

Mary Wollstonecraft's "Love of Mankind" and Cosmopolitan Suffering

For scholars of cosmopolitanism, the publication of Immanuel Kant's *Zum ewigen Frieden: Ein philosophischer Entwurf* (1795) signals the emergence of two important insights: first, the earth as a limited space plays a key role in the notion of cosmopolitan justice; second, justice associates a cosmopolitan order with critique, specifically a critique of imperialist abuse. References to the earth were absent in Kant's *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose* (1784) and eleven years elapsed before he stated in *Zum ewigen Frieden (Toward Perpetual Peace)* every individual's right to "present oneself to society by virtue of the right of common possession of the surface of the earth."¹ In January 1796, ten months prior to the English publication of *Zum ewigen Frieden*, Mary Wollstonecraft published *A Short Residence in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark* (1796), the travel memoir reflecting her experience while journeying in Scandinavia from June to October 1795. Here, Wollstonecraft predicates her view of mankind's future upon the resources of the earth and articulates a critique of the Enlightenment faith in universal improvement. By both endorsing the progress of mankind and calling it into question in the name of environmental exhaustion and human suffering, Wollstonecraft ushers a moment into Enlightenment cosmopolitan philosophy in which cosmopolitanism constitutes its own inescapable critique. In this essay, I

¹ Immanuel Kant, *Toward Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*, in *Toward Perpetual Peace and Other Writings on Politics, Peace, and History*, ed. Pauline Kleingeld, trans. David Colclasure (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 82. Thomas Beddoes reviewed *Zum ewigen Frieden* in August 1796 two months prior to the English translation: Thomas Beddoes, "Kant: Zum ewigen Frieden," *The Monthly Review* 20 (1796), 486-90.

contrast Kant's preoccupation with questions of property and hostility with Wollstonecraft's demand that the cultivation of "affection for the human race" be the "growth of each particular soil, and the gradual fruit of the ripening understanding of the nation, matured by time, not forced by an unnatural fermentation."² I argue that Wollstonecraft's commitment to cosmopolitan improvement reflects the kind of localism that proceeds from a planetary view of concrete, organically related singularities out of which all living matter weaves its existence.

Affinities and divergences between Kant's and Wollstonecraft's evocations of the earth give reason to read *A Short Residence* as a template of the planetary subjectivity that Gayatri Spivak proposes against the model of global agency. Spivak coins planetarity to ward off at least two tendencies prevalent in the schemes and rhetoric of globalization: first, the imposition of homogenizing practices, the same system of exchanges, on every spot of the globe, "that abstract ball covered in latitudes and longitudes, cut by virtual lines."

Homogenization, enabled by the very abstractness that the image of the globe infuses into our relationship to the world, "allows us to think that we can aim to control it."³ To counteract a relation to the earth as a manageable entity is the second reason behind the invention of the concept of planetarity. Thinking of the planet as manageable represents the large scale of thinking of the Other as manageable and to be managed. Planetarity counters such an ethos by positing a different relationship to alterity, and the planet itself, a relationship that cannot be resolved dialectically, but must be lived through (*erlebt*), while alterity incessantly holds

² Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark*, ed. Richard Holmes (London: Penguin, 1987), 198. Hereafter cited in the text as *Residence*. Unless signalled, italics for emphasis are mine.

³ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Death of a Discipline* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 72.

us and casts us away. A shift of metaphor, then, from the globe to the planet is at work, so that we start perceiving ourselves as “planetary subjects rather than global agents, planetary creatures rather than global entities.”⁴ Spivak allots to this self-perception the ability to change our approach to alterity: “if we planet-feel, planet-think [...] ’our other’ – everything in the unbounded universe – cannot be the self-consolidating other, an other that is a neat and commensurate opposite of the self.”⁵ This “peculiar mindset” in which “we must persistently educate ourselves” epitomises a cosmopolitan education that trains us into a non-oppositional relation to all that presents itself to us in the shape of otherness.⁶ It can also engender, as we will see through Wollstonecraft’s *A Short Residence*, a training against the grain of the Kantian view of human “unsociable sociability.”⁷ For Kant, “unsociable sociability” is an innate but beneficial evil, while Wollstonecraft would rather ascribe it to the effects of a partial civilization. Hence, the more a human society progresses, the more a “moral love of mankind” fosters planetary consciousness.⁸ For Wollstonecraft, as for Spivak, a movement towards planetarity rejects the amenability of the planet. On the contrary, as this essay concludes, planetary consciousness inhabits a deep-seated awareness of the earth as a

⁴ Spivak, *Death of a Discipline*, 73.

⁵ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “World Systems and the Creole,” *Narrative* 14.1 (2006): 108.

⁶ Spivak, *Death of a Discipline*, 73.

⁷ Immanuel Kant, “Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Perspective,” in *Toward Perpetual Peace and Other Writings on Politics, Peace, and History*, ed. Pauline Kleingeld, trans. David Colclasure (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 14

⁸ Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Historical View of the French Revolution*, in *Political Writings*, ed. Janet Todd (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 294.

potentially unmanageable living organism that predates, survives the individual and ultimately thwarts the *telos* of progress.

This essay is organized in three parts: the first considers the place of the nation and, in particular, of vernacular literature as “the growth of each particular soil, and the gradual fruit of the ripening understanding of the nation” in the progressivist scheme that determines the future of the earth (*Residence* 198). Second, I show that such emphasis on vernacular literature serves the expansion of sociability and moral love which for Wollstonecraft are the determinants of mankind’s progress. This is a conviction, I conclude, that distinguishes Wollstonecraft’s empathy-based from Kant’s justice-based cosmopolitics, which draws on but is also distinct from Adam Smith’s model of sympathetic identification in *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759). Empathy, triggered by Wollstonecraft’s planetary understanding of the earth as an exhaustible but also recalcitrant organism, heralds a cosmopolitan critique based on suffering that faces the exhaustion of the Enlightenment idea of progress itself.

National Character, Vernacular Literature and Mankind’s Progress

Wollstonecraft’s reflections on national formations are closely linked to the idea of home called forth by her guest status in Northern Europe. Deliberating about home anywhere on earth, Wollstonecraft sees a chasm opening between human societies that have obtained and deployed scientific knowledge and societies marked by this lack. After weeks of travelling in Scandinavia, relief spreads as she approaches Germany, for her, the gateway to the scientifically developed part of Europe: “I am now convinced [the virtues of a nation] bear an exact proportion to their scientific improvements” (173). Europe appears to Wollstonecraft fragmented, immersed in an unequal civilizing process rather than the consolidated agent of

civilization in the world. However, her concluding words in *Residence* exude guarded satisfaction: despite dismal local circumstances such as Swedish poverty or Danish feudal slavery, “the gigantic evils of despotism and anarchy have in a great measure vanished before the meliorating manners of Europe” (198). This final thought looks forward to “the ideal of Europe as a harmonious system of balancing states” that Karen O’Brien considers to be the core commitment of Enlightenment cosmopolitan history.⁹

With its synchronic and diachronic comparative method, its focus on the physical features of the earth as well as their impact on a people’s trade, industry and political acumen, Wollstonecraft’s *A Short Residence* contributes to the kind of world knowledge (*Weltkenntnis*) dubbed by Kant “*physical, moral and political geography*” that anticipates his later pieces on cosmopolitan right, and his version of conjectural history. As Kant glosses the utility of such study: “The comparison of human beings with each other, and the comparison of the human today with the moral state of the human in earlier time, furnishes us with a comprehensive map of the human species.”¹⁰ The taxonomy matters to Kant, who specifies that this kind of knowledge is not scholastic philosophy, but “a type of cosmopolitan philosophy” and therefore useful to the world. Utility is of paramount value to Wollstonecraft, who, with eyes set on the best service her travel account can offer to readers, draws a line between other travellers’ nationalist orientation and the planetary orientation she borrows and develops from the progressivist model of Scottish conjectural history. Against

⁹ Karen O’Brien, *Narratives of the Enlightenment: Cosmopolitan History from Voltaire to Gibbon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 2.

¹⁰ Immanuel Kant, “M. Immanuel Kant’s Announcement of the Programme of his Lectures for the Winter Semester 1765-1766,” in *Theoretical Philosophy 1755-1770*, ed. and transl. David Walford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 298-9. Emphasis in original.

the nationalist orientation, she summarizes the method and intention of her account in the synchronic and diachronic sense proffered by Kant: “I do not pretend,” she writes, “to sketch a national character, but merely to note the present state of morals and manners as I trace the progress of the world’s improvement” (172).

The question of national character, to which Wollstonecraft, wary of the place it held in the tradition of travel writing, returns on several occasions, reveals her efforts to represent alterity as well as the impossibility of stating anything beyond the provisional.¹¹ She paves a way between a wholesale cataloguing of national features – in the style of Kant’s sketches in *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime* (1764) and a host of other writers – and particularities approaching but not solidifying into a set of characteristics.¹² She restates her distance from depictions of national character philosophically, expanding on the constructivist view of society she had defended in both *Vindications*. The argument resurfaces now in the common error of confusing the natural with the cultural character of a people:

All are eager to give a national character; which is rarely just,
because they do not discriminate the natural from the acquired

¹¹ John G. Hayman comments on the pressure felt by travel writers to provide an account of the characteristics of foreigners according to their national belonging. See John G. Hayman, “Notions of National Character in the Eighteenth Century,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 35. 1 (1971): 1-17.

¹² I refer here to national stereotypes widely circulated in print culture, but also the study of national character integral to David Hume’s and Kant’s early aesthetic and moral philosophy. Immanuel Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Sublime and Beautiful*, ed. Patrick Frierson and Paul Guyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 58.

difference. The natural, I believe, on due consideration, will be found to consist merely in the degree of vivacity, or thoughtfulness, pleasures, or pain, inspired by the climate, whilst the varieties which the forms of government, including religion, produce are much more numerous and unstable. (92)

Wollstonecraft relies on Hume's bipartite structure of the moral and physical factors shaping national character, while her correlation between temperament and climate echoes the climatological theories popularized by Montesquieu's *L'Esprit des Loix* (1748) and further developed by some Scots, for example, Samuel Stanhope Smith, whose environmentalist approach Wollstonecraft endorsed in the *Analytical Review*.¹³ But the diminished weight ascribed to physical factors ("merely in degree") seems mindful of Hume's rejection of climatological explanations. Nor does Wollstonecraft follow Montesquieu in naturalizing government and religion as results of climatic characteristics. Indeed, averse to linking natural or climate-induced features with forms of government, she devotes attention to the inhibiting or stimulating influence played by governments upon the abilities of their subjects. Here, in one of her most cosmopolitan-minded moments, the condition of slavery illustrates her point. Arguing against the essentialist justification deployed by contemporary pro-planter and anti-abolitionist propaganda, Wollstonecraft writes, "A people have been characterised as stupid by nature; what a paradox! because they

¹³ David Hume, "Of National Characters," in *Political Essays*, ed. Knud Haakonssen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 77-92; Wollstonecraft reviewed Smith's *An Essay on the Causes of the Variety of Complexion and Figure in the Human Species* in December 1788.

did not consider that slaves, having no object to stimulate industry, have not their faculties sharpened by the only thing that can exercise them, self-interest” (93-4). In this, Wollstonecraft differs starkly from Hume or Kant, whose cosmopolitanism co-existed with racist views first pronounced in his *Observations on the Beautiful and the Sublime*, reiterated in his lectures on geography and anthropology in the 1780s and latent in the *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose* (1784), to be finally relinquished only in *Perpetual Peace* (1795), where independently of race, every individual on earth is judged entitled to the cosmopolitan right of universal hospitality.¹⁴ If Kant legitimizes the condition of slavery and white governance, because the “Americans and Negroes cannot govern themselves,” Wollstonecraft reverses the relation, rejecting slavery as no condition for any people to learn self-governance.¹⁵

Adopting conjectural history to assert every human’s ability for betterment and self-governance, she critiques a version of cosmopolitanism that assumed an innate unitary European superiority based on racial features, inherent in Kant’s early comments on the translatability of black skin into intellectual deficiency, or the innate passivity of Native Americans and the Hindus’ intermediary potential above that of the African or Native American but inferior to the white European. “Others,” counters Wollstonecraft, “have been brought forward as brutes, having no aptitude for the arts and sciences, only because the progress of improvement had not reached that stage which produces them” (93-4). Her

¹⁴ Pauline Kleingeld, “Kant’s Changing Cosmopolitanism,” in *Kant’s Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim: A Critical Guide*, ed. Amélie Rorty and James Schmidt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2009), 185.

¹⁵ Quoted *From Sketches for the Lectures on Anthropology* in Kleingeld, “Kant’s Changing Cosmopolitanism,” 184.

Europe has not outgrown brutish existence, as she will note during her travels, and whatever can be said about its nations' characters is only a provisional state susceptible to revision, including her own reassessment of French vanity and depravity in light of her Scandinavian travels, which amounts to the revision of a staple of French stereotyping among British travellers (172).¹⁶ Considering that Wollstonecraft abandoned her effort to interpret the French Revolution through the paradigm of national character as initially done in *Letter on the Present Character of the French Nation* (1793), opting eventually for the historiographic approach of *A Historical View of the French Revolution* (1794), this retrospective insight suggests her distance from a well-established tradition of racial determinism.

Despite Wollstonecraft's reluctance to perpetuate "the factitious national characters which have been supposed permanent, though only rendered so by the permanency of ignorance," national character remains directly or obliquely addressed, for instance, in discussions of politeness, hospitality and local mores (*Residence* 93). But rather than conceiving of it as a justification for European imperialism, she recruits national character to account for the role of alterity within the larger scheme of mankind's progress. Alterity stands for the local singularity that becomes the "characteristic of modernity" in conjectural history, to be reached through the sifting of innumerable details of common life.¹⁷ It is part and parcel of this goal to treat with silence encounters that do not transmit the experience of national alterity: "As nothing passed at this supper to characterise the country," writes Wollstonecraft elliptically, "I shall here close my letter" (71). At another point, the redundancy of language

¹⁶ Hayman, "Notions of National Characters," 7.

¹⁷ Sebastiani, "National Character and Race," in *Character, Self, and Sociability in the Scottish Enlightenment*, ed. Thomas Ahnert and Susan Manning (New York: Palgrave, 2012), 197.

and the sufficiency of ocular and auditory witnessing posit the indubitable presence of such markers: “I am persuaded that I have formed a very just opinion of the character of the Norwegians, without being able to converse with them” (113).

But communicating these characters in her travelogue runs up against cognitive barriers imposed by local singularity. More than once, Wollstonecraft’s geography must speak through linguistic detours and disclaimers. Confronted with unfamiliar physical features of the earth, her language reflects on its own exhaustion, as it simultaneously seeks to perform rather than express the strangeness of local geography: “It was too late for me to go on shore, if you will allow me to give that name to shivering rocks” (127); or, “I hesitated to use the word country, *yet* could not find another; *still* it would sound absurd to talk of fields of rocks” (90). Significantly, the letter where Wollstonecraft rejects the permanence of national character opens with a contemplation of the unrepresentability of individuality. No medium can capture the singular, she states, her own travel memoir included:

There is an individuality in every prospect, which remains in the memory as forcibly depicted as the particular features that have arrested our attention; *yet* we cannot find words to discriminate that individuality so as to enable a stranger to say, this is the face, that the view (83).

In light of the unutterability of the particular, national character resembles the Derridian *supplement* or *trace* that posits a constitutive difference not simply in relation to external things, but in relation to itself. Ungraspable variety and constant mutation make national

character a stranger to itself, a phantom neither present nor absent, shifting, enabled and systemized through that other Derridian concept of the *context* provided by history and geographical boundaries.¹⁸ If there is any writing of national character to be done at all, it must happen through references to this context calculated to temper or divert the readers' trained desire for a catalogue of national characters. Wollstonecraft on her part commits to reporting, although imperfectly, the endless variety of the particular distilled by the consciousness of this context.

Yet, if national character is demystified as a marker normalized by historical and geographical context, how do we explain the frequent commentaries on national language and literature in *A Residence*? Are they perforce enlisted to promote a national-minded being in the world? In other words, are these commentaries signs of a counter movement that reinstates the mystification of the national character? An affirmative answer to this question would rest on an exclusive understanding of the nation-planet relationship. However, planetary inclusiveness lies at the core of Wollstonecraft's philosophy and the models of citizenship she endorses.

In 1789, she enthusiastically reviewed *A Discourse on the Love of Our Country* (1789) by the teacher, friend, dissenting minister Richard Price, who in a speech commemorating the revolution of 1689 made patriotic sentiment subservient to the love of mankind. Price declared that an exclusive love of one's country suffers from short-sightedness and the lack of the horizon bounded by cosmopolitan love: "We should love it [our country] ardently but

¹⁸ Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination*, trans. Barbara Johnson (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1981), 7.

not exclusively.”¹⁹ Price conceives of exclusive patriotic love as owing to deficient knowledge and the cognitive and moral myopia of primary instincts:

Our regards, according to the order of nature, begin with ourselves, and every man is charged primarily with the care of himself. Next come our families, and benefactors, and friends, and after them our country. We can do little for the interest of mankind at large. To this interest, however, all other interests are subordinate. The noblest principle in our nature is the regard to general justice and that goodwill which embraces all the world.²⁰

Price’s model bears strong resemblances to Martha Nussbaum’s Stoic-inspired model of concentric circles, or *oikeiosis*, debated in *For Love of Country* (1996), a collection of essays that echoes Price’s title. Here, the ego occupies the centre of several radiating circles that stand each for family, community, ethnicity, the nation and the world. Price unmistakably sees this view of the self in the world resulting from the cultivation of understanding. Indeed, to overlook the subordination of national interest to cosmopolitan love is the most natural, but also the least informed, disposition. Wollstonecraft’s eulogy of *Love of Our Country*, a piece where “the heart speaks to the heart” leading the reader to assent to “obvious truths,” matter-

¹⁹ *The Analytical Review* 5 (1789), 471-2. Richard Price, *A Discourse on the Love of Our Country* (London: T. Cadell, 1790), 10.

²⁰ Price, *Love of Our Country*, pp. 9-10.

of-factly commands Price's connection between disposition, knowledge and understanding.²¹ Put differently, for Wollstonecraft, cosmopolitan love is our natural disposition toward exteriority at its most developed stage; it is the aspiration and outcome of our perfectibility.

Here, national language and literature enter to play a crucial but subordinated role, as suggested in Wollstonecraft's critique of the Swedes' linguistic cosmopolitanism:

The well-bred Swedes of the capital are formed on the ancient French model, and they in general speak that language; for they have a knack at acquiring languages with tolerable fluency. This may be reckoned an advantage in some respects; but it prevents the cultivation of their own, and any considerable advance in literary pursuits. (79)

Besides grounding the neglect of vernacular languages in a hegemonic aristocratic practice and thus linking it with stagnation rather than perfectibility, her attention to vernacular literature welds freedom and cosmopolitan love. Norwegians for instance, may appear "the most free community," yet these enabling conditions of freedom await to be fructified by knowledge produced and disseminated in vernacular language. In this spirit, Wollstonecraft commends the recent translations of several German texts, taking them as an indication that Norwegians have "still less taste for literature; but they are arriving at the epoch which precedes the introduction of the arts and sciences" (103). Not surprisingly, Norwegians'

²¹ *The Analytical Review* 5 (1789), 471-2.

uninformed freedom produces the banal patriotism that, combined with their poor understanding of the terrible turn that the French Revolution has taken under Robespierre, repels Wollstonecraft (114, 133). A witness of the carnage of the Revolution, Wollstonecraft decries the inefficacy of the Norwegian daily press to promote the cosmopolitan solidarity due to the victims of Jacobin Terror. This proves to her that little taste for literature and little exercise in vernacular literature result in a love of revolutionary zeal that fails to ascend to inclusive cosmopolitan love.

Understanding enlarged by knowledge is the missing ingredient in Norwegian community, a lack that hampers local public inquiry and discussion: “They love their country, but have not much public spirit” (103). As Wollstonecraft learns it from Price, “Virtue without knowledge makes enthusiasts,” while “Liberty,” which helmed the Revolution’s motto, “is the object of patriotic zeal. It is inseparable from knowledge and virtue and together with them completes the glory of a community.”²² Keeping Price’s teaching in mind and responding to Thomas Cooper’s *Some Information Respecting America* (1794), another eye-witness account of the Revolution in Paris that suggests “Americans should permit you [Europeans] to be their manufacturers of literature,” Wollstonecraft asserts that vernacular literature activates national resources by producing local knowledge, rather than merely consuming and recycling hegemonic productions: “The reflection necessary to produce a certain number even of tolerable productions augments more than he is aware of the mass of knowledge in the community” (*Residence* 79).²³ Cooper’s advice is of a piece with his view of America as an “infant society,” an infancy that, in Wollstonecraft’s view, any society must

²² Price, *Love of Our Country*, 19.

²³ Thomas Cooper, *Some Information Respecting America* (London: J. Johnson, 1794), 64.

outgrow through its own ongoing efforts rather than compliance with parental tutelage.²⁴ These efforts may consist in nothing more extraordinary than the recording of local practices, presumably as in the Icelandic manuscripts presented to her at the public library in Copenhagen. These local applications, Wollstonecraft concedes, may seem tedious and wearying. Yet it is “the immense labour men will submit to, in order to transmit their ideas to posterity,” imbued by “this very delicacy of feeling and thinking [toward local practices] which probably has produced most of the performances that have benefited mankind” (*Residence* 176). Against the regurgitation of hegemonic knowledge, Wollstonecraft pits this patient localist processing of a “thousand little circumstances” that capture what eludes “vulgar eyes,” proliferating “endless perspectives” and therefore inquiry, that most valuable Wollstonecraftian activity (80). Textually, *A Short Residence* with its many references to British literary productions testifies to the enlisting of the national literary imagination for the augmentation of cosmopolitan knowledge, or *Weltkenntnis*, which in Wollstonecraft’s philosophy fosters the kind of moral maturity that lives and loves inclusively, as Price’s cosmopolitanism would have it.

Hence, the enlisting of national character channels a critique of local passivity and a monopolizing economy of knowledge in Wollstonecraft’s cosmopolitan philosophy that aligns her with Kant’s commitment to *Weltkenntnis*. However, *A Short Residence* manifests foundational differences between Kant and Wollstonecraft that are rooted in their understanding of human sociability, producing in Kant’s case a cosmopolitan critique based on justice and in Wollstonecraft’s on suffering. The last two parts of this essay elucidate the stakes of this divergence.

²⁴ Cooper, *America*, 65.

Sociability and Moral Love

We could start by inquiring into what motivates human beings in Wollstonecraft's and Kant's philosophy to subordinate their material and intellectual labour to the cosmopolitan good. In other words, we would be asking about the bearings human nature has on political community. Wollstonecraft's view of human nature combines an essentialist and constructivist approach. For her, the universal and foundational feature of humanity is the soul "stamped with the heavenly image."²⁵ In the context of Wollstonecraft's writing, this heavenly stamp functions as a marker in the most immediate etymological sense of character or engraving (*χαρακτήρ*), an alternative to the atomized national imprints of conjectural history that nineteenth-century theories of human variegation would conflate with race.²⁶ In this impression of divine image is laid the innate principle of perfectibility, so that "every being may become virtuous by the exercise of its own reason," Wollstonecraft writes in *Rights of Woman*, demanding upon this principle women's equality.²⁷ The degrees and forms of rational exercise vary according to social circumstances, but the goal of reason by the logic of the soul made in the divine image is the perfection of our nature. As Natalie F. Taylor succinctly explains, such a justification of perfectibility differs fundamentally from Locke's

²⁵ Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of The Rights of Woman and The Wrongs of Woman, or Maria*, eds. Anne K. Mellor and Noelle Chao (New York: Longman Cultural Editions, 2007), 74.

²⁶ Sebastiani, "National Character and Race," 188. Sebastiani quotes the Scottish anatomist Robert Knox who deploys the trope of engraving to explain racial variety: race "stamps the man."

²⁷ Wollstonecraft, *Rights of Woman*, 38.

tabula rasa, where reason serves only the end of self-preservation, while Wollstonecraft sees reason as “the fulfilment of human nature”.²⁸ As they attempt to cultivate an active communication between passion and reason, often a synonym for reflection in Wollstonecraft’s idiom, humans acquire knowledge and perfect themselves: “I never met with much imagination amongst people who had not acquired a habit of reflection,” Wollstonecraft notes. Even sentiment coalesces reasoning and feeling: “that delicacy of feeling and thinking [...] characterised by the word sentiment” (*Residence* 73). The synergetic expansion of feeling and thinking (passions and reason) generates benevolence, sympathy, tenderness, and affection as emanations of that “love which embraces all that is great and beautiful,” the bequest of the heavenly stamp (99). Even if occasionally inclined to cut loose in solitariness, humans are born and intended to hone their feeling and thinking in communities. In short, for Wollstonecraft, humans are sociable beings.

Recently, critics have elaborated on Wollstonecraft’s indebtedness to the Scottish Enlightenment and in particular the identification of sociability rather than self-preservation or solitariness as the trigger factor for the birth of society.²⁹ The Scottish philosophers offer a powerful alternative to Lockean or Rousseauian social contract theory, one that sees in

²⁸ Natalie F. Taylor, “‘Mistaken Notions of Female Excellence’: Mary Wollstonecraft’s Vindication of Virtue” in *Called to Civil Existence*, ed. Enit Karafili Steiner (New York and Amsterdam: Rodopi/Brill, 2014), 97.

²⁹ Jane Rendall, “‘The Grand Causes Which Combine to Carry Mankind Forward’: Wollstonecraft, History and Revolution,” *Women’s Writing* 4.2 (1997): 155-72; JoEllen M. DeLucia, “A Delicate Debate: Mary Wollstonecraft, the Bluestockings, and the Progress of Women,” in *Called to Civil Existence*, ed. Enit Karafili Steiner (New York and Amsterdam: Rodopi/Brill, 2014), 113-30; Daniel O’Neill, *The Burke-Wollstonecraft Debate: Savagery, Civilization, and Democracy* (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007).

fellow-feeling, or sympathy, an adhesive constituent that impels human communities toward progress.³⁰ A key passage from *A Short Residence* corroborates this influence. There Wollstonecraft writes of “some *involuntary* sympathetic emotion like the attraction of adhesion [that] made me feel that I still was a part of a *mighty whole*, from which I could not sever myself” (69). For the Scots (among others, Adam Smith and John Millar), civilization, that is, the development of humanity through stages marked by a change in modes of subsistence, emerges as a result of sociability. Ultimately, in stadial theory, society does not materialize through men’s careful calculations for a contract that best satisfies their drive for self-preservation, but in the family, the primordial cell of human dependence and affection. Nature has placed women at the nucleus of this cell and, by entrusting them with nursing abilities, made them the primary caretakers and agents of fellow feeling. Accordingly, a society is as civilized as its men come to value and acquiesce to the sensibility and softening influence of women.³¹ Although faithful to the active principle of human connectivity, Wollstonecraft understands that stadial theory appoints to women an important but restrictive and passive role in the civilizing process, so that her enduring concern will be to break this linkage between gender and feeling that denies women an equally rational involvement in the civilizing process.³² Her strategy is to carve out a position that allots corresponding moral weight to reason and feeling by first recasting concepts such as Smith’s sentiment “into a delicacy of feeling and thinking,” and then driving a wedge between Smithian imagination and sympathy: “This is not the first time I have remarked heart without sentiment: they are

³⁰ Taylor, “Vindication of Virtue,” 99-100.

³¹ O’Neill, *The Burke-Wollstonecraft Debate*, 92.

³² Enit Karafili Steiner, *Jane Austen’s Civilized Women: Morality, Gender, and the Civilizing Process* (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 1-13.

distinct. The former depends on the rectitude of the feelings, on truth of sympathy: these characters have more tenderness than passion; the latter has a higher source; call it imagination, genius, or what you will, it is something very different” (*Residence* 128). It is this double-edged exigency that determines her image of the cosmopolitan, “an enlightened citizen of the world, whose zeal for liberty appears to arise from the purest moral principles, and most expansive humanity.”³³

Kant, too, is influenced by these theories. He also believes that sociability drives men into society, but this is a sociability spiked with acrimony. Encountering the idea first in the work of Montaigne, Kant writes of man’s “unsociable sociability” (*ungesellige Geselligkeit*) in the Fourth Proposition of *Idea for a Universal History*. Unsociable sociability represents the drive of self-preservation that pulls humans away from and toward each other. But, unlike his predecessors, Kant sees unsociable sociability as the evil out of which good may come, indeed nature’s *telos*, the cosmopolitan condition itself: “a universal *cosmopolitan condition* can come into being as the womb in which all the original predispositions of the human species developed.”³⁴ An analysis of “unsociable sociability” in Kant’s thought reveals that the concept “serves first and foremost to explain human inventiveness and industry,” the competitiveness resulting from the self-interest necessary to improve our situation.³⁵ Although competitiveness leads to discord and strife, driven as it is toward improvement, it

³³ Mary Wollstonecraft, *The Works of Mary Wollstonecraft*, ed. Janet Todd and Marilyn Butler (New York: New York University Press, 1989), vol. 7, 390-1.

³⁴ Kant, “Idea”, 14.

³⁵ Schneewind, “Good out of Evil”: Kant and the Idea of Unsociable Sociability,” in *Kant’s Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim: A Critical Guide*, ed. Amélie Rorty and James Schmidt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2009), 110.

stimulates dormant abilities and calls forth new ones: “Here the first true steps are taken from brutishness to culture, which consists, actually in, the social worth of human beings [...] to ultimately transform an agreement to society that initially had been *pathologically* coerced into a *moral* whole.”³⁶ The most valuable ability consists in man’s perception of himself as possessing “a rational nature”: “For this reason one should thank nature,” rhapsodizes Kant, “for their quarrelsomeness, for their jealously competitive vanity, for their heartless competitive vanity, for their insatiable appetite for property and even for power!” This cocktail of evil dispositions will compel humans to recognize that a cosmopolitan order more than any other reconciles self-interest with moral imperatives.

Although Wollstonecraft launches a vituperative critique of the contemporary commercial “appetite for property,” taking to task her businessman lover Imlay and renowned theorists like Smith, she acknowledges some truth in competitiveness as inspired by the desire to improve one’s situation, when writing of slaves as “not [having] their faculties sharpened by the only thing that can exercise them, self-interest” (*Residence* 93). But Wollstonecraft does not share Kant’s belief in individualistic abstract reasoning: fittingly, her philosophy couched in the travel epistolary reaches the reader as a dialogue with Imlay, the implicit “you” and “dear friend” of her letters. *A Short Residence*, as Mary Favret convincingly argues, reweaves out of the contemporary style of the sentimental heroine and philosopher a new subjectivity that incorporates “female sensibility” and “masculine understanding [...] feeling and reason,

³⁶ Kant, “Idea,” p. 7. See also Genevieve Lloyd, “Providence as Progress: Kant’s Variations on a Tale of Origins,” in *Kant’s Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitical Aim*, ed. Amélie Oksenberg Rorty and James Schmidt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 203-6.

writer and reader in a productive enterprise.”³⁷ Moreover, the opinions proffered in these letters, striving to render the strange as intelligible as possible, without claiming to grasp it in its final form, are provisional and await the response and challenges of the reader.

Wollstonecraft holds on to sympathy as an innate principle and the idea of self-interest as a first impetus to overcome indolence. But her travels in Scandinavia confirm an earlier conviction of hers, namely, that sympathy and self-interest undergo crucial developments as human communities exert themselves in arts and sciences, hence her foregrounding of vernacular literature. In *A Historical View of the French Revolution* (1794), she argues: “It was natural for men to be selfish, because they were ignorant how intimately their own comfort was connected with that of others.”³⁸ Hence, the solid recognition of the dependence of personal happiness on “general happiness” is not the work of innate sympathy. In fact, sympathy can be bound up with “selfish passions” by being first and foremost grounded in the self and generating only “an extension of that family love” that culminates in patriotism, the harbinger of “vainglory and barbarity.” Wollstonecraft would have probably agreed with Nancy Hirschman that “sympathy contains an odd mixture of strong individualism and strong sociability. Sympathy translates self-reference into sociability by connecting our minds – or more accurately, our feelings and our inner lives – with those of others.”³⁹ However,

³⁷ Mary Favret, *Romantic Correspondence: Women, Politics and the Fiction of Letters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 96.

³⁸ Wollstonecraft, *French Revolution*, 293. Here Wollstonecraft reiterates the selfish source of patriotism with remarkable clarity in a discussion of national heroes: “these heroes loved their country, because it was their country, ever showing by their conduct, that it was only a part of a narrow love of themselves,” 294.

³⁹ Nancy Hirschman, “Sympathy, Empathy and Obligation: A Feminist Rereading,” in *Feminist Interpretations of David Hume*, ed. Anne Jaap Jacobson (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 184.

Wollstonecraft deems the translated self-reference of sympathy too weak to generate the cosmopolitan love exalted by Price as the *summum bonum* of human endeavour, since the impressions of sympathy are easily overwritten by stronger sensations. In Lockean logic, she writes of a crowd gaping at a public execution: here, “sympathy is quickly effaced by curiosity” (168). Smith, too, drawing on the Stoic *oikeiosis*, believes sympathy to be active among family and kin but to lose force as the relational and spatial distance between self and others increases. This remains understated in contemporary theory. Very few recent studies on the compatibility of Smith’s thought with cosmopolitanism caution against recruiting his theory of sympathy and benevolence indiscriminately in today’s discourse on cosmopolitan justice.⁴⁰ One of these studies is Fonna Forman-Barzilai’s book on Smith’s moral theory, which responds sceptically to the faith that Amartya Sen in *The Idea of Justice* (2009) puts in Smith’s sympathetic impartial spectator as a model for global justice. Forman-Barzilai refutes a seamless continuity between the Stoic concentric model and Smith’s, as Martha Nussbaum would have it, since Smith recoils from the Stoics’ imperative to collapse these circles in the name of universal love.

Shrewdly aware that sympathy, although an active principle, cannot reach far on its own, Wollstonecraft writes in *View of the French Revolution*: “It is time, that a more enlightened moral love of mankind should supplant, or *rather support* physical affections.”⁴¹ A “moral love of mankind” turns Price’s cosmopolitan love into the hallmark of progress, since moral love seizes on the synergy between reason and fellow feeling to be expected from an

⁴⁰ Fonna Forman-Barzilai, *Adam Smith and the Circles of Sympathy: Cosmopolitanism and Moral Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 5; Amartya Sen, *The Idea of Justice* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University 2009).

⁴¹ Wollstonecraft, *French Revolution*, 294.

evolving civilization: “it requires more cultivation of mind to keep awake affection, even in our own hearts” (*Residence* 136). Politics, Wollstonecraft insists, is the indispensable instrument for this kind of cultivation, because it hones the citizens’ public spirit. Without politics, affections recede into the backstage of being, so that people lose sight of that grander horizon, or to resort to the Stoic’s, Smith’s and Price’s imagery, that greatest circle enclosing all the others. In Wollstonecraft’s view, men’s “exertions are, generally speaking, only for their families, which I conceive will always be the case, till politics, becoming a subject of discussion, enlarges the heart by opening the understanding” (103). The centrality of affections in the realm of politics and public politicizing repudiates a compartmentalized view of society and its members in separate spheres. While Natalie F. Taylor is right to claim that “for Wollstonecraft, human beings are not merely sociable, they are political,” in light of the deeply-entrenched neglect of affections in liberal political philosophy, it is worth emphasizing that Wollstonecraft’s cosmopolitan philosophy conceives of the mature political subject as possessing an understanding attuned to affections.⁴² This is the recognition that her feminist imagination bequeaths to political theory. This attunement, I think, never takes a firm and final form, and Wollstonecraft must revisit the correspondence between mind and affection provisionally, without letting it solidify. But politics, as a promoter of inquiry, helps shape this correspondence because it makes us aware that we cannot hone an affection for mankind without enlarging our understanding, nor can an enlarged understanding afford to disregard our physical and moral attachment to mankind.

⁴² Taylor, “Vindication of Virtue,” 108.

The Inhospitable Womb

These affinities and differences come to bear on the future of cosmopolitanism in Kant and Wollstonecraft's thought. There is a common concern with different consequences in their projections: they both show an almost simultaneous interest in being in the world as life on the earth. In *Perpetual Peace* reflections on property, traditionally a point of antagonism, turn into a foundation for the cosmopolitan law of universal hospitality that Kant presents as:

a right to visit, to which all human beings have a claim, to present oneself to society by virtue of the right of common possession of the surface of the earth. Since it is the surface of a sphere, they cannot scatter themselves on it without limit, but they must rather ultimately tolerate one another as neighbors, and originally no one has more of a right to be at a given place on earth than anyone else.⁴³

We see “unsociable sociability” raise its head in humans’ coerced tolerance by lack of space on a spherical planet with limited land and waterways to share. As a result, Kant sees the shrinking distance between humans to effect familiarization and overlapping interests on a planetary scale, so that it can “finally bring the human species ever closer to a cosmopolitan constitution” governed by the law of universal hospitality. This law, “a *right*” not be mistaken for “philanthropy,” requires that “a stranger not . . . be treated in a hostile manner by another upon his arrival on the other’s territory. If it can be done without causing his death, the

⁴³ Kant, *Perpetual Peace*, 82.

stranger can be turned away, yet as long as the stranger behaves peacefully where he happens to be, his host may not treat him with hostility.”⁴⁴ Kant’s repeated efforts to minimize hostility toward strangers are of one piece with the “unsociable sociability” of *Idea*, whereas universal hospitality is the outcome of the advancement of reason as a result of man’s unsociable sociability. Yet *Perpetual Peace*, unlike *Idea*, taking the habitable space of the earth as the basis for a minimal cosmopolitan ontology, extends also a critique of the contemporary excesses of unsociable sociability, in particular the imperialist practices of European states that had transmuted from guests into usurpers.⁴⁵ The right of universal hospitality, not to be confused with a right of universal settlement, offers a buffer to the many aggressive infringements witnessed in Kant’s time and human history in general.

Wollstonecraft, too, extends an implicit critique predicated upon spatial confinement. But hers is projected into the future and has an organic orientation, rather than a social one. Not hostility, rapaciousness, or other breakouts of unsociable sociability, grab her attention, but the well-being of the planet where nature pursues the project of perfectibility with humans. The physical incapacity of the earth to adapt perpetually to human improvement spoils the dream of progress, hurling Wollstonecraft’s imagination into a nightmarish landscape:⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Kant, *Perpetual Peace*, 82.

⁴⁵ Lloyd, “Providence as Progress,” 213.

⁴⁶ Marked by dread and distress, the bleak vision of futurity that opens before Wollstonecraft’s imaginary eye is an illustration of what Kant calls “terrifying sublime”: “The feeling of it is sometimes accompanied with some dread or even melancholy”. Immanuel Kant, *On the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime and Other Writings*, ed. Patrick Frierson and Paul Guyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 16.

I anticipated the future improvement of the world, and observed how much man has still to do to obtain of the earth all it could yield. I even carried my speculations so far as to advance a million or two of years to the moment when the earth would perhaps be so perfectly cultivated, and so completely peopled, as to render it necessary to inhabit every spot; yes; these bleak shores. Imagination went still farther, and pictured the state of man when the earth could no longer support him. Whither was he to flee from universal famine? Do not smile: I really became distressed for these fellow creatures yet unborn. The images fastened on me, and the world appeared a vast prison. (131)

The eighteenth-century saw speculations about the age of the earth by three major philosophers: the French Comte de Buffon, the Scottish James Hutton and Jean-André Deluc, Citizen of Geneva. The first two are particularly relevant for Wollstonecraft. Her peek a million or two years into the future of the earth matches Buffon's *Epochs of Nature* (1778), a conjectural history of earth's past and future ages. Taking as a starting point an incandescent earth that became habitable through continuous cooling and would lose its life-preserving abilities as the cooling entered inhospitable temperatures, Buffon estimated the age of the earth from 75,000 years up to ten million, predicting its future annihilation.⁴⁷ Even if critics found in Buffon's speculative calculation the novelistic vein that Kant openly confesses in his

⁴⁷ Martin J. Rudwick, *Earth's Deep History: How It Was Discovered and Why It Matters* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), 62-8 ; Scott J. Juengel, "Mary Wollstonecraft's Perpetual Disaster," accessed July 7, 2017, <https://www.rc.umd.edu/praxis/disaster/HTML/praxis.2012.juengel.html>

conjectural history with a cosmopolitan purpose, Wollstonecraft contemplates a bleak view of futurity.⁴⁸

In 1785, the Scottish philosopher James Hutton, friend to David Hume and Adam Smith, presented to the Royal Society of Edinburgh his *System of the Habitable Earth with regard to its Duration and Stability*, published as *Theory of the Earth* a year before *A Short Residence*. Hutton's insistence on soil as the vital source of subsistence and its final disappearance through erosion may loom over Wollstonecraft's eschatology of a failing planet. Her apprehension of an earth "so perfectly cultivated, and so completely peopled" reaches the public two years before Thomas Malthus' *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798).⁴⁹ But the impasse it faces suits a Buffon-like apocalypse rather than a temporarily catastrophic future in the style of Malthus or Hutton. Both Malthus and Hutton incorporate destruction into the cyclic development of the earth: after famines caused by nature's insufficiency, plagues, or the sinking of soil at the sea bottom, a renewal would follow; for Malthus, through nature's self-regulating "miraculous" powers, and for Hutton, through the heat at the deep interior of the Earth that would heave up the sunken soil and create new land for humans and animals to dwell in.⁵⁰ In particular, Hutton's successive intervals of doom and renewal tear at the very belief of the permanence of any locality on earth, predicting the turmoil of forced migration that preoccupies Wollstonecraft. Simultaneously, the cyclic

⁴⁸ Kant, *Idea*, 15. Kant writes: "it may seem that such a project could yield only a novel."

⁴⁹ Thomas Malthus, *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (London: J. Johnson, 1798), 77. Malthus transfers onto the geological processes of the earth and the survival of the human species the "truly miraculous" powers of "selection, combination and mutation." His examples of regeneration after catastrophe range from the war-ridden fields of Flanders, to the London plague of 1666 and the famines in China and Hindustan, 35.

⁵⁰ Rudwick, *Earth's Deep History*, 69.

pattern squares with the creationist view of an intelligent design of “provident wisdom and benevolence.”⁵¹

Wollstonecraft’s future earth, lacking this providential blueprint of regeneration, is a nightmare without exit, a scenario of ultimate catastrophe: “Whither was he to flee from universal famine?” Wollstonecraft’s dismal vision suffers from the decay that follows ripeness and the geological despoliation due to long-standing anthropogenic consumption of earthly resources that cannot renovate or metamorphose into something sustaining and sustainable. Here, the earth evokes the womb through its maternal properties.⁵² Even the viewer of this apocalyptic mindscape is maternal, as Rachel Seiler-Smith points out, a nursing body on which harrowing “speculative images ’fasten’ onto her, as if, in eighteenth-century nursing, they are ’fastening’ onto her breasts.”⁵³ Wollstonecraft’s, however, is not the metaphorical womb (*Schoss*) of Kantian cosmopolitan history, but an all-encompassing organic womb that can no longer feed her children and must deliver them into starvation. Therefore, not an inimical disposition of mankind, not unsociable sociability, but an earth rendered inhospitable through man’s improvement causes the *huis clos* of civilization.

After imagining the suffering of unborn humans, the loss that cannot be mourned that is Freudian melancholia, Wollstonecraft can exit such spiralling distress by grounding her thoughts in the present as a moment of admonishment: “Do not smile,” she writes to her

⁵¹ James Hutton, “Theory of the Earth: From the Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh” (1785), 79.

⁵² Mary Jacobus offers a psychoanalytical exploration of the maternal in Wollstonecraft’s imagination in “In Love with a Cold Climate: Travelling with Wollstonecraft,” in *First Things: The Maternal Imaginary in Literature, Art and Psychoanalysis* (New York and London: Routledge, 1995), 63-82.

⁵³ Rachel Seiler-Smith, “Bearing/Barren Life: The Conditions of Wollstonecraft’s Morbid Maternity,” *European Romantic Review* 28.2 (2017): 179.

correspondent. To twenty-first century readers burdened by the shared guilt of planetary exploitation, some lucky enough to belong to those not (yet) in the throes of starvation that Wollstonecraft imagines, she bequeaths a different cosmopolitan ethos predicated not on justice, but on suffering out of a moral love for mankind. I agree with Deborah Weiss that Wollstonecraft's major feat is "to make female feeling generate the intellectual production that is, for her, the only way to advance society, albeit inch by inch, book by book."⁵⁴ Her own contribution to intellectual history is nothing less than a version of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism that commands attention not for its formulation of cosmopolitan law, but for its readiness to see and partake in suffering. Paul Gilroy identifies this other kind of cosmopolitanism "that was born from centring subjectivity on suffering rather than [Kantian] sovereignty or autonomy"⁵⁵ in the Italian poet and philosopher Giacomo Leopardi (1798-1837). *A Short Residence* predates Leopardi's birth by two years. Perhaps because Wollstonecraft's medium is the travel memoir rather than a treatise of propositions for a legally regulated mobility between states, critics to this day locate the moment when cosmopolitanism becomes a critique in Kant's *Perpetual Peace*. However, the ethos of cosmopolitan suffering that erodes the cherished *telos* of improvement testifies to Wollstonecraft's seminal place within (Post-) Enlightenment thought, displaying the ability of the Enlightenment to launch its own critique. Wollstonecraft's choice of the format of travel writing, especially of one addressed to an intimate narratee in the presence of a child whose future engrosses the narrator's motherly attention, makes of the reader a witness and

⁵⁴ Debora Weiss, "Suffering, Sentiment, and Civilization: Pain and Politics in Mary Wollstonecraft's *Short Residence*," *Studies in Romanticism* 45.2 (2006): 221.

⁵⁵ Paul Gilroy, *After Empire: Melancholia or Convivial Culture?* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 83.

of the genre itself a virtue rather than a concession. Her choice displays the necessity of this contemplative critique to become exoteric and translate into an embodied practice of the family, – the embryo of human sociability rather than of the esoteric brotherhood of the *philosophes* –, permeating considerations that spring from a human activity as common as travel.

Wollstonecraft’s nightmarish anticipation prefigures planetary cosmopolitanism, in Spivak’s understanding of the term, because earth in her tale of progress proves to be ultimately unamenable. The planet responds with sterility to mankind’s globalizing managerial practices that have seemingly subdued and tilled it for human needs. Seemingly because the global agent that Wollstonecraft envisions at the apex of managerial schemes is a starving one, while earth is still turning, the ultimate *pièce de résistance*. It is hard not to hear through this despoiled but recalcitrantly enduring earth Spivak’s admonishment that “even a devastated planet lives a billion [years], without us.”⁵⁶ Wollstonecraft’s text demonstrates not only the presence of angst, doubt, and impotence but also a template for a different being in the world and with the world. The narrator of her travel account remains attuned to the earth’s organic life, positing herself as both a citizen and a provisional inheritor of a planet made of pluralization: “the endless perspectives” of concrete localities (*Residence* 74). It is a position that resists that of the global agent repudiated by Spivak, mentioned at the start of this essay, derivative of the globe and the visual representations of the earth on maps and

⁵⁶ The full quotation depicts the earth as both subjected to and surviving, albeit in despoiled shape, managerial megalomania: “To globalize is to think a manageable world. To think of ourselves as planetary is to remember that if we live a hundred years, even a devastated planet lives a billion, without us.” Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Reply,” *PMLA* 123, no.1 (2008): 247.

computers. Spivak's warning against the danger of such abstraction resonates with Wollstonecraft's only use of the word "globe" in *A Short Residence*:

Travellers who require that every nation should resemble their native country, had better stay at home. [...] The most essential service, I presume, that authors could render to society, would be to promote inquiry and discussion, instead of making those dogmatical assertions which only appear calculated to gird the human mind round with imaginary circles, like the paper globe which represents the one he inhabits (93).

For Wollstonecraft, the globe is reduced to an unhelpful if not caging metaphor. The detached consciousness of globalism, helmed by the scientific advancements that Wollstonecraft contemplates up to their toxic consequences, threatens a concrete being in the habitable space that earth is. "No one lives" on the globe on our computers, writes Spivak.⁵⁷ The paper globe is not the structure where thousands of everyday circumstances unfold, Wollstonecraft reminds us. Rather, the globe with its girding imaginary circles stabilizes into flat generalizations the provisonality of a life attuned to a mutable planet, obscuring the benefit of the kind of inquiry that does not recoil from pondering its own opacity and disenchantment, or agonizing over the soundness of its most valued premises.

⁵⁷ Spivak, *Death of a Discipline*, 72.

Bibliography

- Beddoes, Thomas. "Kant: Zum Ewigen Frieden." *The Monthly Review* 20. (1796): 486-90.
- Cooper, Thomas. *Some Information Respecting America*. London: J. Johnson, 1794.
- DeLucia, JoEllen M. "A Delicate Debate: Mary Wollstonecraft, the Bluestockings, and the Progress of Women." In *Called to Civil Existence*, edited by Enit Karafili Steiner. 113-30. New York and Amsterdam: Rodopi/Brill, 2014.
- Derrida, Jacques. *Dissemination*. Translated by Barbara Johnson. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1981.
- Favret, Mary. *Romantic Correspondence: Women, Politics and the Fiction of Letters*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Forman-Barzilai, Fonna. *Adam Smith and the Circles of Sympathy: Cosmopolitanism and Moral Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Gilroy, Paul. *After Empire: Melancholia or Convivial Culture?* New York and London: Routledge, 2004.
- Hayman, John G. "Notions of National Character in the Eighteenth Century." *Huntington Library Quarterly* 35. 1 (1971): 1-17.
- Hirschman, Nancy. "Sympathy, Empathy and Obligation: A Feminist Rereading." In *Feminist Interpretations of David Hume*, edited by Anne Jaap Jacobson. 174-93. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000.
- Hume, David. "Of National Characters." In *Political Essays*, edited by Knud Haakonssen. 77-92. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Hutton, James. "Theory of the Earth: From the Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburg." 1785.

Jacobus, Mary. "In Love with a Cold Climate: Travelling with Wollstonecraft." In *First Things: The Maternal Imaginary in Literature, Art and Psychoanalysis*. 63-82. New York and London: Routledge, 1995.

Juengel, Scott J. "Mary Wollstonecraft's Perpetual Disaster." *Romantic Circles*. Accessed July 8, 2017.

<https://www.rc.umd.edu/praxis/disaster/HTML/praxis.2012.juengel.html>

Kant, Immanuel. "Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Perspective." In *Toward Perpetual Peace and Other Writings on Politics, Peace, and History*, edited by Pauline Kleingeld, translated by David Colclasure. 3-16. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006.

Kant, Immanuel. "M. Immanuel Kant's Announcement of the Programme of his Lectures for the Winter Semester 1765-1766." In *Theoretical Philosophy 1755-1770*, edited and translated by David Walford. 298-9. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Kant, Immanuel. *Observations on the Feeling of the Sublime and Beautiful*, edited by Patrick Frierson and Paul Guyer. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Kant, Immanuel. *On the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime and Other Writings*, edited by Patrick Frierson and Paul Guyer. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Kant, Immanuel. *Toward Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*. In *Toward Perpetual Peace and Other Writings on Politics, Peace, and History*, edited by Pauline Kleingeld, translated David Colclasure. 67-109. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006.

Kleingeld, Pauline. "Kant's Changing Cosmopolitanism." In *Kant's Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim: A Critical Guide*, edited by Amélie Rorty and James Schmidt. 171-186. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Lloyd, Genevieve. "Providence as Progress: Kant's Variations on a Tale of Origins." In *Kant's Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitical Aim*, edited by Amélie Oksenberg Rorty and James Schmidt. 200-15. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Malthus, Thomas. *An Essay on the Principle of Population*. London: J. Johnson, 1798.

O'Brien, Karen. *Narratives of the Enlightenment: Cosmopolitan History from Voltaire to Gibbon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

O'Neill, Daniel. *The Burke-Wollstonecraft Debate: Savagery, Civilization, and Democracy*. University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007.

Price, Richard. *A Discourse on the Love of Our Country*. London: T. Cadell, 1790.

Rendall, Jane. "'The Grand Causes Which Combine to Carry Mankind Forward': Wollstonecraft, History and Revolution." *Women's Writing* 4.2 (1997): 155-72.

Rudwick, Martin J. *Earth's Deep History: How It Was Discovered and Why It Matters*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014.

Schneewind, J. B. "Good out of Evil: Kant and the Idea of Unsociable Sociability." In *Kant's Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim: A Critical Guide*, edited by Amélie Rorty and James Schmidt. 94-111. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Sebastiani, Silvia. "National Character and Race." In *Character, Self, and Sociability in the Scottish Enlightenment*, edited by Thomas Ahnert and Susan Manning. 187-206. New York: Palgrave, 2012.

Sen, Amartya. *The Idea of Justice*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2009.

Seiler-Smith, Rachel. "Bearing/Barren Life: The Conditions of Wollstonecraft's Morbid Maternity." *European Romantic Review* 28.2 (2017): 163-83.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Reply." *PMLA* 123.1 (2008): 247.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "World Systems & the Creole." *Narrative* 14.1 (2006): 102-112.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. *Death of a Discipline*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.

Steiner, Enit Karafili. *Jane Austen's Civilized Women: Morality, Gender and the Civilizing Process*. London and New York: Routledge, 2012.

Taylor, Natalie F. "'Mistaken Notions of Female Excellence': Mary Wollstonecraft's Vindication of Virtue." In *Called to Civil Existence*, edited by Enit Karafili Steiner. 93-112. New York and Amsterdam: Rodopi/Brill, 2014.

The Analytical Review 5 (1789): 471-2.

Weiss, Debora. "Suffering, Sentiment, and Civilization: Pain and Politics in Mary Wollstonecraft's *Short Residence*." *Studies in Romanticism* 45.2 (2006): 199-221.

Wollstonecraft, Mary. *A Historical View of the French Revolution*, in *Political Writings*, edited by Janet Todd. 285-371. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Wollstonecraft, Mary. *A Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark*, edited by Richard Holmes. London: Penguin, 1987.

Wollstonecraft, Mary. *A Vindication of The Rights of Woman and The Wrongs of Woman, or Maria*, edited by Anne K. Mellor and Noelle Chao. New York: Longman Cultural Editions, 2007.

Wollstonecraft, Mary. *The Works of Mary Wollstonecraft*, edited by Janet Todd and Marilyn Butler. Vol. 7. New York: New York University Press, 1989.