



J A C Q U E L I N E T . M I L L E R

The Passion Signified: Imitation and the Construction of Emotions in Sidney and Wroth

I.

“LOVING IN TRUTH,” begins Astrophil, “and fain in verse my love to show.”¹ That he truly loves is here his unquestioned premise, briefly stated as prologue to the real difficulty he is facing. The problem for Astrophil is how to show that love in verse, how to represent that love in a way that will move Stella. The passion precedes the representation of it; it is, syntactically and otherwise, posited as the origin of all that follows in the next 108 sonnets.

In her study of “inwardness” on the Renaissance stage, Katharine Maus begins with an alternative paradigm provided by Hamlet: “But I have that within which passes show; / These but the trappings and the suits of woe” (I.2.85–86).² As Maus explains, Hamlet “distinguishes between the elaborate external rituals of mourning and an inner, invisible anguish” and thereby reveals the “inevitable existence of a hiatus between signs . . . and what they signify”³—between the passion and the show of it. Hamlet’s approach to the problem is different from Astrophil’s. Hamlet’s concern that the signs of woe are suspect because “they are actions that a man might play” (I.2.84) is not initially shared by the Astrophil who “sought fit words to paint the blackest face of woe” and will later be willing to perform whatever role is effective (“I am not I, pitie the tale of me”); and though Astrophil will similarly conclude (in Sonnet 1 and elsewhere) that the conventional trappings of feeling are inadequate if not empty, he will also repeatedly express his desire to “show” that which Hamlet claims “passes show.” Yet Hamlet nonetheless, like the Astrophil of Sonnet 1, posits a passion “within” that exists independent of its representation.

This essay will argue for a different conceptualization, one in which the representation precedes and produces the passion. Maus argues that we must attend carefully to Hamlet’s contrast between “an authentic personal interior

and derivative or secondary superficies" (2), and that we not pronounce anachronistic judgment nor underestimate "the conceptual importance of personal inwardness in this period" (27). Like Maus, I want to take seriously early modern articulations of interiority, but I don't want to do so by focusing on a perceived disparity between the inner passions and their outward expression. Anne Ferry has argued that in the Renaissance "man's inward and outward experiences were viewed as closely parallel and . . . no great separation was consistently or systematically conceived to exist between them." Her study of the discourses of inwardness points out, for example, that the distinction between inward and outward "parts" in the Renaissance often referred to anatomical and spatial divisions, both pertaining primarily to the body: limbs and features were "outward parts," and the organs were "inward parts."⁴ The implications of this—what Maus calls "the corporeal way inwardness is sometimes conceived in the Renaissance" (195)—have been further elaborated by critics like Gail Paster and Michael Schoenfeldt who, working with the Galenic theory of the humors, have shown how early modern ideas of selfhood and interiority were deeply informed by and imbedded in the body.⁵ This system, as Schoenfeldt puts it, establishes connections between physiology and psychology so that "the vagaries of human emotion could be articulated and explained in corporeal terms" (6). Like Schoenfeldt, I wish to argue for "the inevitable and literal influences of the outside world" on the individual (22) and "the porous cusp between self and other" (38). But whereas Schoenfeldt's argument looks at the bodily processes of ingestion, digestion, and excretion as "very literal acts of self-fashioning" (11), I want to look at a less literal process by which the external becomes internalized. And though humoral theory can provide one context for explaining the phenomenon I will be discussing, it will not be the focus of this essay.⁶ While I agree with Maus's astute critique of those critics who, in arguing for the cultural construction of the idea of inwardness, find expressions of interiority suspect, I want to explore an alternative articulated in other Renaissance texts that themselves take issue with the paradigms posed by both Hamlet and Astrophil on the gap between inner authenticity and outer displays: that inwardness in the Renaissance, and particularly the passions associated with inwardness, are often portrayed as coming into being precisely through the imitation of those very signs and shows that Hamlet scorns and Astrophil seeks.

I take as my starting point the episode in Sidney's *Arcadia* that describes how Philoclea, being wooed by Pyrocles disguised as the Amazon Zelmane, falls in love. (The narrator opens this scene by chiding himself for having slighted Philoclea in the story and for having "till now forgot thy passions").⁷ Philoclea is, we are told, a "sweet minded" creature, of "unspotted simplicity," "not knowing of evil." She has lived thus far "without framing out of her own will the forechoosing of any thing" (238) and because of her inexperience she

is, we are informed, “the easier to be altered.” In short, Philoclea bears little resemblance to Pico’s “maker and molder of thyself” who “with freedom of choice and with honor” can “fashion thyself in whatever shape thou shalt prefer.”⁸ Yet if this suggests that she will be an easy and innocent victim of love, the process by which she comes to love is not portrayed, as we might expect, as an assault overcoming her innocent will (although in retrospect she will be inclined to use this conventional language)⁹, but rather by what we might call a process of imitation (the term, as we shall see, that Sidney himself uses) in which the appropriated external signs of love become constituent of—indeed, generate—the inward passion. In a sense, Philoclea does very much come to fashion herself in the shape she prefers, though not in the way Pico necessarily intended.

Philoclea first feels a “friendly affection” for Zelmane because s/he is both a noble and attentive stranger. From this follows “that most natural effect of conforming herself to that which she did like, and not only wishing to be herself such another in all things, but to ground an imitation upon so much an esteemed authority.” Hence, “mark[ing] all Zelmane’s doings, speeches, and fashions,” Philoclea did not only “imitate the soberness of her countenance, the gracefulness of her speech, but even their particular gestures.” The description emphasizes that Philoclea’s imitations are initially empty of feeling: “as Zelmane did often eye her, she would often eye Zelmane; and as Zelmane’s eyes would deliver a submissive but vehement desire in their look, she, *though as yet she had not the desire in her*, yet should her eyes answer in like piercing kindness of a look.” This continues for some time (we are provided with examples of imitated sighs, imitated sadness, and even the detail of an imitated “languishing countenance, with crossed arms and sometimes cast up eyes”—“she also willingly put on the same countenance”) until “at the last, poor soul, ere she were aware, she accepted not only the badge but the service, not only the sign but the passion signified.” Finally, “then needed she no more paint her face with passions, for passions shone through her face” (238–240).

The genuine love that we are told Philoclea ultimately feels for Pyrocles is constituted by an act of imitation. Copying the gestures and speech of someone in love, Philoclea comes to feel love; imitation of the conventional signs of a passion is the source of the passion itself. The cosmetically applied signs of love “painted” on the external body elicit an inward passion that in turn animates and is manifest in the body. The scene poses an array of questions. To what extent are passions externally constructed? How does this paradigm construct or deconstruct the distinction between inner and outer, and between one person and another? To what extent can passions be claimed as one’s own—as features of one’s personal interior—when they are so readily transferable through external manifestations?¹⁰ What model of the self pertains when the passions are formed, so to speak, from the outside in, and as copies of an

original model? Most particularly, what does it mean to use the language of artistic production (of imitation, of signs and signification) to speak of the construction of the passionate self? What are the implications of the idea that the sign exists prior to—and produces—the thing signified? What kinds of claims does the literature that employs such representation make about its own mimetic, expressive and formative resources?

2.

In the *Defence of Poetry*, Sidney faults the writers of “that lyrical kind of songs and sonnets” especially for failing to convey the impression of emotions truly felt: “But truly many of such writings as come under the banner of irresistible love, if I were a mistress, would never persuade me they were in love: so coldly they apply fiery speeches, as men that had rather read lovers’ writings . . . than that in truth they feel those passions, which easily (as I think) may be betrayed by that same forcibleness or *energia* (as the Greeks call it) of the writer” (69–70).¹¹ Imagining himself as the intended audience of these poems, the mistress to be convinced of the writer’s passion and moved to reciprocate it, Sidney posits an unmoved reader—a reader unmoved precisely because it sounds as though the writer is copying the passion expressed by others (“lovers’ writings”), portraying not his own but the passions felt by someone else. Imitated passion—imitating the outward expression of passion adopted from other models—is distinguished from truly felt passion, or from the passions expressed as truly felt by the writer. This would seem to imply (in contrast to Philoclea’s experience in the *Arcadia*) that the application of the forms of passion is insufficient not only to convey but also to produce (in either the writer or reader) the passion signified. This conforms to Astrophil’s discovery in Sonnet 1, that “others’ feet still seemed but strangers in my way” to the expressing of that “loving in truth” initially posited, and to the engendering of a response from Stella.

But, of course, *Astrophil and Stella* doesn’t neatly conclude that an easy solution to Astrophil’s dilemma is to express outwardly an already felt inward passion. Though he claims at points that “I can speak what I feel” and “that all the map of my state I display / When trembling voice brings forth that I do Stella love” (6), or that “I in pure simplicity / Breathe out the flames which burn within my heart” (28), we also know that to distinguish himself from the denigrated “Pindar’s apes” Astrophil does not simply propose speaking what he feels but “copying . . . what in her [Stella] Nature writes” (3), and that those who “bewray a want of inward touch” by singing “poor Petrarch’s long deceased woes” are advised “Stella behold, and then begin t’endite” (15). “Look in thy heart and write” is hardly simple or straight-forward advice: the heart may be the seat of passions, but what Astrophil finds in his heart is the image

of Stella, written by nature, which one imitates, and we also know that the solution, though expressed as newfound discovery that eschews “others leaves,” is itself an imitation of a firmly entrenched convention. This is not the place to fully review the intricacies of this first sonnet, only to suggest the interplay and interdependence of the idea of the interior passion, the imitated exterior (if internalized) natural model, and the imitated literary convention claimed as a personal discovery of interiority.¹²

Similarly, in the *Defence*, the initial statement that truly felt passion “may easily be bewrayed” in contrast to the coldly imitated speeches of others does not tell the whole story. Certainly, Sidney may not primarily be concerned with truly felt passion but with the appearance of it in the writer—the distinction may be one of style or delivery, between the “coldly” applied speech of others and that speech invested with “forcibleness or *energia*.” But in the next paragraph, Sidney proposes that proper imitation results in the internalization and personal possession of what is imitated. Tully and Demosthenes are “most worthy to be imitated” though not mechanically “in Nizolean paperbooks of their figures and phrases:” rather, he would have writers “by attentive translation (as it were) devour them whole, and make them wholly theirs.” If this, too, can be understood as a matter pertaining primarily to “the outside of it, which is words” rather than what Astrophil calls the “inward touch,” the example Sidney next provides, from Tully himself, reveals how closely and complexly connected are the forms and figures used to express passion and the passion itself. Tully, the worthy object of imitation, is himself to be considered an imitator of what, to borrow Sidney’s terms, we might call “fiery speeches,” but not those found in others’ “writings:”

Tully, when he was to drive out Catiline, as it were with a thunderbolt of eloquence, often used the figure of repetition, as *Vivit. Vivit? Imo in Senatum venit, &c.* Indeed, inflamed with a well-grounded rage, he would have his words (as it were) double out of his mouth, and so do that artificially which we see men in choler do naturally.

(70–71)

Genuinely angry, our model imitator and model for imitation copies the rhetorical form naturally used by angry men. The way to “bewray that in truth they feel those passions”—the way to express truly felt passion effectively (and affectively) so that it moves others—is in fact to “do . . . artificially which we see men . . . do naturally.”¹³

These ideas are staples of rhetorical theory in the Renaissance. Brian Vickers has shown that between 1540 and 1640, “the increasing stress on persuasion via the passions led to a readjustment of emphasis within rhetoric,” making *movere* the dominant goal.¹⁴ The aim of rhetoric (and of Sidney’s rhetorically informed poet) is to “move” the audience, and this goal of moving is,

as Wayne Rebhorn has shown, grounded in emotions (through which the will is affected).¹⁵ Tropes and figures serve to express passions; Peacham, for example, writes that figures “do attend uppon affections, as ready handmaids at commaundement to expresse most aptly whatsoever the heart doth affect or suffer.”¹⁶ The audience is moved or “imprinted” with the passion that the rhetor reproduces in language—“imprinting” is a frequently-used image significant for its suggestion that the passions are not so much elicited from within but impressed as a copy from without¹⁷—and is then ideally moved to act in imitation (in Sidney’s example, “who readeth Aeneas carrying old Anchises on his back, that wisheth not it were his fortune to perform so excellent an act?” [41]). Furthermore, Renaissance rhetoricians (following time-honored advice from Aristotle, Horace, Cicero and Quintilian) maintained that the orator must first feel the emotion he aims to arouse in others. As Thomas Wilson writes in *The Art of Rhetoric*, “Neither can any good be done at all when we have said all that ever we can, except we bring the same affections in our own heart, the which we would the judges should bear towards our own matter”;¹⁸ Peacham, describing the figure *pathopeia*, notes that “the Orator being moved himselfe with anie of these affections . . . doth bend & apply his speech to stir his hearers to the same” (143–44). This is what Rebhorn calls a process of “contagion” (87), and it too contributes to the notion we perceive in the episode from the *Arcadia* (where Sidney refers to love’s “infective power”), that passions are not so much our own, and do not so much always emerge from within, but rather get transferred from one person to another. Yet if rhetoric is the potent tool by which the passions of men are not only expressed but also fashioned, the forms and figures of rhetoric are themselves fashioned in imitation of the way men naturally give voice to feelings.¹⁹ As Puttenham puts it, “all your figures Poeticall or Rhethoricall, are but observations of strange speeches, and such as without any arte at al we should use, and commonly do, even by very nature without discipline.”²⁰ Rhetoric imitates emotion, and in turn produces copies of those imitated emotions in the audience. Rhetoric is defined in part by its mimetic function and by its mimetic properties: it inscribes in the audience the passions it expresses in language, and is itself an imitation of men in the grip of passion. We may find a source of emotions in rhetoric, and, as Vickers has shown, the source of rhetoric in emotion.²¹

It will be helpful here to turn to Thomas Wright, whose *Passions of the Minde in Generall* was first published in 1601. He is, as his two modern editors point out, of particular significance for his emphasis on the role of passions in rhetoric, an issue evident throughout the treatise but discussed most extensively in Book V, which was added to the 1604 revised edition and which, in Newbold’s words, is “itself a kind of ‘art’ of rhetoric sandwiched into a treatise on the passions.”²²

Wright gives expression to many of the ideas I have sketched out above,

and will bring our discussion full circle. Wright attends to both the nature of passions and to what we might call the art of passions, describing the effective speaker as “extremely passionate, knowing moreover the Art of moving the affections of those auditors” (3); moreover, he implies that the speaker, to be passionate, must first apply his art to himself, and “must of necessitie stir up first that affect in himselfe, he intendeth to imprint in the hearts of his hearers” (177). Wright is also particularly relevant because he concerns himself with both verbal and bodily expression and imitation of passion. According to Wright, “the internall conceits and affections of our minds” are declared through the “externall operations” of “words and actions,” which “spring from the same roote” (105, 124); and “orators, whose project is persuasion” are rightly concerned with these two “principall” components “to compasse their purpose” (172).

Wright opens his explanation of how passions are rhetorically aroused in rather conventional terms:

if we intend to imprint a passion in another, it is requisit first it be stamped in our hearts. . . . And for this cause the passion which is in our brest, must be the fountaine and origen of al externall actions; & as the internal affection is more vehement, so the external perswasion will be more potent: for the passion in the perswader seemeth to me, to resemble the wind a trumpeter bloweth in at one end of the trumpet, & in what maner it proceedeth from him, so it issueth forth at the other end, & commeth to our eares; even so the passion proceedeth from the heart, & is blowne about the bodie, face, eies, hands, voice, & so by gestures passeth into our eies, & by sounds into our eares: & as it is qualified, so it worketh in us. (174)

Wright begins with the note commonly sounded by rhetoricians: the orator must first feel the passion he wishes to “imprint” in his audience. The passion in the heart is then expressed in the voice and body, and passes into the auditor. Although Wright first employs the image of the “fountain” to describe this process, the analogy he ultimately adopts—to the breath of the trumpeter that issues out, he claims, as it was blown in—might give us pause. Unlike the water imagery used, for example, by Peacham, who depicts the orator’s mouth as “a plentifull fountaine . . . to powre forth the inward passions of his heart” (iii^r) and describes how the orator’s speech “like the flowing water creepeth by gentle meanes into the content of his hearers” (121), Wright’s trumpet is not natural—indeed it is an instrument of art—and presumably effects some transformation on the air breathed into it. Yet Wright does not pursue the details of the analogy, and here seems to be implying, as Peacham did, that passions flow out of the orator and into the audience.²³

As he continues to elaborate, however, the implications of that trumpet

analogy emerge. The orator, he goes on, “ought to endeavour, that every part of action imitate as lively as may be the nature of the passion” (178). The external manifestation imitates the passions within, we assume, since what follows this is an elaboration of the saying that the body is “*imago animi*,” concluding that “the actions of the bodie shoud be, in a perfit perswader, an image of the passion in the mind” (179).²⁴ But he proceeds to ask, “how shall this be performed?”; that is, how shall indeed the actions of the body—the external signs—imitate the passion within? Wright offers two general rules, and “the first is, that we look upon other men appassionate, how they demeane themselves in passions, and observe what and how they speake . . . what motions are stirring in the eyes, hands, bodie, &c.” The orator does not look within to imitate the nature of the passion, but without; he copies the forms of passion as they are expressed by other men. To even further disturb the idea that the rhetoric of passions emerges from the felt passions of the speaker, he advises that the best models of passion to be copied are “stage plaiers, who act excellently, for as the perfection of their exercise consisteth in imitation of others, so they that imitate best, act best. And in the substance of externall action for the most part oratours and stage plaiers agree: and only they differ in this, that these act fainedly, those really” (179).

Renaissance theories of rhetoric, thus, in treating the passions, continually reverse directions, gesturing within (heart, mind, soul), without (to the external signs in words and in the body), and even further beyond, to the others in whom passions are imprinted and to those from whom the external signs (words and actions) are copied. The words and the embodied expressions that both signify passion within the self and fashion the passion within others find their models without. In making the actor the model of external action for the rhetor to imitate, Wright would seem to make passion (or at least its expression) a matter of impersonation, yet his final distinction between those who act feignedly and those who act really, salvages some ever-receding locus of inwardness. Nonetheless, Wright signals the impossibility of locating the passions independent of the signs that may express and produce them.

3.

I return now to a literary text to explore how some of the issues treated here play out in other contexts. In the *Urania*, Wroth at several moments registers the vexed relation between poetic imitation and truly felt passion. At one point, Antissia, Pamphilia’s rival for Amphilanthus’s love, confronts her in a private garden where Pamphilia has inscribed on a tree a sonnet bemoaning her unrequited love. Though Pamphilia has insisted that she does not love, Antissia challenges her with the evidence: “You cannot thus dissemble . . .

your owne hand in yonder fair Ash will witnes against you" (94).²⁵ In response, and perhaps in a playful twist on her uncle's *Defence*, Wroth has Pamphilia exploit a distinction between poetry that imitates and poetry that truly records the feeling of the writer, even as she suggests their indistinguishability: "Not so," she replies, "for many poets write as well by imitation, as by sence of passion; therefore this is no prooffe against me." Antissia can't dispute this argument ("It is well said . . . in your owne defence") but goes on to present what appears to be irrefutable evidence: she has not just read Pamphilia's writing, but overheard her speaking aloud; to this Pamphilia confesses that she loves (but not that she loves Amphilanthus). The complexities of this exchange are multiple: though it records as a commonplace that art may convincingly mime passion without it being truly felt (and as a corollary that words unframed by poetic form must be the expression of true passion), the truth that Pamphilia is hiding is that the poetry on the tree does indeed represent her passion. This scene finds its ironic reversal much later in the *Urania* when Pamphilia shows some of her verses to Amphilanthus at his request. Praising their skill, he nonetheless admonishes her: "But one thing . . . I must find fault with, that you counterfeit loving so well, as if you were a lover, and as we are, yet you are free; pitie it is you suffer not, that can faigne so well" (320). Here, Pamphilia's poems are (perhaps strategically by Amphilanthus) taken to be an exemplary case of imitation that expertly mimes the passion of a lover. To this Pamphilia replies: "Alas my Lord, you are deceived in this for I doe love." Rather than having her verses read as the expression of truly felt passion, they are read as very successful imitations; the implication is that what appears to be the excellency of the imitation is in fact the product of true passion. Whereas in the first instance the true passion can be falsely disclaimed as imitated, here true passion must be confessed because it can be mistaken for imitation.

Elsewhere in the *Urania* (as in the *Arcadia*) Wroth formulates the relation between imitation and passion more explicitly in terms of the representation, construction, and embodiment of the passionate self. At one moment, Polarchus, who has feigned love for a disreputable "amorous lady" in order to rescue Parselius and Leandrus who have been imprisoned by her, comes perilously close to actually loving her. After he has successfully if disingenuously wooed his way into a position to help his friends and is about to execute their liberation, we discover that "a little sad he was to goe" because "so long had hee dissembled, and so feelingly acted his part, as he was caught indeed" for "he [had] plaid himselfe almost into love with her" (406). In this brief scene, the idea that simulating a passion can produce the passion becomes a source of merriment for his companions, who once they have all escaped, "made sport with their companion to see his passions, and he truely confessed he could willingly have stayed with her."

A later scene provides a more serious and extended exposition of a similar situation, and develops in more depth its implications. This episode occurs near the conclusion of the fourth book, and involves a shepherdess Celina and her friend, a Lady named Rossalea. The women are bonded by a great affection, and by something more. Speaking with the traveling Prince of Venice who has seen and immediately fallen in love with Celina, Celina explains that she and Rossalea are “armed with strong resolutions” (640) against love, but she is interrupted by Rossalea’s confession that she has indeed fallen in love. Greatly dismayed, Celina rails against Rossalea for having yielded to the “weakest passion,” to which Rossalea simply responds that she hopes Celina will learn to love as she does.

The resolution of these women to eschew the “weakest passion” of heterosexual love is grounded on a shared notion of self-sufficiency and self-possession. It gave them what Rossalea admits she has now lost, a “subject-like freedom,” and it enabled them, as Celina reminds Rossalea that she once did, to have “gloried in your owne strength and power.” Yet alongside the emphasis on such personal power and freedom, the women are introduced as figures whose equal affection for each other makes them mirror images: when they meet in the countryside, Rossalea greets Celina with “affection gloriously shining in her eyes,” and Celina, “with as kind and loving lookes answered her salutations” (639). Their affection and their shared resolution against love have also voided the kind of distinctions—of class (shepherdess and Lady) and genre (pastoral and epic)—that might otherwise differentiate them. Their bond—in accordance with how Renaissance friendships were customarily construed—is based on a kind of mimetic likeness which each woman seeks to reestablish. When an outraged Celina rejects Rossalea’s hope that Celina too will become a lover (“wishing me to be a lover is a flat curse”), Rossalea contends that her desire is pardonable “since I wish you as my selfe” (641). Rossalea’s hope that Celina will feel the same passion she feels, that she will become again an image of herself, is not unlike that of the rhetor who wants to instill in his audience his own feelingly expressed passion. To this end, when the Venetian asks Rossalea to tell her story, she agrees to do so “with so much truth and passion, as shee could, hoping by it to win the Shepheardesse to bee her fellow in service, as her chosen friend in love.”

We never find out if Rossalea’s passionate delivery of her story would suffice to transform Celina into a lover, because precisely at this moment the women are diverted and the means by which Rossalea hopes to make of her friend a copy of herself is replaced by a variant process of imitation. Seeing her sheep disturbed, Celina runs forth to the bank of the river and discovers an almost-drowned man. Unbeknownst to her, this is the beloved of Rossalea, who appears on the scene and responds to the sight with a mixture of distress

and efforts to recover him. Still ignorant of the man's identity, Celina begins to attend to and respond not so much to him, but more directly to her friend:

Celina saw the care her friend had of him, and with what affection she sought his saving, she thought it charytie, she liked the vertue, she seemed to lament with her as her friend, she counterfeited not, but in truth sorry, yet at first she imitated Rossalea, first knew not alasse how to greive, but so she played till it was so perfectly counterfeited, as she acted beyond that part, and in earnest grieved. (642)

In this manner, in a very short space of time, Celina not only grieves in earnest, but also loves in earnest, and becomes so much the image of her friend that she also falls in love with "her friends chosen love." If this is just vengeance on the woman who rejected love, so does Rossalea, who wished to see herself imprinted on her friend, receive her poetic justice: "Now may Rossalea not only blame her friend but her selfe, for . . . had shee not so passionately loved, and shewed the way by her affectionate and deare expression, shee had not knowne how to entertaine those flames, or practise the use of them." The significance of this scene is highlighted moments later when Celina, thinking she is alone, "cast her selfe on the ground" and "speaking to herself" to lament her plight, speaks not in her own voice but sings "a song the delicate Rossalea had once made, she being perfect in Poetry" (649).

This episode records and recasts many ideas we have been exploring. A genuine passion is formed by imitation of the signs of another's passion; and it is expressed by imitation as well. Passions (and their verbal and bodily signs) are transferrable and blur the demarcation between inner and outer, and between self and other. In the *Arcadia*, Sidney attributes Philoclea's adoption of the "pattern" of Pyrocles's love in part to what he calls the "commonalty of passions" (238). Anne Ferry and Debora Shuger have argued from various perspectives that the notion of the self in the Renaissance was "generic"; experienced "relationally" rather than "reflexively"; and "generalized" and "representative."²⁶ Indeed, the passion within may not so much identify the distinctive self but the common copy.

4.

Wright argues that one way to know one's own passions is to consider the company one keeps, for "in them thou shalt see a patterne of thy passions: for like affecteth like" (78). His tendency to categorize national characters according to their passionate dispositions is based upon a similar assumption that "similitude of inclinations, & likelines of passions" is a basis for social groups (97). Such assertions assume that we bond with those whose passions resemble ours, that a similitude of passion is the source of community. But the passages we have looked at above from the *Arcadia* and the *Urania* provide

another perspective, and suggest not only that similitude of passions creates communities but that it is the nature of passions—in particular their mimetic properties and their transferability—to create similitude.

That transferability is itself based on imitation: copying the signs of passions of others both expresses and produces the passions that create likeness. In the scene from the *Urania*, Rossalea misconstrues the process when she thinks that if Celina loves she will reestablish the likeness that makes one a copy of the other and cements their friendship (“I wish you as myself”); for it turns out not so much that loving will produce her as a copy, but that copying will produce that love. Similarly, in rhetoric, orators express a passion within by imitating the signs of passion in others, and in turn produce copies of that passion in their auditors. The emphasis is repeatedly on the *likeness* between speaker and audience that results from the rhetorical transaction. According to Peacham, the orator “may prevaile much in drawing the mindes of his hearers to his owne will and affection. . . .” (121); the goal is “by the vehemency of our voice and utterance to expresse the greatnesse of our affections and passions, and thereby to move the like affections in our hearers” (63). Wilson employs an analogy to fire: as “there is no substance of itself that will take fire except ye put fire to it,” likewise when an orator’s “fiery stomach causeth evermore a fiery tongue” he will “set others on fire with like affection.” The passions of the auditor thus become an image of the pattern expressed by the orator, for “such men both in their countenance, tongue, eyes, gesture, and in all their body else, declare an outward grief, and with words so vehemently and unfeignedly sets it forward, that they will force a man to be sorry with them and take part with their tears” (163–64).

When Hamlet insists that “I have that within which passes show” he claims an authentic interiority that differentiates him from others who “might play” those actions he defines as “the trappings and the suits of woe” which cannot “denote me truly.” He posits a gap between the signs that anyone can adopt and the authentic inward “me.” But the evidence we have amassed suggests, contrary to Hamlet, that those signs “a man might play” may very well create the passions they signify. The passions that Hamlet situates “within” are elsewhere construed as being formed from without, by the rhetor’s imprint or the adoption of the signs of another’s affect—literally, by going through the motions. The passion that in Philoclea ultimately “shone through her face” derives from the passion she initially “paints” on her face by copying Pyrocles. In the texts we have looked at we see a gesture towards the theory pronounced by Malebranch, writing after Descartes’s revolutionary theory of the emotions, and seventy years after Wright, who claims that the effect of the “communication of the soul’s passions” is “to make [men] exactly like one another not only in their mental disposition but also in the condition of their body.”²⁷ In the

Renaissance, even the passion “within” could suggest the resemblance of—and the lack of boundaries between—one person and another.

Our current understanding of emotion as a term specifying the affective states would not become current until the late seventeenth century. The corollary term used in the Renaissance was passions or affections.²⁸ In the Renaissance, according to the *O.E.D.*, one meaning of the term emotion was a “transference from one place to another.” In this sense, perhaps emotion remains a useful term for discussing the Renaissance theory of passions that migrate from one person to another through imitations of the verbal and bodily signifiers that fashion “within” the “passion signified.”

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Notes

1. Sonnet 1, *Astrophil and Stella*, from *Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. Katherine Duncan-Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 153.
2. *Hamlet*, from *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, ed. David Bevington (New York: HarperCollins, 1992).
3. Katharine Maus, *Inwardness and Theatre in the English Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 1.
4. Anne Ferry, *The “Inward” Language* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 66, 61.
5. See Paster, *The Body Embarrassed* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), and “Nervous Tension” in *The Body in Parts*, ed. David Hillman and Carla Mazzio (New York: Routledge, 1997), 107–125; and Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
6. In his history of acting theory, Joseph Roach has charted the close alliance of rhetoric and acting, and their mutual dependence on the Galenic humoral theory of the passions (*The Player’s Passion: Studies in the Science of Acting* [Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1985]). I share Roach’s interest in what he calls the “rhetoric of the passions” and cover some similar ground, but he is concerned primarily with tracing its basis in physiological doctrines and its implications for the stage actor and his craft. Ultimately, he focuses on the “dangers” or “perils” (“the darker side”) for the actor who risks losing himself or his “own” shape, whereas in taking the issue off the stage, so to speak, I look at texts in which the phenomenon at stake is not so much a danger to the self but constituent of it. Cf. Stanley Fish’s comment in his essay on psychoanalysis and rhetoric, that “the rhetorical and constructed nature of things does not compromise their reality but constitutes it” (“Withholding the Missing Portion: Psychoanalysis and Rhetoric” in *Doing What Comes Naturally* [Durham: Duke University Press, 1989], 552).
7. *The Countess of Pembroke’s Arcadia*, ed. Maurice Evans (Penguin, 1977), 237.
8. Pico, *Oration on the Dignity of Man*, trans. Elizabeth Forbes, in *Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, ed. Ernst Cassirer et. al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), 225.
9. See Philoclea’s complaints, *Arcadia*, 242–43.
10. In *Strange Fits of Passion: Epistemologies of Emotion, Hume to Austen* (California:

- Stanford University Press, 1996), Adela Pinch argues that one effect of “the eighteenth century’s revolution in epistemology” is the concept “that feelings may be impersonal” (7), that they are “transsubjective entities that pass between persons” (19). Susan James, in *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth-Century Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), makes a similar point about how emotions are conceptualized in the seventeenth century from Descartes to Locke: that they “pass from one person to another” (86). My essay takes us back further, to explore and contextualize the configuration of similar concepts in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.
11. Sir Philip Sidney, *A Defence of Poetry*, ed. J. A. Van Dorsten (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966).
 12. See David Kalstone, *Sidney’s Poetry* (New York: Norton, 1965), 126, for an account of these various readings of the sonnet’s final line. On what the poet finds in his heart, see Thomas O. Sloan, “The Crossing of Rhetoric and Poetry in the English Renaissance,” in *The Rhetoric of Renaissance Poetry*, ed. Thomas O. Sloan and Raymond Waddington (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 236, and William Ringler, ed. *The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1962), 459 n. 14. For analyses of the poem’s claim to interiority, see also Ferry, *Inward Language*, 128–30, Patricia Fumerton, “‘Secret’ Arts: Elizabethan Miniatures and Sonnets” in *Representing the English Renaissance*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 121, and Mary Thomas Crane, *Framing Authority*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 192–94.
 13. See Vickers, *Classical Rhetoric in English Poetry* (London: MacMillan, 1970), 109–10, for a discussion of this passage.
 14. Brian Vickers, “On the Practicalities of Renaissance Rhetoric,” in *Rhetoric Revalued*, ed. Brian Vickers (Binghamton, N.Y.: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1982), 136. My discussion here is indebted to Vicker’s work.
 15. See Brian Vickers, “‘The Power of Persuasion’: Images of the Orator, Elyot to Shakespeare,” in *Renaissance Eloquence*, ed. James J. Murphy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 412, on the “fusion of rhetoric and poetics.” See Wayne Rebhorn, *The Emperor of Men’s Minds: Literature and the Renaissance Discourse of Rhetoric* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 85, and Vickers, “Practicalities,” 135, on the close relation between the emotions and the will.
 16. Henry Peacham, *The Garden of Eloquence* (1593) (Gainesville, Fla.: Scholars’ Facsimiles & Reprints, 1954), 120. I have modernized the u/v spelling.
 17. See Rebhorn, 153, for examples of the use of this image, which he relates to the context of sexual reproduction.
 18. Thomas Wilson, *The Art of Rhetoric* (1560), ed. Peter Medine (University Park, Pa.: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 163.
 19. Vickers traces the history of this idea from classical rhetoric through the eighteenth century in *Classical Rhetoric*, 83–121.
 20. Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1970), 303–04. See Derek Attridge’s “Puttenham’s Perplexity: Nature, Art, and the Supplement in Renaissance Poetic Theory” in *Literary Theory/Renaissance Texts*, ed. Patricia Parker and David Quint (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 257–279 on the question of supplementarity and the blurring of distinctions between nature and art in Puttenham.
 21. See Vickers, *In Defense of Rhetoric* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), on how, “from Aristotle to the end of the eighteenth century, the figures and tropes were regarded

- mimetically, as capturing specific and clearly defined emotional states" (305), and on rhetoric's "natural sources in human emotion" (329). See also Susan James, *Passion and Action*, 118, 230, et passim, for a less rhetorically based discussion of the mimetic quality of the emotions in seventeenth-century theories of the bodily expressions of the passions.
22. William Newbold, ed. *The Passions of the Mind in General* (New York and London: Garland, 1986), 26. Thomas O. Sloan, in his facsimile reprint of Wright's text (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971) and in his essay, "The Crossing of Rhetoric and Poetry in the English Renaissance," situates Wright's work in the context of ramism, treatises on the passions, handbooks of rhetoric, and devotional practices. I will be quoting from Sloan's edition.
 23. See Rebborn, 155–56 on the imagery of flowing water to depict the orator's eloquence (which he reads as suggestive of a sexual nature), and Mary Thomas Crane, *Framing Authority*, 66–67, on how humanists employed metaphors of fountains and water to represent powerful speech as a way of naturalizing their attempt to teach students how to achieve eloquent fluency.
 24. It is worth noting that Wright also contends elsewhere that "Words represent most exactly the very image of the minde and soule" and that "speech" is "the image of life" (105).
 25. All quotations are from Mary Wroth, *The Countess of Montgomery's Urania*, ed. Josephine Roberts (Binghamton, N.Y.: Medieval and Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1995).
 26. See Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 233; Shuger, "The 'I' of the Beholder: Renaissance Mirrors and the Reflexive Mind," in *Renaissance Culture and the Everyday* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 37; Ferry, *Inward Language*, 41.
 27. Nicolas Malebranche, *The Search after Truth*, trans. of *De la recherche de la vérité* (1674/5) by Thomas Lennon and Paul Oscamp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 377.
 28. See Ferry, *Inward Language*, 11–12.