that does not hold given our account of Hume's theory of society as a topology of passions.

If government is an illusion and yet is supposed to have efficacy, then some form of power is at work, which brings us to the question of what binds us to such governments – how do they exercise power?

IN GOVERNMENT OF GENERAL UTILITY, POLITICAL OBLIGATION IS A TRAP

In both his historical and his functionalist accounts of the origin of government, Hume argues that people obey government and its laws due to a perception of its general utility to society. Government also presents and justifies its specific actions and their orientation as being of general utility to society. Not only are the subjects of government encouraged to believe in the general social utility of its actions, but it is the subjects' belief in such utility that facilitates the success of those actions. As Hume says, the everyday ground of government is opinion. There is thus an operational circularity between governmental action in harnessing commercial passions – via taxes or subsidies, penalties or incentives – and people's beliefs in the utility of such action. I call this circuit *the trap of functionalist obligation*.

This trap closes on each of us in the following manner. The schema of justice forms the substructure, the matrix of government. Hume asserts that without the rules governing our relation to the possessions of others, no combination of humans into a society is possible (EPM App3.9). As we saw in chapter 8, without the schema of justice, society would supposedly fall into chaos in the shape of conflicting individual judgements as to the utility of different decisions on a controversy (T 3.2.2.22; T 3.2.3.2). Quite simply, without the schema, there is no society (T 3.2.8.1). But this drastic choice is not presented solely at the level of the philosophical theory of justice; it is operative at the level of the application of the laws to each individual case. As we saw before, the petitioners, the lawyers and the judges may well perceive the public disutility of an individual decision, but they must believe in the general utility of the judiciary as a coherent system; otherwise, there would be chaos. Evidently, this alternative – 'either the justice system or chaos' – is a not a real choice. For any rational individual, it is a kind of blackmail. The same blackmail operates at the level of government, in a similar manner to Socrates' explanation of political obligation to his incredulous friend in the *Crito*. If you live in a society and have benefitted from its infrastructure, wealth and security, then you have also accepted the framework of its functioning and thus have a duty to assist that functioning and to believe in it: *otherwise, there will be chaos*.

Say that an individual makes the judgement that the government and its policy is not of general utility to society. Due to the excluded middle of the choice between functionalism or chaos, such an individual would automatically be seen to cause public disutility by a dissenting judgement. But how exactly does this repressive conversion of democratic critique into harmful dissent occur? First of all, at the level of society, a dissenting judgement fails to perform its duty of maintaining case-by-case belief in the general utility of government. There is a relatively constrained margin of toleration or play for

accidents, dysfunction, discord and individual adjustments in the application of law and policy, but there is no room for a judgement of the general disutility of all policy. Second, the very existence of a dissenting judgement implies an alternative vision of justice or of a type of political rule; it cannot be registered as a simple anomaly or occurrence of 'noise' because its very existence entails the existence of different evaluative criteria. The potential existence of an alternative form of political rule or an alternative system of property rules presents a negation of the current systems of government and justice. However, from the standpoint of the current government, this negating alternative remains unknown, and thus it is perceived as a threat. Hence, a functionalist government will always react in one of two ways to a dissenting judgement concerning the overall utility of government or of the justice system: either it will proclaim that such a judgement presents a threat to the smooth operation of the state's institutions and, a fortiori, the proper or normal occurrence of social interactions, or it will proclaim that *there is no alternative* schema of justice or government – Thatcher as pale avatar of Hume, his twitching finger puppet.

Of course, from the standpoint of society, such proclamations are arbitrary since they fly in the face of historical evidence. There have been other forms of political rule apart from Hume's relatively innovative conception of functionalist government. There have been other forms of the usage of land and goods than the five titles to property that he generalizes and renders exclusive in his schema of justice.

HYLOMORPHIC FUNCTIONALISM IS AN EXERCISE OF POWER

Government as a hylomorphic functionalism is an illusion because it misrecognizes its own participation in a topology of passions. Government is an illusion that is supposed to work, to have a certain efficacy. Part of that efficacy is secured by the blackmail of functionalist obligation. We have identified a mismatch between Hume's model of government and the reality of politics, the reality registered, for instance, in his very own *History of England* and what it discovers in the shape of multiple configurations of appearance, complicated topologies of passions and temporal geneses of plural norms for political action. And yet, according to many economists and political scientists, from Adam Smith until the present day, commerce-encouraging government is held to work. If this is the case, we need a concept of power: something must be distorting these evaluations of the actual workings of government in society.

The first element for our concept of power is the selectivity of government with regard to the passions to be harnessed, as mentioned above. We have just encountered the second element, the trap of functionalist obligation,

through which individuals are drawn into a circuit of self-reproducing evaluation, belief and policy. The third element concerns government as supplement to the schema of justice. As we saw in chapter 8, Hume admits that the selection and legalization of certain titles to property could well legitimate a de facto situation of inequality and lead to inconvenience (T 3.2.4.1). In its encouragement of commerce, government will be led to accept and then instrumentalise a preexisting hierarchy of merchants and captains of industry. This point will be made in more detail in the argument concerning functionalism as an idealism, but the key idea here is that in basing its activities upon a social hierarchy – of property, of commerce – government reinforces that hierarchy and thus does not occupy a neutral and transcendent position with regard to society.

The fourth element for our construction of a concept of power concerns the permanent expansion of governmental activity. Like any hylomorphism, functionalism has a great weakness; it is incapable of reconciling or unifying form with matter, the differentiated with the undifferentiated, essential properties with accidents. In order to even measure the price of goods, salary levels, interest rates and so on, the government must define a finite set of values within which that measure will take place: government will measure the price of goods or salaries in one country or across one territory. In other words, functionalism must stipulate the global unit within which that measure occurs, and usually that unit goes under the artificial name 'the national economy'. However, just as in Aristotle, it is impossible from the standpoint of form to comprehend and grasp unity at the level of matter. In all hylomorphisms, form is supposed to endow matter with discrete unity so as to produce a concrete individual substance. But the nature of substantial unity remains forever elusive. Functionalism's focus on rules and variables rather than individuals prevents its grasp of unity: moreover, how could the substantial unity of an action-system be conceptualized if that action-system consists of an interdependent and expanding tissue of actions? It has operational unity alone. In drastic contrast, at the level of a topology of passions, as we saw in chapters 2 and 3, it is quite evident how a substantial and passional unity can be formed.

In his political economy, Hume claims that commerce has a natural tendency to spread and propagate between towns and peoples. If the government's objective is to encourage commerce, it will be led to follow the expansion of commerce to wherever it spreads. For instance, if a government regulates a domestic market to facilitate transactions and then a foreign market opens up for the same goods, then that government will not only promote or negotiate regulation of that foreign market as part of trade agreements but also work towards the concordance of the two systems of regulation. There are only a few steps from this task to the activity of a world trade organization. Commerce as object of government draws government forwards to

extend and expand its zone of activity. There are no intrinsic limits to the expansion of government because it has no grasp on any substantial unity at the level of society. Liberalism has thematised the limits of government, but insofar as it is functionalist, it has never been able to provide a stable concept of those limits.

Let's return to the selectivity of government with regards to the passions and functionalist obligation: the first and second elements for our construction of a concept of power. If a government facilitates the growth of the commercial passions by means of incentives, then by default, it does not facilitate the growth of other passions, such as benevolence, courage or solidarity, and of any specific configurations into which they enter. To encourage a passion is to augment its role in weaving the fabric of society, in associating individuals and groups and locating them on the order of social ranks. The univocal encouragement of commerce leads to a diminished role for noncommercial passions in shaping society. Fewer connections between people and groups and fewer locations on social ranks will occur through the noncommercial passions. The government's selectivity amongst the passions generates a quantitative ratio of forces within a people. More social relationships will be constructed through the love of gain than through solidarity.

As for functionalist obligation, it forms a trap for the individual because it confronts her or him with a forced choice: either obey the law and accept the judge's decision in each particular case or join chaos. The government's actual object or target is always an aggregate of behaviours, never the single individual. However, in the relationship of obligation, the government individualizes people, presenting them with a choice between playing their specific role of maintaining social cohesion or merging into an amorphous process of disorder. It is never a question – as it could well be at the level of the topology of passions – of a group of citizens assembling their judgements of governmental dysfunction and acting together to rectify a social problem. Functional obligation individuates and separates people by assigning a unique debt to society to each individual. The burden is universal, but it is born individual by individual, each on their own. All are equal before the law, but all are separate before the law. In other words, functionalist obligation ties a people to government by dividing those people into juridical persons and assigning each of them a separate and indissoluble debt. This separate debt discourages the formation of noncommercial groups and reduces any space for the sharing of action. Functionalist obligation truncates and mutilates human capacities via the threat of chaos. In the web of a functionalist government, we are truncated human beings.

The four elements for our conception of power are selectivity imposed via an unequal ratio of powers, the truncation of humans into debt-bearing persons, the assignation of those persons to a reinforced monological hierarchy of ranks and the indefinite expansion of governmental activity. These ele-

ments add up to the following operation: government generates our judge-
ments of its own efficacy by leading us to locate ourselves on a false image
of our topology of passions, an image of single-ordered individuals, that is, a
series of separate individuals ranked according to only one scale of value.
We will call this a *single-order image*. In contrast, our own location in a
topology of passions is extremely complicated because it is determined by all
of our relationships, past and present, and by every fluctuation and variation
in those relationships and by the reception of our every gesture and action.
Imagine, then, the challenge of thinking through the implication of our own
neighbourhood within the vast topology that is society!

Due to this difficulty, individuals will always seek to simplify their loca-
tion in their topology of passions via an image which privileges certain
primary locations over others, perhaps those of family and work, a lover, the
gang you belong to or your peeps or your besties. The government, on the
other hand, offers a simple ready-made image of the complete social topolo-
gy of passions complete with a single-ordered ranking system that promises
advancement to the individual over other less merit-worthy individuals.
Thus, meritocracy is a false image which government uses to encourage
'peace and order' or, in other words, obedience. In offering a single-order
image, government mimics the intrinsic operation of any configuration of
passions, generating an image of the whole, as we saw in chapter 3. Its
images thus enter into competition with all the other images at work in a
particular topology, each operating its own kind of reduction.

Government can be said to exercise a power over a people according to
the degree that they localize themselves on its single-order image. Govern-
ment borrows its force from just those individuals who predominantly locate
themselves by such an image. Government can be said to dominate a people
if its image of single-ordered individuals is not massively countered by alter-
native images of their location on a topology of passions. But there are
evidently many degrees of governmental power apart from domination, and
power based on topological location is intrinsically volatile.

Let's approach this question of government as exercising power one more
time. It is odd to think of a power – a capacity to act – as having for its result
the diminishing of the capacity to act of certain groups and individuals: is all
power negative in its effect? And yet this is what seems to be the case when
government is selective in the configurations of passion that it encourages.
One option would be to distinguish between negative power and positive
power, power that diminishes people's capacities and power that augments
people's capacities. But this would be a simple moralism, and it does not fit
within Hume's framework. A more accurate analysis of governmental selec-
tivity would show that it increases certain capacities and diminishes or ne-
glects other capacities. There are degrees of governmental selectivity or ex-
clusivity just as there are degrees of government intervention. Some govern-

ments will quite simply seek to increase the capacities of a wider range of individuals and groups and other governments a narrower range. Governmental power is thus exercised in the form of a ratio between the capacities it augments and those it diminishes.

But this entire approach assumes that government actually functions and has an effect on a people's capacities. Let's take a step back: using Hume's analysis of our idea of necessity, we can ask why it is that we assume a government has power in the first place. Hume says that power, agency, efficacy, force, connection and necessity are all synonyms of our ideas of causality (T 1.3.14.4). In line with his interrogation of causality, we can ask, what are the impressions that give rise to our idea of power in a government? He argues that it is never the case that we have a single impression of the unique quality of power or efficacy within any object (T 1.3.14.4). What we do have, however, is an accumulation of impressions of the constant contiguity of two objects in time and space and the precedence of one in relation to another (T 1.3.14.1). The frequent repetition of these associated impressions leads the mind to be determined to consider the second object every time it perceives the first object. A custom or habit thus emerges in the association of ideas. This subjective feeling of determination – the habit – is the basis of what we attribute as the 'objective necessity' of the power or efficacy of one object to bring about a determinate change in another object.

To apply Hume's analysis of power and causality to our question, we can stipulate that the power of government lies in whatever causal force is attributed to it by individuals. This thesis parallels Hume's own claim that the ground of governmental authority is a people's opinion of right and property. But how do individuals attribute power to government? It must be through the accumulation of impressions of a constant conjunction between government actions and the increased capacities of particular social groups. But if hylomorphic functionalism is an illusion, how would such impressions arise?

Here we are led back to the same concept of power: these impressions arise through individuals internalising a governmental image of the topology of passions as a single-ordered series of discrete individuals and groups. In Hume's philosophy, it is the imagination that associates impressions and ideas, and the imagination often begins to make associations according to habits or 'general rules' that do not correspond to an individual's actual environment. Here, it is government's single-order image that plays the role of a 'general rule'. Once my imagination tends to associate ideas and impressions in line with this image, I begin to think in terms of simple unilateral relationships between the government and discrete social groups, groups for whom certain salient capacities, such as wealth, are simply increased by government's actions.

What drops out of these images is not only the amorphous and dynamic nature of social groups, their multiple other capacities and the augmentation

and diminishment of such capacities by their relationships with many other groups, but also the so-called side effects of governmental policy, the multiple consequences of that group's increased wealth, some of which are currently gestured at in political economy with the derisory moniker of 'environmental externalities'. In a topology of passions, there is no simple division between inside and outside, between a society and its environment. If a functionalist government begins to take 'the environment' into account in its measures of the health of the economy, it will nevertheless remain structurally blind beyond the variables it measures, and an unknown realm will always fall into the category of 'environmental externality'.

In short, government is attributed power through individuals locating themselves and other groups on the government's single-order image of that intricate topology in which they and government actually find themselves, a topology betrayed by government. There are multiple orders of rank that weave together a topology – so many kinds of differentiation, so many pleasure-giving qualities that can locate us by pride or humility beyond wealth, power, beauty and ethnicity, such as my ability to draw a chalk maze with monsters across the kindergarten playground to the delight of my two-year-old son – and our thirst for images of our topology can be slaked with diagrams as baroque and ephemeral as a sand mandala: in tracing these diagrams, we glimpse the depth of the parallel hierarchies across which our lives are strung.

HYLOMORPHIC FUNCTIONALISM IS AN IDEALISM THAT MAY EXACERBATE DISJUNCTION

Functionalism is constructed on the basis of a separation of two levels, as already shown in the exegesis and critique of Hume's account of judgement in chapter 5. In the case of government, the distinction lies between government and society.

Government perceives itself as existing on a separate level to its object. However, as we have seen, all action, including that of government, emerges from a specific location in a topology of passion. All action unfolds and is received at specific locations within that topology of passion. So a government, functionalist or not, forms but one part of a topology of passion. This is evident at the level of the everyday operations of government: society reacts to every gesture, speech and movement on the part of the visible state. So how is it possible for a functionalist government to sustain a belief in its separate location?

This is where we return to our idea of the reflexive fold, briefly glimpsed in the shape of action, moral judgement and the schema of justice. A government is nothing more than a reflexive fold in a topology of passion. It is a

fold because its operation of acting on action presumes a doubling of levels. It is a reflexive fold because it attempts to construct an image, however reductive, of the entirety of the topology in the shape of 'society' or 'the national economy'. It is a reflexive fold of a topology rather than a separate level to society or an adequate image of the economy, because there is a constitutive continuity of kind between itself and those regions of the topology in which it attempts to intervene or of which it attempts to construct an image. This continuity of kind is revealed by Hume's accounts of the origin of government as lying in a configuration of the passions – the problems of the bad citizen and the bad magistrate. Government not only emerges from but also forms part of the fabric of the passions. Government is a group or a set of groups located in multiple manners within a determinate topology. These locations are its third characteristic as a fold: a government is relocated by those groups whose actions it seeks to modify and by other groups who are collaterally affected by such modifications. From the standpoint of these groups, a government's actions are perceived and reacted to simply as actions, not as meta-actions or productions of a better state of affairs. Insofar as a people develop a habit of attributing efficacy to the government, it will be located as a group – and on other groups – by particular passions: government will not be comprehended as the neutral expression of a necessity engendered by the very nature of society. It will be seen to incarnate particular norms rather than universal norms, and it will be understood to give a particular and limited answer to the question 'who should govern?'

Nevertheless, in its efforts to act upon actions so as to increase industry, commerce and population, government takes itself to belong to a separate level and to operate through hylomorphic functionalism, hence its idealism. In other words, despite its constant evaluations of its own efficacy, government is highly theoretical and not particularly practical. It continually sows the seeds of its own destruction because it cannot recognize its own topology of passion, the intricate topology within which it continually acts and is acted upon. Mind! Government is not alone in such reductionism: any configuration of passions massively simplifies its surrounding topology and generates an integral image of the whole that reduces the latter's complexity, as does any model of political action, but to a lesser degree of simplification. Yet at the same time, the topology of passions is made up of nothing other than configurations of passions and models of action, so simplification is part of its texture.

To show in more detail how government is enmeshed in a topology of passions, let's return to the topological forms of discord and disjunction. Amongst the forms of discord there is partiality, that is, the limited generosity we extend to family and friends before extending it, if at all, to acquaintances, neighbours and strangers. The second type of discord is the experience of humility when another person's location by pride on a high social

rank corresponds to my location on a lower social rank. The third type of discord is hatred, which locates the self or a group on an intense relationship of repulsion with regard to another individual or group. There are many examples in Hume's writings of political actions giving rise to consequences that fuel one or more of these forms of discord. At a very basic and sociological level, it is quite clear that government forms a specific group, an elite, that would be ranked quite high on the social hierarchy. This high ranking is reflected in Hume's essay "Of National Characters" when he remarks that a government sets the tone for society and has a significant influence on the latter's customs and mores (PE, 84–85). According to his theory of passions, all groups formed by sympathy based on common characteristics – including government – are subject to partiality. We find a concrete instance of such partiality in Hume's mention of the imposition of a sales tax on consumer items in his essay "Of Taxes". Hume claims that one of the frequent and beneficial consequences of such a tax would be that "the poor increase their industry, perform more work, and live as well as before, without demanding more for their labour" (PE, 161). But what if the poor, as a group, were to demand what impact such a tax had on another group, the rich? Given their wealth, a small increase in a sales tax would have no effect whatsoever on the behaviour of rich subjects. A flat sales tax, numerically equal for all, would not have equal economic consequences on all groups. If the poor found themselves to be disproportionately penalized for the consumption of certain items compared to the rich, they would be localized by humility on a lower rank of not only wealth but also recognition compared to the rich. Moreover, the poor would localize the rich upon the government as forming part of the same corrupt group through the latter's partiality. In this scenario, the imposition of a sales tax exacerbates two topological forms of discord: partiality and humility. Note that these are just hypothetical scenarios without a historical modelling: to turn them into actual models of a topology of passions, we would have to engage in a concrete investigation of a determinate topology, a little like Hume's *History*.[1]

   Let's imagine another scenario. In order to stimulate commerce, a government puts in place a set of incentives for investors to come into a country, including a reduction of taxes on business and on personal capital gains tax, and it also seeks to motivate its high earners to redouble their efforts and investments at home by slicing the highest rate of proportional income tax. It pays for these tax cuts by making cuts to welfare provisions. If the poor were to form a group in such a situation, their experience would be one of repeated humiliation by the rich and of accumulated locations on an ever-decreasing rank of ease and comfort compared to the rich. Say another party is elected to government and seeks to remedy excessive economic inequality by increasing welfare provisions for disadvantaged sectors of the population. It then balances its budget by increasing income tax on the top

income bracket, reintroducing inheritance tax and even imposing a transaction tax aimed at curbing certain forms of financial speculation. In such a situation, wouldn't people affected negatively by these increased taxes form a group by sympathy and find themselves located by contempt for the poor and resentment or hatred with regard to government and feel themselves humiliated and lowered on the social ranks by the actions of government? One might even leave the country in disgust like a French film star. In both of these scenarios, we see governmental action exacerbating the third topological form of discord: hatred between individuals and groups. In another scenario, a government could deliberately exacerbate discords between groups so as to further its own political ends: the formerly unionized working classes can be encouraged to reimagine themselves as the petite bourgeoisie or as the 'aspiring classes', no longer so divided from their historical rivals, the bourgeoisie, but absolutely separated from their new rivals, recently arrived immigrants come to either take their jobs or parasite welfare provisions. A government could do this by promoting the differential location of individuals and groups on an alternative single order of rank to that of wealth, that of authentic belonging-to-a-nation.

In this diagnosis of the limits of functional government, given its enmeshing in a topology of passions, the goal is not to evoke the chimera of an alternative model of political action which would unfold in a society without causing any conflict or divisions: there is no room for beautiful souls in a topology of passions. The danger in the impact of functionalist government is rather the exacerbation of the three forms of discord into the endemic forms of disjunction: faction and expulsion.

The emergence of faction as a configuration of the passions requires reciprocal location by a maximal degree of hatred and a zero-sum game in which each increase on social ranks for one group implies a corresponding decrease for the other group. Evidently, the distribution of public finance is perceived by certain groups as a zero-sum game. Unless there is a massive increase in tax revenue due to a huge leap in commerce, tax cuts need to be balanced by cuts in governmental expenditure. These cuts are seen to affect different groups. If a society is dichotomized into two groups bound together by hate, especially if this is due in some part to the accumulated effects of governmental action, and if the government is seen to take from one group to give to the other, then all the ingredients for faction are in place. This would not be the faction that Hume limits in his essays to the official sphere of parliamentary politics in the shape of the Tories and the Whigs; this would be faction at a far deeper level: that of an entire topology of passions.

In the theory of disjunction developed at the end of chapter 3, we saw that the most extreme form of disjunction occurs in the shape of a group located via such an intense contempt by another group that it does not even register at the minimal rank of the hierarchy structuring the latter group's topology, a

degree of contempt that becomes indifference or engenders the kind of relationship a human might have to a supposedly inferior species: this is the configuration of expulsion. Hume entertains just such a disjunction in an odd example in the *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*. He asks us to imagine a situation in which there was

> A species of creatures, intermingled with men, which, though rational, were possessed of such inferior strength, both of body and mind, that they were incapable of all resistance, and could never, upon the highest provocation, make us feel the effects of their resentment; the necessary consequence, I think, is, that we should be bound by the laws of humanity, to give gentle usage to these creatures, but should not, properly speaking, lie under any restraint of justice with regard to them, nor could they possess any right or property, exclusive of such arbitrary lords. Our intercourse with them could not be called society, which supposes a degree of equality; but absolute command on the one side, and servile obedience on the other. Whatever we covet they must instantly resign: Our permission is only tenure by which they hold their possessions: Our compassion and kindness the only check, by which they curb our lawless will: And as no inconvenience ever results from the exercise of a power, so firmly established in nature, the restraints of justice and property, being totally useless, would never have place in so unequal a confederacy. (EPM 3.18)

This is a perfect description of the configuration of expulsion. If the schema of justice does not even apply to such creatures, if the term 'society' cannot even be used to describe their relationship with humans, then they are evidently located on an entirely different hierarchy. They are not even registered as acting or judging within the same space as human beings; indeed, their sole activity from a human standpoint is 'servile obedience'. Hume's immediate example of such a relationship is that holding between humans and animals, and we can easily extend it, in contemporary terms, to the nonrelationship between members of commercial societies and their marginalized, misnamed, misrecognized and mutilated ecologies. Oh irony of history again! What lessons about the birds and the bees will we teach our children to ensure the reproduction of our society? That bird and bee species are disappearing from a countryside doused with pesticide to ensure the increase of key variables, such as yield per hectare? Blindness beyond the variable can entail expulsion in the shape of biological extinction.

What follows in Hume's *Enquiry* is a little more nuanced. He writes,

> The great superiority of civilized Europeans above barbarous Indians, tempted us to imagine ourselves on the same footing with regard to them, and made us throw off all restraints of justice, and even of humanity, in our treatment of them. In many nations, the female sex are reduced to like slavery, and are

> rendered incapable of all property, in opposition to their lordly masters. (EPM 3.19)

This passage seems to harbour both colonialist and anticolonialist sentiments. Without any argument, Hume asserts the superiority of Europeans over Indians and employs without qualification the ideological opposition of 'civilization' and 'barbarism', hence providing a clear instance of racial prejudice. He implicitly asserts the superiority of European nations with regard to the treatment of women, a trope also found in Montesquieu. Yet he also briefly critiques the unjust behaviour of European colonialists. Hume does not assert a similar disjunction between Europeans and Indians as that found between humans and animals. Rather, he diagnoses a temptation for the colonialists to imagine such a disjunction as being real. Whatever Hume's final word might be about European colonialism, it is clear that such an illusory disjunction can take place at the level of the imagination and have massive efficacy. A topology of passion is woven precisely from the operations of the imagination in associating ideas within each passion.

In his diagnosis of the factors that could bring about the death of a government, Hume mentions extensive conquest. In our critique of hylomorphic functionalism as an exercise of power, we argued that it harbours an intrinsic tendency to expansion. In my diagnosis, the problem with functionalist government is not so much a tendency to conquest as its easy alliance with colonialism; first the colonization of a national territory and then the colonisation of extraterritorial lands and peoples. In the Britain of Hume's day, much transatlantic trade took the form of a 'triangular trade' between Britain, West Africa and the American colonies, transporting slaves; American cash crops, such as sugar, rum and tobacco; and European manufactured goods.[2] If such commerce were to be encouraged by government, that government would necessarily have to confront the phenomenon of slavery. If government facilitated the slave trade, its actions would clearly have exacerbated an absolute disjunction between the European traders and consumers and those Africans who were enslaved.

Government is an illusion because there is no action upon action. Action cannot be transformed into a production with a distinct measurable result because its consequences are multidirectional and determined by its unfolding and locating within a topology of passions. In particular, governmental incentives and penalties are located as actions by one group upon other groups, sometimes at the expense of a third group. For the full argument to be made, each of these hypothetical scenarios would need to be modelled in the terms of a particular historical conjuncture, but at the theoretical level, we can diagnose a tendency: government may exacerbate existing discords and disjunctions within its topology of passions precisely because of its functional blindness to its own implication within that topology. In that blindness

resides its power, the power of reproducing a single-order image of its environment.

This is not the last word on government. There are some elements that remain outside the line drawn by this critical diagnosis, elements to be taken up and rescued for an alternative model of political action, drawn from the margins of Hume's texts: a model of democratic enthusiasm. There are four such elements, and I will just mention them here and then take them up in the following chapter.

A political action harnesses existing passions. There is a potential in this idea for careful attention to the singularity of those passions. To harness is no doubt not the right image; it is too ambiguous, as we remarked above. I prefer to think of artifice making use of natural force more along the lines of a surfboard tracing a line up and over the face of a wave or a sail slacking, billowing and filling to tautness as it catches the wind. The finest image would be one in which the catcher is part of the caught, like a laminar flow sped on in its curves by another flow.

It is clear that not all passions or all configurations of passion would be caught and amplified by a specific model of political action. Although some division and conflict may be unavoidable in the unfolding of any political action, some models of political action may enable the diminution of discord, hatred, contempt, humiliation and indifference. To guide such selectivity, the model would require a principle or criterion for action: a different criterion to that of 'whatever passions increase commerce'.

Hume briefly glimpses government as a machine for creating duration, for constructing common futures. Perhaps this idea can be developed in a different direction to that of building infrastructure for commerce.

Last element to recuperate: if political actions are to be grasped in their full implication within a topology of passions and not via a simple image, then Hume's introduction of consequentialist reasoning in his legitimation of government by utility bears further exploration. What happens when one explores the impact of an action beyond utility?

Chapter Eleven

Theory of Democratic Enthusiasm

In his *History of England*, Hume avoids constructing his own model of political action, reserving that task for his essays. He contents himself with occasional indications of the advantages of a written constitution and of a free and limited government. Nevertheless, he frequently gestures towards the existence of a countermodel of political action under the derogatory epithet of 'enthusiasm', as we saw at the very beginning of our first chapter. Recall his characterization of the spirit of the times that faced Charles I: "above all, the spirit of enthusiasm, being universally diffused, disappointed all the views of human prudence, and disturbed the operation of every motive, which usually influences society" (HEV, 221). Recall his portrait of enthusiasm as a passion that arises when a believer takes himself to be an instrument of divine will, enjoying direct communication with the heavens, without any mediation by the terrestrial authority of the church or government (HEV, 441).

In the *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, Hume introduces the schema of justice by caricaturing and dismissing its own countermodel, called 'enthusiasm', which promotes either a perfect distributive meritocracy or perfect equality, both of which lead to the "destruction of society" in his estimation. In this caricature, he connects enthusiasm to principles: "During the ardour of new enthusiasms, when every principle is inflamed into extravagance, the community of goods has frequently been attempted" (EPM 3.7). However, he also makes two interesting concessions. He recognizes that within a group in which mutual benevolence, friendship and generosity is intense, such as families or married couples, all "distinction of property" is gradually "lost and confounded amongst them" (EPM 3.7). Much later on in the chapter, he allows,

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> It may appear withal, that the rule of equality, as it would be highly *useful*, is not altogether impracticable; but has taken place, at least in an imperfect degree, in some republics, particularly that of Sparta; where it was attended, it is said, by beneficial consequences. Not to mention that the agrarian laws, so frequently claimed in Rome, and carried into execution in many Greek cities, proceeded, all of them, from a general idea of the utility of this principle. (EPM 3.25)

He then immediately makes a blanket statement concerning the impracticability of the idea of 'perfect equality' on the basis of common sense and of history. Yet he has forgotten that he has just made a concession concerning the real practicability and utility of 'imperfect equality'.

We have two clues to retain in our analysis of enthusiasm: intense benevolence in groups and the practicability of imperfect degrees of equality.

THE "ARRANT CONTRADICTION": COEXISTENCE OF MOMENTS OF TIME

In chapters 5 and 6, we saw how the ground of action is time: an action folds together two locations in time, equivocal attributions of agency and intention to an action insert it into different time frames and actions project their own temporal schemas at the level of their communication. An exploration of Hume's own analysis of our ideas of time is thus not out of place.

Hume devotes much of his analysis of time to resolving the ancient question of whether time is a continuum and thus infinitely divisible or rather consists of a succession of discrete and indivisible moments. He takes a position against the infinite divisibility of time, arguing from the limited capacity of the human mind to carry out such division. He claims that the rejection of the thesis of the infinite divisibility of time entails an alternative thesis according to which "each of [time's] parts succeeds another, and that none of them, however contiguous, can ever be coexistent" (T 1.2.2.4). Time thus consists of a linear and unidirectional sequence of indivisible and successive moments.

In this section of the *Treatise*, he makes two arguments against the infinite divisibility of both space and time. In the first, his aim is to show that it is impossible for a finite extension to contain an infinite number of parts, which it would have to if space were infinitely divisible:

> I first take the least idea I can form of a part of extension, and being certain that there is nothing more minute than this idea, I conclude, that whatever I discover by its means must be a real quality of extension. I then repeat this idea once, twice, thrice, etc, and find the compound idea of extension, arising from its repetition, always to augment, and become double, triple, quadruple, etc., till at last it swells up to a considerable bulk, greater or smaller, in

proportion as I repeat more or less the same idea . . . were I to carry on the addition [of parts] I clearly perceive, that the idea of extension must also become infinite. Upon the whole I conclude, that the idea of an infinite number of parts is individually the same idea with that of an infinite extension; that no finite extension is capable of containing an infinite number of parts, and consequently that no finite extension is infinitely divisible. (T 1.2.2.2)

He mentions in a footnote that someone put the obvious objection to him that he begins this argument by supposing what he is supposed to demonstrate: the existence of discrete parts; that is to say, the existence of ideas of indivisible minimal extension. What is supposed in the hypothesis of infinite divisibility is rather 'an infinite number of proportional parts', as his objector puts it. In the footnote, Hume rejects the distinction between 'proportional parts' and solid 'aliquot parts' as unimportant since neither can be smaller than the smallest part of extension our mind can conceive. But as Cantor shows a century and a half later and Kant already glimpsed, there is a difference between what the mind can imagine or figure and what it can conceive and formalize. What is more important here is that Hume sneaks an ontological claim into the premise of his argument: 'being certain that there is nothing more minute than this [least idea of extension], I conclude, that whatever I discover by its means must be a real quality of extension'. What he discovers is that the infinite addition of ideas of finite solid parts equates with the idea of an infinite extension. For this conclusion to hold of extension itself, the initial ontological claim must hold: 'what I discover is a real quality of extension'.

The second argument he makes against infinite divisibility also relies on a metaphysical claim – that "existence only belongs to unity" and that the being of numbers is a mere aggregate of this originally existent unit (T 1.2.2.3). One may well apply the term unity to a collection – "twenty men may be considered as a unity" as can "the whole earth . . . the whole universe" – but such unity is fictive, and the existence of such collective terms depends entirely on the original existence of the elementary unit. At this point, it seems that Hume should have followed Kant's strategy inspired by his own philosophy: he should have extended his critique of the metaphysical idea of causality to other metaphysical ideas, such as *unity*, and *real qualities*. Indeed, at the end of his analysis of time, he makes a perfectly disingenuous disavowal:

my intention was never to penetrate into the nature of bodies, or explain the secret causes of their operations. . . . I am afraid that such an enterprise is beyond the reach of human understanding, and that we can never pretend to know body otherwise than by those external properties that discover themselves to the senses. (T 1.2.5.26)

If this is really the case, then his two arguments against infinite divisibility cannot rely on metaphysical premises concerning the relationship between our ideas and 'real qualities of extension', or the relationship between unity and being. The latter is an argument belonging to Aristotle and Leibniz, not to an antimetaphysician. If Hume's arguments concern only, as he asserts, "the nature and causes of our perceptions, or impressions and ideas", then he would need to explain the necessary connection between the idea of unity and the idea of existence (T 1.2.5.26). Yet when he does consider our idea of existence, he is led to claim that "whatever we conceive, we conceive to be existent" (T 1.2.6.4). If we conceive of twenty men or the whole globe, we conceive it to be existent. There is no room in his analysis of our idea of existence for degrees of existence or some special privilege for a particular idea of unity. In short, on the basis of his associationism of ideas, he cannot make the kind of metaphysical claims that he employs in his arguments against the infinite divisibility of time.

Let's take another of his arguments, this time from the absurd. He claims that if one admits the infinite divisibility of time, "there would be an infinite number of co-existent moments, or parts of time; which I believe will be allowed to be an arrant contradiction" (T 1.2.2.4). He later remarks that coexistence is characteristic of the positioning of objects in space, not in time (T 1.2.3.8). In this argument, he does not show but simply claims that the overlapping or coexistence of durations is an impossibility.

We can adopt the opposite premise to Hume and hold that time is infinitely divisible. He shows that this premise directly entails the coexistence of parts of time. These parts must be infinitely divisible, and so they are not exclusive and impenetrable. The coexistence of such parts of time could thus well imply some kind of blurring or overlapping of different durations. Our tactic will be to take this as a hypothesis and see if we can flesh it out according to our model of actions occurring within a topology of the passions.

Recall that for Hume, action in itself does not form a solid basis for judgement because it is 'perishing', and it manifests the 'incompatible parts of time'. In his analysis of time, Hume says that "time cannot make its appearance to the mind, either alone, or attended with a steady unchangeable object, but is always discovered by some perceivable succession of changeable objects" (T 1.2.3.7). Take the judgement of an action as explored in chapter 5 and then historically instantiated in chapter 6 with parliament judging the king's actions and vice versa. When an action is judged, it is attributed an agent, an intention, a value and a discrete end. These attributions unavoidably insert the action within a certain time line relative to other actions by the same and neighbouring agents. The action itself is assigned a discrete temporality. As I argued in chapter 6, within a political conflict, each antagonistic party assigns different temporalities to the same actions. From

the standpoint of Charles Stuart, parliament was innovating in its attempts to legally secure civil liberties. From the standpoint of parliament, they were merely restoring privileges that had been granted in the Magna Carta and the statutes of Edward VI. From the standpoint of the judgement of action, we thus find blocks of time, or finite durations. In the depths of factional conflict, it is evidently quite difficult to find any 'coexistence' between these different durations, yet the latter is what our hypothesis requires.

Let's turn to the temporal schemas of action, sketched in chapter 6. In any communicative apparatus surrounding an action, the action is portrayed as an attempted stitch in time. It seeks to either return from an undesirable present to a desirable past or leap from an undesirable present to a desirable future. In chapter 6, we saw how parliament's remonstrances and protestations split the present into two time lines: that of the actual present and its continuation in which its griefs remain unaddressed and that of an ideal present and its future continuation in which those griefs would be properly addressed. The executive's apologies from necessity created a single line from the actual present to an ideal future secured by its actions. Each parliamentary vindication tried to construct a time line from an ideal past to the actual present. In the conflict between king and parliament and in the communication of their actions, we find a clash of incompatible time lines, joining different ideal and actual moments and assigning different authors to the realization of those time lines.

At the level of both the third-person judgement of action and the first-person communication of action, we find encounters of different durations and time lines: what has not yet emerged is any idea of coexistence. Perhaps we will find some clues to coexistence if we return to our earlier topological speculations concerning enthusiasm as location on an inclusive whole.

LOCATION ON A MAXIMAL ENVELOPE

When we elaborated our topology of passions on the basis of book 2 of Hume's *Treatise*, we briefly indulged in speculation concerning what it might mean for an individual or a group to be located on the whole. Examples were found in Hume's *History* of an individual being simultaneously located on the maximum and minimum ranks by passions of respect and contempt, such as Charles I during his trial, from the two standpoints of faithful royalists and faithful republicans. Simultaneous location on maximum and minimum ranks causes the whole order of ranks to appear. The people felt the sheer height of the fall from 'king' to 'man of blood' and 'traitor' because the whole had momentarily appeared. At this point, we made a distinction between a *differential* whole and an *inclusive* whole. In a differential whole, all social ranking takes place via a collective zero-sum

game. The ranks are based on finite resources – wealth, social prestige, access to services – and thus one is ranked high insofar as others are ranked low. The zero-sum game might not hold between two particular individuals – I could be promoted in my company, and you could remain at the same level in your company – but it would hold between masses of individuals: not everyone can be promoted, and some are demoted, whilst others are fired. In Adam Smith's best-case scenario in a commercial society, the economy is growing, and the interests of the merchants, wage earners and landlords converge: there is no zero-sum game because resources are increasing and everybody gains. However, Smith also identifies on the part of merchants a permanent tendency to distort public sphere deliberations in their favour. It is thus quite probable that their gains during a period of growth are proportionally far higher than those of the wage earners and landlords. The merchant's version of the pigs' slogan in *Animal Farm* would thus be: all are winners, but we win more than the others.

The return of a zero-sum game is not merely probable but also certain when a salient individual is raised by an envelope: he or she can be raised only insofar as other individuals form a neighbouring net of 'lesser objects' for the passions and are thus concomitantly sunk in that envelope. This led us to the following hypothesis: what if it were possible for an individual or group to be raised by an envelope without the converse, that is, other individuals and groups being lowered? What if it were possible to be located not on a differential but on an inclusive whole, that whole being an object that maximally increased our capacity to create and maintain relationships without curtailing the capacity of those to whom we are closely bound to create and maintain their own relationships? Let's pursue this hypothesis.

An object that raises us is an envelope; a maximal increase in our capacity for relationships implies a maximal envelope. In chapter 4, we defined a maximal envelope as one in which all other envelopes are sunk. In other words, the order of dependency between greater and lesser objects is transitive: an envelope is a greater object to which the imagination passes with ease from lesser related objects; that envelope in turn is a lesser related object with regard to an even greater object. The maximal envelope is simply the greatest object which puts a term to this process of subordination. Our most concrete example of a maximal envelope was a special type: a vortex. We found a vortex in the *History* in the shape of 'Cromwell': the proper name of an opaque intention organizing the direction and fate of all political actions in the country during the Republic. We can postulate the existence of vortexes in other historical periods, such as the name of a nation-state and the subsequent morale-boosting envelope of patriotism and nationalism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. With regard to religious enthusiasm, we can postulate the name of God as just such a vortex: an opaque intention that organizes the direction and fate of all actions. Another problem with relig-

ious enthusiasm is that the name of God organizes a differential ranking system wherein individuals are located on degrees of devoutness and faithfulness, whereas we are trying to construct a concept of an inclusive whole.

In *Anatomy of Failure*, I advanced the idea that an alliance is constructed through the exploration of the consequences of applying a principle within a new context. The principles I had in mind were the existence of a written "agreement of the people" as advanced by the Leveller agitators during the English revolution or even the principle of meritocracy as applied via the Self-denying Ordinance to an army in which senior positions had previously been acquired rents for noble families. What if a maximal envelope were neither a name nor an intention nor an institution but a principle?

There are a few clues in Hume's works that could help us explore this hypothesis. In his political essays, Hume recognizes that strong factions form around principles, such as equity and justice, but that faction also neglects ordinary morality (PE, 17). It appears that here we have a case of differential ranking: the political principle becomes all important for the members of the faction at the cost of demoting the importance of ordinary morality. Yet in such an example, everything depends on what exactly Hume was referring to by 'ordinary morality': he could merely be referring to habitual passional locations. In the *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, he briefly recognizes that justice is not just a set of rules for coordinating social actions but also an 'idea' (EPM 3.7). He also accords the status of 'idea' to 'perfect equality' as the enthusiast's principle which leads to the practice of a community of goods. In chapter 2, we saw that the local exercise of the natural virtues, such as benevolence, generosity and humanity, does not lead to differential ranking (T 2.2.10.8). At one point in the *Enquiry*, Hume renames these virtues 'moral principles', so here we have an interesting lead (EPM 5.18.39). Moreover, Hume distinguishes the impact of such principles from the functionalism of the schema of justice when he notes that each and every act of benevolence is immediately useful to the individuals concerned, whereas it is quite possible that a single act of justice proves of negative utility to the individuals concerned. Here, we find a commonplace basis for the idea of location on an inclusive whole, a location in which all are raised without others being lowered. In Hume's terms in the *Treatise*, acts of generosity form 'pure objects of love' and do not entail any location on differential ranks via pride and humility. Generosity is neither a finite nor a scarce resource. Some political principles are also nonfinite: there can be no end to experiences of 'liberty, equality and fraternity', with the proviso that none of these three terms can be detached from the others and that they must be applied together. There can be no end to 'commoning', or sharing, or solidarity in the form of '*tous ensemble*', in the words of the 1995 protests against the Juppé government's politics of austerity. An 'agreement of the people' as

carried around the country by the Leveller agitators required ratification and deliberation by all alike with no special privileges for any group.

What if Hume's objection to factions organized around principles held true and all such factions neglect ordinary morality and engage in irresolvable conflict, upsetting any chance of public peace? We can add our own objection: surely, the application of a principle to a new context is an exercise of hylomorphism, the principle providing the form and the context the matter. Furthermore, any moral philosopher worth her or his salt would also ask what criteria guide the choice of principle in the first place. [1]

To deal with Hume's objection, sometimes the application of a principle to a context is not pragmatic because it requires the sacrifice of interests or of other public goods or, indeed, of ordinary morality. It is often claimed that in extreme situations of economic crisis or civil war, the rigid application of principles, such as the respect of civil liberties and human rights, would put at risk the survival of the whole, of society. This is precisely why many modern constitutions have clauses that allow the suspension of civil liberties and of certain laws and political institutions for the duration of a state of emergency. It is the case that prudence calls for flexibility in the application of principles in all situations, not only in states of emergency. But the claims of prudence are made in the name of a higher principle: *salus populi suprema lex est*. Everything depends on the interpretation of 'salus' and 'populi'. Is the supreme law that of the salvation of the people, of their welfare or of their security? And then, how is the 'people' to be delimited? How exactly is a border to be flung around a people continually engaged in international trade? An individual can exercise prudence based on egotism alone, but when it comes to prudence as a properly political virtue, the very construction of a people depends on principles, on grand and complex ideas like 'welfare', 'security', 'salvation', 'law', 'peace' and 'the nation'. Hume cannot escape enumerating his own principles as we saw in chapter 7: a free press, a free and limited constitution, the rule of law and peace.

The other point against the pragmatic critique of principles is that too much flexibility on certain principles may well ensure the survival of society, but at what cost? Writing these lines two blocks from Maréchal Petain's apartment, I think of Vichy France. The cost can be the very identity of that whole. Aristotle asks the question, wherein lies the identity of the city-state? He answers that it lies in the constitution or regime, the organization and distribution of political offices. Perhaps we can be more precise: the identity of the political whole lies in the maintenance of certain principles. Sacrifice certain principles in the heat of action, and the whole is already lost, whatever remnants survive.

The second objection to the application of principles is that of hylomorphism. We already saw that the natural virtues of generosity and humanity do not work in the same way as the schema of justice: the utility of a generous

action is a direct result of its effect in a particular situation, whereas the utility of the schema of justice resides at the level of the whole system. This suggests that the application of a principle – and Hume calls generosity and humanity 'principles' – does not entail the imposition of general rules and the erasure of a context's singularity. The model I am suggesting requires enquiry into the specific consequences of a principle when it is applied to a particular context. Such enquiries would entail a decentralization of political activity.

The final objection restages Hume's entire enquiry into the principles of morals: on what basis would one choose one principle over another for location on a maximal envelope? What disqualifies nationalistic principles like 'America first' or fascistic principles like 'blood and soil'? They are disqualified by their differential location of individuals and groups on an order of ranks: some are raised – American manufacturers – and some are lowered – non-American manufacturers. In contrast, we are searching for principles that generate location on an inclusive whole, for maximal envelopes in which one group's rise does not entail another group's fall. In the terminology of *Anatomy of Failure*, we are interested in principles that allow bridges to be constructed between disjoint contexts. The challenge is to create commonality within a passionally differentiated society without simply imposing a privileged passional configuration and without fuelling the two forms of disjunction.

At this point, an enquiry opens up into the nature and identity of contemporary political principles: an enquiry begun here but to be completed elsewhere. A principle for action is not one of Hume's 'general ideas' or 'general principles' lying behind many phenomena to be discovered by his sciences of human nature, of politics or of political economy. A principle is a starting place from which other principles for action can be derived. On the basis of the initial principle of liberty, we can reconstruct Hume's own derivation of the principles of a just balance of the constitution; a limited constitution (PE, 61); freedom of the press (PE, 1–3, 261–62); rule by law, which in turn entails equality before the law and laws being known to everyone; and civil liberties (PE, 3, 63, 52). What initial principles could create commonality today?

A COSMOPOLITAN DEFINITION OF JUSTICE

In his dismissal of egalitarianism as impractical, Hume allows that "during the ardour of new enthusiasms, when every principle is enflamed into extravagance, the community of goods has frequently been attempted" (EPM 3,7). But what is the 'enflaming' of a principle if not its location as a maximal envelope? Everybody is located on the principle. In such a case, enthusiasm

creates commonality: the goods that lie in common need be neither material nor financial; they could be a set of ideas and experiences.

Say that justice consists in bringing about the inclusion of formerly disjunct groups upon the same whole; it involves the slow expansion of extended sympathy to groups previously located by indifference, contempt, degrees of hatred, humility, pity and pride. As Aristotle argues, true friendship as a form of solidarity holds the political body together: our move is to equate justice with friendship, two virtues that he distinguished. The task of justice is the gradual creation of a larger expanded group from disparate groups and individuals. This task will probably involve divisions, the emergence of discord and various negotiations of conflict, but the overall purpose is to pass through division so as to reduce disjunction. For this reason, justice requires accumulative work, work that will last.

By way of consequence, injustice lies in the fragmentation and splintering of groups through fuelling discord and disjunction. Justice is incompatible with any of the passional forms of disjunction, whatever mechanisms those forms involve. This criterion of justice may be employed to judge a particular government. A government is just, for instance, when it reduces the second form of discord, differential ranking, decreasing the depth and height of single-order social hierarchy.

Justice is not a schema of general rules coordinating social action but rather a passional operation. This idea of justice originates in the concept of an inclusive whole, itself derived from our construction of a topology of the passions on the basis of book 2 of the *Treatise*. There are, no doubt, many historical models of such an idea to be constructed through enquiries into specific experiences, such as that of the Jacobin *porte-parole* who rode out from Marseilles to far-flung villages, bringing news of the new legislation passed in Paris designed to meet their desires and grievances, translating that legislation into local dialects and using it to frame and adjudicate local conflicts.[2] My first model remains that of *Anatomy of Failure*: the writings and experiments of the Leveller agitators in the New Model Army during the English revolution of 1647 leading up to the great Putney Debates. The Leveller agitator experience is misrecognized and dismissed by Hume under his catchall derogatory labels of 'enthusiasm' or 'fanaticism'. But in these pages, we are finding a new meaning for enthusiasm on the basis of Hume's very own topology of passions.

CONSEQUENCES OF PRINCIPLES

Consequentialism is one of the elements we retained from Hume's legitimation of government by utility. Our first step, however, will be to detach it from calculations of utility.

The problem with political economy's calculations of utility is that measurements of variables mask the plasticity of utility. Utility is never an absolute quality of an action; it is always utility relative to an identified end, such as "peace, order and harmony" (EPM App1.3; EPM 5.45; EPM 5.17; EPM 6.17–20). Moreover, the interpretation of that end is also relative to a global historical state of society (EPM 3.12). For instance, due to historical constraints on the political imagination, a society could be judged to be quite peaceful whilst engaged in genocide in one of its colonies, and there could be order on its streets, but at the level of its agriculture, it could be standing on the brink of an environmental catastrophe. It is because utility is plastic that the historically determined interpretation of an end such as 'peace, order and harmony' requires an entire conceptual construction. When political economy makes these conceptual constructions, it turns utility into a narrow criterion by use of the ceteris paribus clause, thereby eliminating many factors as unimportant. In addition, as I argued previously, there is no basis for a comparative evaluation of the general utility of a different schema of justice, just a comparison with past states of that society according to a narrow set of variables. Finally, calculations of public utility allow governments to bypass deliberation and rapidly resolve conflicts of interest between different groups: one group's interests are sacrificed for the greater interest either because it is smaller than the other groups or because the damage to its interests is less than it would be to the other groups' interests if a given policy were adopted. All of these problems are sketched in our critique of functionalism. The crucial question is how to disengage consequentialist evaluation from functionalism and utility.

One clue lies in Hume's legitimation of the schema of justice or of government by their general utility. Each time, he hastily rejects the possibility of an individual judging the utility of particular judicial decisions, of particular politicians or of particular policies. He says that such individual judgements, based on individual interest alone, would lead to anarchy. But what if the judgement were made not by an individual but by a group – and by a group that was expanding?

The other clue lies in the object of consequentialist judgement. Calculations of utility always select the qualities of particular actions and their impact on a restricted set of measurable variables. In the application of a principle to a new context, the object of judgement is not the action itself but rather the impact of the principle within a concrete topology of passions: what patterns of concord and discord ensue? Any consequentialist judgement also requires an understanding of its material side, that is, of its own context of emergence and of its own material impact on the passions. These larger questions concern the relative locations of significant groups and eventually the dominant orders of rank and the undoing of single-order images. Certain applications of certain principles may – and others may not – lead to the

transformation of a topology along the lines of justice as defined above. Given the fact that these evaluations would be carried out by groups and that their material impact is far wider, it would be more appropriate to term them 'enquiries' than judgements.

A group expands by applying principles of commonality to new contexts and by investigating the consequences of such applications, understanding each context as a determinate topology of passion. As we saw at the end of chapter 6 on conflict, when an action – such as the application of a principle – unfolds in a context that is disjoint from the action's initial context, that action may be subject to equivocal attributions of agency, intention and value. Only the blind universalism of functionalism would seek to escape or erase this equivocity. One of the first consequences of a principle's application in a new context is that it will receive a different name and be attached to a different author and assigned different probable consequences. The action of putting a principle to work will thus become an equivocal action, and at the level of day-to-day practice, the principle will disorientate people more than orientate them, divide them more than bring them together, and not much will have been gained.

If two contexts are to actually be bridged by the application of a principle, the enquirer into the unfolding of that action must be capable of coming up with a mixed name, a common or *composite name*, that both sides can recognise and use.[3] When a principle is applied in a new context and no one manages to find a composite name for it across its different contexts, its application will remain equivocal, and forms of discord will emerge. In order to bridge different contexts, names must be found for previously equivocal actions, names that will last. In chapter 4, we encountered a peculiar configuration of appearance in which a proper name, Cromwell, became a vortex, that is, a maximal envelope concealing an opaque intention to which all political actions and events in the country were subordinated. A proper name as vortex shares with the composite name the property of emerging against a background of equivocity. In the case of the vortex, it is the equivocity of the intention once guessed at and projected by many actors. In the case of the composite name, it is the equivocity of the application of a principle to a new context. The key difference is that the composite name indexes an action motivated by an explicit principle. It can be publically explained, and its translations can be evaluated and contested from all sides. In contrast, the proper name as vortex indexes a single opaque intention whose interpretation is blind and whose contestation cannot be based on evidence.

Now that we have assembled maximal envelopes based on principles, a cosmopolitan definition of justice, consequentialist enquiries and the construction of common names for equivocal actions, we can return to the encounters of different blocks of time and the difficult question of coexistence.

THEOREM OF CONCORD

Hume imagines the sharing of duration in the *Treatise* in his account of extended sympathy whereby we rejoice in the pleasures and are saddened by the pains of another self or group. We share not only in the other's pleasure and pain but also in its rise or fall through time. This is what it means to share another's fortune, to use an ancient term. What is fortune but changing passional locations on other groups and individuals?

In intense forms of extended sympathy, when the other individual is fragile, only just beginning to bind him- or herself to others beyond you, it is as if your heart lives outside your body and keeps going for a walk, breath and pulse alone as guardrail.

Sympathy can bridge gulfs of time: we approve of the distant actions of individuals and groups with no direct utility to us or our society when we read a history or recall the actions of an ancient hero (EPM 7.4–29). These sentiments of sympathy cause durations to momentarily overlap. A more intense instance occurs when an individual or group initially locates itself via an extended sympathy with another individual or group. To begin to share in another's pains and pleasures is also to share in their recent history, the story of their rise and fall, and thus eventually in their long-term history. I inhabit a different duration to my friend, but through sympathy, our durations overlap, and I share not only in his history but also in his desires and fears for the future.

There was one last element to retain from Hume's model of government, and that was the idea of government being able to construct durations through the deferment and delay of future pleasure. Our hope was to develop another version of this idea than that of vast infrastructural projects for commerce dreamt of by Montesquieu, Hume and Smith. A principle, such as 'liberty, equality, fraternity', emerges in one context, and then it is applied in another. If through the examination of its consequences in that new context another name is devised for that principle, a name acceptable to denizens of both contexts, then the action of applying that principle will retrospectively have been given a common nature and a common time line. Each action of such a sort contributes to the emergence of a common duration between two formerly discordant or even disjoint contexts. The coexistence of at least two blocks of time is thus built up composite name by composite name, where those names index what has happened in the unfolding of principles.

Who can act, and on what grounds? We can act on the grounds of extending principles of commonality across formerly disjunct contexts. Who is right about what is to be done? We find the right path by constructing composite names for the application of those principles in different contexts. It is the accumulation of such composite names that will show us the way forward. What is it to succeed or to fail? On the basis of the cosmopolitan idea

of justice, to succeed is to maximally expand a group through extended sympathy, joining it to previously disjunct groups and individuals. To fail is to watch discord and disjunction grow from the sidelines. If you and I split now, were we ever united, and to what end? The answer to the question of alliance requires a further enquiry into the way in which we are united by enthusiasm.

The title of this chapter refers to 'democratic enthusiasm', yet there has been no discussion of democracy as a constitutional form or a value. This is an underdetermined part of our explorations, but at this late stage, we can glimpse that democracy might be understood not as an arrangement of political office but rather as the shape of a particular kind of practice. Democracy is not a term that occurs often in Hume's *History*. When it does appear, it is in its most pejorative acceptation as a configuration of passion, as mob rule, the swirl of furious apprentices and journeymen around Westminster goading the popular party in its innovatory zeal, London as a whole overrun by a "generalized contagion" of passion (HEV, 295; HEVI, 399). But there are two other mentions of democracy which approach our own conception of democratic enthusiasm. Shortly before denouncing the popular torrents of passion outside Westminster, Hume remarks that the House of Commons acted as if it were a "pure democracy", unbound by the House of Lords or by the king and animated by its enthusiasm for principles of 'religion' and 'liberty' and the protection of the constitution (HEV, 293–94).

According to our idea of enthusiasm as location on a principle as a maximal envelope, the actual work of organizing a collective takes place through the application of that principle in formerly discordant or disjoint contexts. Such application entails enquiries into the consequences of the unfolding of the principle in a new context. If that context were initially discordant or disjoint with regard to the principle's initial context, its application risks being received as an imposition, and an equivocal action will emerge with rival attributions. However, if enquiries are carried out and adjustments are made all the way up to finding a common name for the application of the principle, a name that works across both contexts, then the enquiry has the power to create common durations. This is the kind of power that can be wielded by a people. The enquiries build up a transmissible collective memory of the actual efficacy of the principles within different fields of social endeavour: public health, education, transport, housing, communication, migration and the environment. As such, the enquiries create a local space for collective deliberation.

One of the virtues of consequentialist enquiry into the reception of actions is that it starts by accepting that intentions are always attributed to actions and by holding, at the same time, that no attribution completely determines the meaning of an action. For this reason, there can be no initial ontological hierarchy between exclusive agents and recipients of action, with a dichoto-

mous distribution of activity and passivity. The actors involved in an action depend on the attributions which actually take place, and the latter may be multiple, going far beyond the Aristotelian categories of agent and recipient. Deliberation becomes properly collective when the enquiry into the impact of a principle recognizes those multiple attributions and the ensuing equivocity of the action in question. People who carry out an enquiry find themselves endowed with a collective power, a power they can subsequently wield. This power is none other than the ability to treat and resolve equivocity.

It just so happens that here and there in Hume's writings, we find small gestures of support for elements of democratic enthusiasm. In his political essays, he allows that faced with the zero-sum games of faction, we may need to adopt our own zeal, a zeal for the public good (PE, 14). Sometimes he dismisses enthusiasm as leading directly to the disorder and licence of revolution: "The sacred boundaries of the laws being once violated, nothing remained to confine the wild projects of zeal and ambition. And every successive revolution became a precedent for that which followed it" (HEV, 492). Yet as we saw in chapter 7, he is forced to admit – on consequentialist grounds – that there has been such a thing as a 'good' revolution in which excesses of zeal led not to continual disorder but rather to the greatest order. He writes of parliament's irregular election of William of Orange to the British throne, "when the public good is so great and so evident as to justify the action, the commendable use of this licence causes us naturally to attribute to the *parliament* a right of using farther licences" (T 3.2.10.18). The lesson to be taken from this admission on Hume's part is that, given success, our minds can acquire new habits. Hume even comes round to recognizing a foundational role for the democratic enthusiasm of the puritans in the first half of the seventeenth century:

> It was to this sect [the puritans], whose principles appear so frivolous and habits so ridiculous, that the English owe the whole freedom of their constitution. Actuated by that zeal which belongs to innovators, and by the courage which enthusiasm inspires, they hazarded the utmost indignation of their sovereign. (HEIV, 146)

What does it mean to be capable of hazarding the utmost indignation of one's sovereign, whatever sovereign power that may be? Cornet Barnet Joyce, tailor by profession, arrested Charles Stuart, king by supposed divine election, and placed him in the custody of the New Model Army. When the king asked him by what warrant, he gestured to the five hundred cavalry behind him. This has widely been taken as the point in the English revolution at which military force overtook political authority in the determination of what was to be done, a moment in which Thrasymachus laughs at us again, hapless heirs of Socrates. But what if Barnet Joyce were not indicating the cavalry-

men as a show of force but simply indicating a group of people, a *demos* united by extended sympathy and the pursuit of principles such as the 'settlement of the war' and the 'agreement of the people'?

At this point, I must borrow an idea from a friend, Bernard Aspe, and his most recent book, *Les fibres du temps* (*The Fibers of Time*).[4] His work parallels and overlaps with mine in many respects, especially in his investigation of the possibility of a 'common time' and of collective action. He argues that when we actually belong to a common action, we are not merely ourselves but also each 'more-than-one' (*plus qu'un*). Within our exploration of a Humean theory of democratic enthusiasm, to be more-than-one implies three things. First of all, for a self to be located on an inclusive whole, raised by a principle without others being lowered, and located long enough to enquire into the consequences of that principle's unfolding across different contexts, that self must be located not only by the passions but also by a judgement of being. This was precisely the role of those eschatological claims on the part of the soldiers of the New Model Army, claims that Hume dismissed as fanatical alternative principles to the schema of justice in the *Enquiry*: 'dominion is founded on grace', and 'the saints alone inherit the earth' (EPM 3.23).[5] A self can be repeatedly located on a maximal envelope only if a habit is developed of seeing that self *as part of a whole*. A judgement of being in Hume's philosophy is nothing but a repeated association of ideas, a new habit.

The second implication of being more-than-one is an abandon of previous opinions of the right to rule and of property in government. Recently, a French businessman told me there had to be a middle ground between the inertia of France's socialist system and the ravages of America's unbridled capitalism and that France had a chance to reach that middle ground since 'Macron will fix things for us'. His belief in Macron's capacities was touching. Yet this much is already evident in Hume: in the modern epoch, a government's power comes down to making people believe in its capacity, regardless of the real effects of past policies. A politician on the rise is one in whose capacities we believe. In contrast, to become more-than-one in a democratic practice of enquiry is to give up all belief in the Other's power and capacity to fix things. In day-to-day life, one can trust others to whom one is bound by principle and practice, but no longer the Other. To become more-than-one is also to abandon all fixations on single-order images of our topology of passions: there is no one located solely on the maximum rank of a single and exclusive hierarchy. The undoing of functionalist government has already revealed the many parallel orders at work in society. A democratic enquiry into the consequences of principles requires an embrace of the as-yet-hesitant but still-surfacing power that we already share with the friends of our principles. To become more-than-one is to destroy our belief in the Other's capacity so as to liberate ourselves and our new beliefs in our own

nascent capacities. Gradually, enquiry by enquiry, a people could come to imagine and own its wide reach and cohesion across different contexts.

If sympathy for downfall lands us in confusion, let's have done with it and learn sympathy for uprise, the uprise of our friends: it may well land us in determination.

The third implication of becoming more-than-one in enquiries into the consequences of principles is a remodelling of the question of alliance. From reading, 'If you and I split now, were we ever united, and to what end', it will read, 'You and I are now joined, but in what, and to what effect?' Hume writes, "As each action is a particular individual event, it must proceed from particular principles, and from our immediate situation within ourselves, and with respect to the rest of the universe" (T 3.2.6.9). This is the answer to the question of alliance! We join together by following the life of our actions with respect to 'the rest of the universe' or, in more modest terms, with respect to a neighbouring region in our topology.

According to Hume's functionalist model of government, to govern is to act upon people's actions by placing objects of pleasure and pain so as to destroy all obstacles to the liberation of the commercial passions. According to our construction of democratic enthusiasm as a model of political action, to act is to incarnate and translate – to *trans-carnate* – a idea of commonality.

The historical consequence of our construction of democratic enthusiasm is as surprising as it is simple. Since the very outset of modernity, there have been other forms of efficacy than government. They were not quite absent but were swept aside and pushed to the margins of those very works of philosophy that invented the modern idea of government. There was – and there still is – an entire domain of coherent collective action that may well have been glimpsed only to be swiftly repressed by Hobbes, Locke and then Hume: it was also directly conceptualized and practised by people such as the Leveller agitators during the English revolution. Their pamphlets should be on the reading lists of all introductions to modern politics and political philosophy.

Democratic enthusiasm is just one of these other forms of efficacy, but it does have a distinctive trait. In the exploration of the consequences of principles within formerly disjoint contexts, democratic enthusiasm builds bridges between different topologies of passion. When extended sympathy develops between groups of people who were previously located via discord and disjunction, then a process of equalization can occur between parallel orders, across different hierarchies. As Hume notes in the *Enquiry into the Principles of Morals* – albeit with the restricted example of property – we cannot hope for flat equality within the same topology of passion. That would presume the annihilation of the basic operations of pride and humility, respect and contempt, passions which we can't avoid, provoked as they are by the slightest of occasions, such as glancing at the mirror, passions indexed on our

own intimate hierarchies. But what we can hope for is an escape from the fixation on single-order images of our topology, an escape that takes place through our location on multiple hierarchies, within multiple orders of intensity. We can hope for processes of equalization between the hierarchies of formerly disjunct contexts – this is the nature of justice – such that no single-order image is ever used again to crush a people's capacity to maintain and create relationships.

Coda

Of Metabolics

At a certain point in any philosophy that deals with politics, a moment of doubt sets in, a moment of reality testing in Freud's terms, a return to the head holding of Plato's *Seventh Letter*. I think I have come to the end of this book, but questions bother me. What exact principles should be chosen for a democratic enthusiasm? What kind of organization does all this imply if the party form is dead? If ever that organization were to gain power, what institutions would sustain it? The doubt does not vanish when I tell myself that all these questions will form the object of future enquiries. It does not vanish because behind it lies a fear bound not to the detail of political organization and institutions but rather to the possibility of defeat or victory. But what is defeat or victory today? Hume writes in "My Own Life" that his *History* met with enmity from all sides and then worse with indifference. Will a defeat of democratic enthusiasm come in the shape of enmity or indifference? Then victory will come in the shape of friendship and involvement.

But enough of fantasy. If there is one lesson to be learnt from our topology of passions, it is that we are always located in a few groups, surrounded by a few friends, from some of the most unlikely places, via local translations and applications, and it is quite possible that by writing or reading these lines, a few more friends will come along, and so we could become more-than-one. Besides, in a topology of passion, there is never pure enmity and indifference: the web of passions is simply too complicated, too supple, too variable, as any enquiry into its history shows. Victory and defeat are degrees of a dynamic, not states of being, far less permanent locations on a hierarchy. This dynamic implies the encounter of rival efficacies, but we need to learn

to recognize different forms of that encounter beyond the old dualistic habit of faction and the mutual disqualifications of, say, parliament and king.

How might we theorize the encounters of many forms of efficacy? Neither political economy nor ecology nor any variant of systems theory answers this challenge since they all dogmatically posit a universal form of efficacy. We need a new method, a new kind of enquiry, perhaps even a new discipline.

The target of this new method would be any idealist theory of efficacy, whether advanced via univocal ontological criteria for delimiting the being of an action and distinguishing it from that of an event, via univocal derivations of normative criteria from universal and unchanging entities such as 'practical reason', via univocal criteria for success in terms of the realization of one agent's intentions at the expense of all others or via univocal criteria for the distribution of activity and passivity, even of victory and defeat. The name for this kind of enquiry will be *metabolics*, from the ancient Greek *meta*, for 'after' or 'about,' and *bolein*, for 'change'. The object of metabolics is any point in collective practice at which a change is marked and evaluated in relationship to other changes, that is, differentiated from a set of alternative changes with different evaluations. The idea behind this new kind of enquiry is that by its means, we may be able to identify forms of grace in which, somehow, in Socrates' terms, a 'fit' occurs not only between an action and its environment but also between several actions, each forming an environment for the other, much like the race down St Kilda Road that I survived and wrote down before even understanding the need for this book:

> I try to equalize the pedal strokes, and breathe evenly, and I pass a rider on a yellow bike swerving out around him and back in front just in time to see the headlights of a car nosing out of a driveway and I swing my weight over to the left and swerve again, but wider around the car and back in to then sight ahead of me three other riders curving down St Kilda Rd in the early morning, arcs of spray welting up from their tread and I speed to catch and pass them but they have guessed my game and put their heads down and push harder so we are racing, wheel on wheel, bypassing the jammed up traffic and the bored executives tapping their hands on the steering wheel in rhythm to a golden oldie, dreaming of Saturday nights buried so far in the past they can't remember the name of the band playing the night they stage-dived whilst we on the bikes are dodging cars and trams and as we race a scarlet car stands planted in our way and I swing right and the others swing left, but it is a longer swing, and this is a chance to overtake so I dig the tyre into the bitumen and coming clear of the car, in sight of each other, I am just ahead of the last rider and we mesh back into single file, each rider zipping into the line, and I blink sweat out of my eyes, and gasp deep breaths of the Melbourne morning, and see, as if from outside but still from the inside, our own common grace, skating on the edge of broken limbs and metal, swerving blind to join together again, the obstacle passed, each wheel reconciled, when it all could have gone so wrong, and we

are swallows darting in and out of the trees blinded then sighted, blocked then opened by paths we make as we discover them, free to peel away and take the other road but choosing to stay so as to goad each other to speed, eating up lengths of road, chasing spans of tarmac, fleeing the walker's weight, the car's combustion, joining road, kerb, cars and trees in each instant, our paths weave a braid that appears to disappear, racing not to outdo but to live in the now, handlebar shifting in our hands, blood singing through flesh, weight poised in the air, all concerns forgotten in a kiss of body, air and metal.

The new discipline will rewrite Aristotle's *Physics* with one purpose in mind: to think the unfolding and intermeshing of many forms of change, to think the encounter of different kinds of efficacy. Metabolics is not a supplement but rather a first philosophy in a place where no one and nothing comes first.

Notes

1. FROM TORRENTS TO PATTERNS

1. David Hume, volume 5 of *History of England: From the Invasion of Julius Caesar to the Revolution in 1688*, 6 vols., based on the edition of 1778 (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 1985), 518. All subsequent references to volume 5 of the *History* will be signalled in the body of the text by the abbreviation 'HEV' followed by a page number, except when they are too numerous. For volume 6, the abbreviation 'HEVI' will be employed and for volume 4, the abbreviation 'HEIV'.

2. HEVI, 348, 346, 375, 492, 356, 214, 269.

3. HEV, 284, 113; HEVI, 58, 135, 214, 269, 492.

4. HEV, 29–30, 58, 59, 86, 106, 109, 114, 125, 128, 135, 142, 143, 163, 166, 181, 212, 221, 323, 377, 410, 416, 442, 493, 514, 548.

5. David Hume, *The Clarendon Edition of the Works of David Hume: A Treatise of Human Nature: Vol. 1. Texts*, ed. David Fate Norton and Mary Norton (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007). All references to this edition will be indicated by a 'T' followed by the book, chapter, and paragraph number in the body of the text. For the most part, I have used a selected edition of the essays: David Hume, *Political Essays*, ed. K. Haakonssen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). All references to this edition will be marked by the abbreviation 'PE' in the body of the text followed by a page number. For essays missing from that edition, such as "On the populousness of ancient nations", I used David Hume, *Essays: Moral, Political and Literary* (New York: Cosimo Press, 2007), abbreviated as 'EMPL'.

6. "But it is an observation, suggested by all history, and by none more than by that of James and h**i**s successor, that the religious spirit, when it mingles with faction, contains in it something supernatural and unaccountable; and that, in its operations upon society, effects correspond less to their known causes than is found in any other circumstance of government" (HEV, 67).

7. HEVI, 27; HEV, 274, 131; HEVI, 37, 123, 438, 69, 78; HEV, 363.

8. Cf. "Besides the military operations between the principal armies, which lay in the centre of England, each county, each town, each family almost, was divided within itself; and the most violent convulsions shook the entire kingdom . . . the fire of discord spread into every quarter" (HEV, 240–41).

9. David Hume, 'My Own Life', in *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, ed. S. Buckle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 218–19. All subsequent references to this edition will be signalled in the body of the text by the abbreviation 'EHU' followed by a page number.

10. HEV, 51, 61, 64, 86, 102, 137.

11. HEV, 126, 166, 174, 201, 206, 207, 208, 221, 271, 274, 303, 306, 372, 373, 375, 390, 393, 428, 457, 486, 523, 538, 586.

12. HEV, 411, 500; HEVI, 13; HEV, 502; HEVI, 40, 13.

13. HEV, 305; 252; 378, 414; 322; HEVI, 50; 518; HEV, 323, 376.

14. HEV, 16, 275, 273, 289–90, 297, 252, 365.

15. Thus driving Spinoza, for whom this was a traumatic event, to turn the fear of the multitude into the rock around which the analysis of politics turns. See Étienne Balibar, *Spinoza politique: Le transindividuel* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2018), 73. Cf. Balibar, *La Crainte des masses* (Paris: Galilée, 1997).

16. HEVI, 354, 356, 369–70.

2. PASSION LOCATES THE SELF

1. The term 'envelope' is loosely inspired by Alain Badiou's use of the term as a topological operation in his logics of appearance based on a particular interpretation of category theory. See Alain Badiou, *Logiques des mondes* (Paris: Seuil, 2006), 175–77.

2. Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, act IV, scene 3 (Arden Shakespeare, 3rd ser.) (London: Thomson Learning, 2006).

3. Apart from being inspired by *Hamlet*, this section also takes its key move from Alain Badiou's use of a maximum and a minimum in the transcendental order of intensities of appearance in a given world. See Badiou, *Logiques des mondes*, 165–84.

3. FROM PATTERNS TO CONFIGURATIONS OF APPEARANCE

1. "A man, who, by any injury received from another, is very much discomposed and ruffled in his temper, is apt to find a hundred objects of hatred, discontent, impatience, fear, and other uneasy passions; especially, if he can discover these subjects in or near the person, who was the object of his first emotion". Hume, *The Clarendon Edition of the Works of David Hume: A Dissertation on the Passions*, ed. Tom L. Beauchamp (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 8.

4. WHAT DOES THE OTHER WANT?

1. HEVI, 126, 131, 134, 247nG.

2. Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1449b36.

3. HEVI, 29; HEV, 498; HEVI, 6; HEV, 541.

4. Gilles Deleuze, *Empirisme et subjectivité* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1953), 15.

5. LOCATING ACTION

1. Jorge-Luis Borges, *Labyrinths* (London: Penguin, 1970), 269.

6. CONFLICT AND MODELS OF POLITICAL ACTION

1. HEV, 348, 352, cf. 357, 359.
2. HEV, 191, 271, 321, 323, 358, 362, 366, 368.
3. HEV, 174, 360, 364, 378–79, 384, 438, 503.
4. HEV, 173, 176–79, 207–8, 245.
5. HEV, 390, 399, 420, 430, 451, 487.
6. HEV, 42, 59, 85, 91–92, 127–28, 160–61, 179, 194.
7. HEV, 165, 173, 174, 201–2.
8. For a construction of the concept of equivocal action on the basis of Locke, see Oliver Feltham, *Anatomy of Failure: Philosophy and Political Action* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 121–30; Oliver Feltham, 'On the State as a Kind of Action', in *Badiou and the State*, ed. Dominik Finkelde (Munich: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2017), 171–92; or Oliver Feltham, 'L'action équivoque', in *La genèse du transcendantal: Conditions et hypothèses*, ed. Jacinto Lageira and Anna Longo (Paris: Editions Mimesis, 2017).
9. This is a point I owe to Jessica Whyte and a timely objection she made to an early paper on Hume at the December 2017 annual conference of the Australasian Society for Continental Philosophy at Deakin University.

7. THE PROBLEM OF FACTION AND THREE PARTIAL SOLUTIONS

1. PE, 23, 54–55, 61–63; PE 5, 181–82, 191.
2. On this question, see Duncan Forbes, *Hume's Philosophical Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 184–85.
3. James A. Harris, *Hume: An Intellectual Biography* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 346.
4. J. Y. T. Greig, ed., *Letters of David Hume: Vol. 1. 1727–1765.* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932), 237.
5. Alain Badiou, *Logiques des mondes* (Paris: Seuil, 2006), 421–70.
6. Hume, 'My Own Life', in *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 218–19.

8. SCHEMA OF JUSTICE, ITS CRITIQUE, AND POLITICAL ECONOMY

1. For a careful introduction to this question, see S. K. Wertz, 'Hume, History and Human Nature', in *Hume as Philosopher of Society, Politics, and History*, ed. D. Livingston and M. Martin (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 1991), 77–92.
2. Elinor Ostrom, *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
3. Nigel Leask, *Robert Burns and Pastoral: Poetry and Improvement in Late Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 24–26.
4. Montesquieu, *L'esprit des lois*, bk. 20, chap. 2 (Paris: Gallimard, 1995), 610.
5. Didier Deleule, 'Anthropologie et économie chez Hume: La formation de la société civile', in *Hume et le concept de la société civile*, ed. C. Gautier (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2001), 27.
6. James A. Harris, *Hume: An Intellectual Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 274.

7. Oliver Feltham, *Anatomy of Failure: Philosophy and Political Action*. London: Blooms-bury, 2013), 208–9, 157–59.

8. Jacques Derrida, *De la grammatologie* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1967).

9. Didier Deleule, ibid.

9. THEORY OF GOVERNMENT

1. Immanuel Kant, 'Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View', in *Kant: Political Writings*, ed. Hans Reiss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970).

2. I term Hume's account of political obligation and government 'practical' or 'pragmatic'; the use of the latter term is not a reference to pragmatist philosophy. Duncan Forbes – in Donald Winch's summary – interprets Hume's approach to government as "sceptical, detached, and comparative". See Donald Winch, *Adam Smith's Politics: An Essay in Historiographic Revision* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 39.

3. On this matter see Andrew S. Skinner, 'Hume's Principles of Political Economy', in *The Cambridge Companion to David Hume* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 412.

4. David Hume, *Essays: Moral, Political and Literary* (New York: Cosimo Press, 2006), 399.

5. Montesquieu, *L'Esprit des lois*, bk. 21, chap. 8 (Paris: Gallimard, 1995), 652–55.

10. CRITIQUE OF GOVERNMENT

1. On the distinction between a theoretical syntax and its models drawn from various semantic fields, such as a history, see Oliver Feltham, *Alain Badiou: Live Theory* (London: Continuum, 2007).

2. See the exhibits of the International Museum of Slavery in Liverpool.

11. THEORY OF DEMOCRATIC ENTHUSIASM

1. As my colleague Julian Culp asked in his review of my *Anatomy of Failure: Philosophy and Political Action* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013). See *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews*, 17 April 2014.

2. See Jacques Guilhaumou, *L'avènement des portes-parole de la république* (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 1998).

3. On the creation of composite or common names, see Oliver Feltham, 'On the State as a Kind of Action', in *Badiou and the State*, ed. Dominik Finkelde (Munich: Nomos Verlagsge-sellschaft, 2017), 171–92.

4. Bernard Aspe, *Les Fibres du temps* (Paris: Editions Nous, 2018).

5. Tom Beauchamp, editor of the *Enquiry*, adds references for such principles to the fol-lowing passages from the Bible: Rom. 5:17, 6:14; Matt. 5:5; Ps. 37:9–11; Isa. 57:13; 1 Cor. 6:2; Dan. 7:27. The interpretation of such passages is evidently wide open.

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