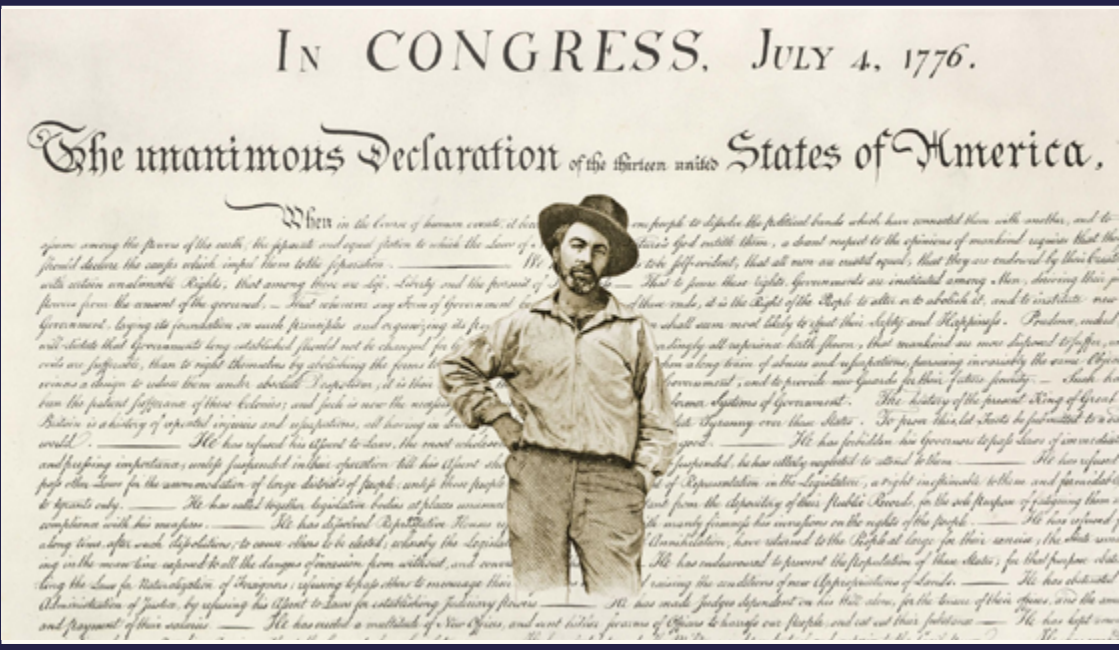
Kiyotaka Sueyoshi



Walt Whitman's Olfactory Language and the Spirit of Revolutionary America

Studia Novorum

SZTE
Szeged University Press

Walt Whitman's Olfactory Language and the Spirit of Revolutionary America

Kiyotaka Sueyoshi

Walt Whitman's Olfactory Language and the Spirit of Revolutionary America

SZEGED UNIVERSITY PRESS
2025

STUDIA NOVORUM

Cover based on

the 1823 William Stone facsimile of the United States Declaration of Independence (source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=621811) and the portrait of Walt Whitman by Samuel Hollyer, engraving of a daguerreotype by Gabriel Harrison (original lost), 1854." The Walt Whitman Archive. Gen. ed. Matt Cohen, Ed Folsom, & Kenneth M. Price. Accessed 30 January 2026. (source: http://www.whitmanarchive.org)

SZEGED UNIVERSITY PRESS

Publisher's representative: Zoltán Gyenge

Editor-in-chief: Klára Sándor

Cover design: Anna Júlia Gyenge

DOI: https://doi.org/10.14232/sn.2025.2

ISBN 978-963-688-101-6 (PDF)

ISSN 3094-1784 (Online)

Table of Contents

Introduction

1. Critical Overview

> Walt Whitman's "Others may praise what they like, but I, from the banks of the running Missouri, praise nothing in art or else, till it has well inhaled the atmosphere of this river, also the Western prairie scent, and exudes it all again," was a voice in the wilderness. The artists have taken no heed of it.
>
> Sadakichi Hartmann, *A History of American Art*[1]

This book is inspired by Sadakichi Hartmann (1867–1944)—a Japanese American "writer, critic, and performer."[2] Hartmann is known for his experiment with the sense of smell—most famously his perfume concert "A Trip to Japan in Sixteen Minutes" (1902)[3]—and his relationship with Walt Whitman, which he wrote down in *Conversations with Walt Whitman* (1895).[4] In light of Hartmann's two particular interests, it is assumed that he would have liked to write about Whitman's olfactory language. However, Hartmann (1895, 49) did not.[5] The same background of national origin and education—Japanese who received education in a European institution,[6] inspires the author to write about Whitman's olfactory language.

---

1 Sadakichi Hartmann, *A History of American Art vol.1* (Boston: L. C. Page & Company: 1901), 192–93.

2 Sadakichi Hartmann, *Sadakichi Hartmann: Collected Poems, 1886–1944 (Memento)*, ed. Floyd Cheung (Stroud: Little Island Press, 2016), 7.

3 Sadakichi Hartmann, "IN PERFUME LAND," *The Forum* (For August 1913): 221–24.

4 Sadakichi Harmann, *Conversations with Walt Whitman* (New York: E. P. Coby & Co., 1895), 50; Hartmann states, "Our relation was after all very much like that of a disciple to his master."

5 Hartmann states, "Intentionally I abstained from all analytical criticism of his works"; Floyd Cheung, "Sadakichi Hartmann, a "Missing Link" of American Poetry," *THE MARGINS*. https://aaww.org/sadakichi-hartmann-missing-link/. Floyd Cheung suggests Harmann's awareness of the lack of critical attention to Whitman's olfactory language.

6 Hartmann was born in Japan to a Prussian merchant and a Japanese woman and received an education in Hamburg. The author was born in Japan and received his education in Hungary.

This book explores two critical vacuums in the criticism of Walt Whitman: his restoration of the revolutionary spirit and his olfactory language. It aims to unite Whitman's politics and poetics through his olfactory language. The two central hypotheses of the book are that Whitman's poetic enterprise is to be studied within the framework of the American experiment of self-government and that Whitman's venturing into the unconventional olfactory language signifies his dedication to the experiment of self-government. The radicalness of Whitman's poetry at the thematic, structural, and language levels derives from his adherence to the revolutionary origin of the nation—from his dedication to the right to self-government and the right to revolution proclaimed in *the Declaration of Independence*. Whitman's devotion to the revolutionary origin of the nation is not only backward-looking but also forward-looking; he urges Americans to continue the experiment of self-government, and in his poetics, olfactory language is the medium for revitalizing the revolutionary spirit.

What Whitman addresses in his poetic enterprise is the original paradox of the revolutionary spirit—the coexistence of its contrastive elements of the spirit of something new and the stability based on it.[7] This paradox raises the question of how to *reinstate* the distinction between ruler and ruled, namely, representation (Arendt 1963, 237). The Founding Fathers were so engrossed in this issue—the stability based on representation—that they omitted to incorporate the *continuous* right to revolution—the spirit of something new (236). The difficulty of republican enterprise—generally and especially for the Founding Fathers[8]—justifies their omission. Back then, republican self-government was a novelty and thus called an "experiment," with its failure as a possible consequence.[9] Decades later, Whitman *belatedly* addresses the same paradox that the Founding Fathers faced. Whitman's innovative form and content signify his intent to restore the revolutionary spirit of something new and solve the contemporary problems that transpired after America's shift from republicanism to democracy.

7 Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (New York: Penguin Books, 1963), 222–23.

8 Baron De Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws vol. I* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1897), 40, 136; The size of the thirteen colonies and the existence of slavery militated against republicanism in America.

9 Thomas Jefferson, *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson vol. XVI*, ed. Albert Ellery Bergh (Washington, D.C: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1907h), 44–45.

It has been said that Whitman's politics and poetics are two sides of the same coin.[10] This book studies this figural mirroring of Whitman within the scope of how to self-govern without the mediation of representation, i.e., how to govern with the revolutionary spirit of the experiment of self-government. This book argues that Whitman's restoration of this spirit and his olfactory language are the best lenses to examine this specific figural mirroring because there is a profound intertwining between Whitman's poetic enterprise to self-govern without the mediation of representation and the sense of smell—*a mediality of immediacy, i.e., without the mediation of representation par excellence*.[11]

There are various reasons for overlooking the theme of Whitman's restoration of the revolutionary spirit and his olfactory language. In terms of the overlook of his restoration of the revolutionary spirit, Whitman is a canonical figure in American Studies, and the criticism of his works has been influenced by the trend of reading canonical works, which has decoupled art from politics.[12] Even if the criticism of Whitman's political view would be accommodated, there is another obstacle to the theme of Whitman's restoration of the revolutionary spirit; it is eclipsed by the umbrella term of "democracy." True, Whitman is viewed as "the poet of democracy," and his political theory and its widespread impact are well studied.[13] However, this preponderance of "democracy" in the criticism of Whitman is at odds with the current project. Whitman's restoration of the revolutionary spirit must be examined in the context of the Founding Fathers' omission to incorporate it in their constituting a lasting institution of republicanism—an emerging representative government, and not in the context of democracy—a majority rule—because they made a clear distinction between the two forms of government (Arendt 1963, 166). Besides, importantly, Whitman links his poetic experiment— "a language experiment"[14]—with the larger American ex-

10 Shira Wolosky, *Poetry and Public Discourse in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 183.

11 Tonino Griffero, "Sniffing Atmospheres. Observations on Olfactory Being-In-The-World" in *Olfaction: An Interdisciplinary Perspective from Philosophy to Life Sciences*, eds. Nicola Di Stefano and Maria Teresa Russo (Gewerbestrasse: Springer, 2022), 82–83.

12 Betsy Erkkila, *Whitman the Political Poet* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 7.

13 John E. Seery, "Introduction: Democratic Vistas Today," in *A Political Companion to Walt Whitman*, ed. John E. Seery (Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 2011), 1–15.

14 Walt Whitman, *An American Primer by Walt Whitman with Facsimiles of the Original Manuscript*, ed. Horace Traubel (Boston: Small, Maynard and Company, 1904), viii.

periment.[15] Since his youth Whitman had been committed to the American experiment of self-government; Whitman the journalist repeatedly employed the phraseology of it—"experiment [test] of man's capacity for self government."[16] Whitman's immersion into the American experiment of self-government constitutes his "long foreground" (Whitman 1965, 731–732). In other words, Whitman views the revolutionary spirit of the experiment of self-government as the origin of America and, therefore, as the mainspring of his poetics. However, in the critical tradition, Whitman's tackling of dilemmas in the context of democracy has occupied the center, dilemmas such as the relationship between the individual and the mass, and the relationship between the states and the federal government.[17] Through examining Whitman's poetics and politics as part of the American experiment of self-government, this book brings his restoration of the revolutionary spirit to light.

Whitman's olfactory language has been neglected for different reasons.[18] First of all, the main approaches to Whitman's works have been from the critic's position that Whitman is a Transcendentalist (Erkkila 1989, 6–7), and thus what seems incompatible with Transcendentalism has been beneath their notice.[19] The negative attitude toward Whitman's olfactory language dates back to Emerson, who set a precedent by stating "There are parts of the book where I hold my nose as I read.[...] it is a fine art if he can deodorise his illustration..."[20] (That Emerson views Whitman's olfactory language as a breach of the literary decorum conversely shows that Whitman's olfactory language typifies Whitman's "new

15 Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass: Authoritative Texts Prefaces Whitman on His Art Criticism*, eds. Sculley Bradley and Harold W. Blodgett (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1965), 562–563.
16 Walt Whitman, *The Collected Writings of Walt Whitman: The Journalism I: 1838–1846*, ed. Herbert Bergman (New York: Peter Lang, 1998), 55, 481.
17 David S. Reynolds, *Walt Whitman's America: A Cultural Biography* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), 112.
18 The scant research on Whitman's olfaction includes Kenneth Burke's "Policy Made Personal: Whitman's Verse and Prose-Salient Traits" in *Bloom's Modern Critical Views: Walt Whitman, Updated Edition*, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House, 2006), 27–60; Christopher Looby's "The Roots of the Orchis, the Iuli of Chesnuts": The Odor of Male Solitude" in *Solitary Pleasures: The Historical, Literary, and Artistic Discourses of Autoeroticism*, eds. Paula Bennett and Vernon A. Rosario (New York: Routledge, 1995), 170–172; and Daniela Babilon's *The Power of Smell in American Literature: Odor, Affect, and Social Inequality*. (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang GmbH, 2017), 100–109.
19 Joseph Beaver, *Walt Whitman—Poet of Science* (New York: King's Crown Press, 1951), 121.
20 Moncure Daniel Conway, *Emerson at Home and Abroad* (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1882), 360.

decorums."[21]) More generally, since the time of Whitman and Emerson, western society has been more and more deodorized[22]—mainly because of the animalistic aspect of the sense of smell.[23] The deodorization is so prevalent that the critics, in their criticism, seem under its influence; they deodorize Whitman's works in their reading. Just as importantly, although critics point out the import of the five senses in Whitman's poems—Whitman said, "I am the poet of the body,"[24] when some of them refer to specific senses, their focus tends to be on the sense of touch, not on the sense of smell.[25]

Thus, the critics of Whitman have held two major assumptions related to the book: 1) all of Whitman's politics can be examined under the rubric of "democracy," and 2) Whitman's olfactory language is unworthy of investigation. The first assumption is supported by Whitman's writings about democracy—for instance, "Every page of my book emanates Democracy"[26] —and his authorship of *Democratic Vistas*. However, despite the preponderance of democracy in Whitman's politics, too much emphasis on this political aspect obscures the others. A case in point is related to the aforementioned Whitman's figural mirroring between his poetics and politics, i.e., the Whitmanian relationship between literary and political representation, one of the foci in the criticism of Whitman.[27] Where-

21 Walt Whitman, "Walt Whitman and His Poems," *The United States Review* vol. 5 (September 1855 (b)): 205–212. https://whitmanarchive.org/criticism/reviews/lg1855/anc.00176.html; Whitman states, "He drops disguise and ceremony, and walks forth with the confidence and gayety of a child. For the old decorums of writing he substitutes new decorums." In the same self-review, Whitman repeatedly refers to the dichotomy between "the old decorums" and "new decorums." He states, "Every word that falls from his mouth shows silent disdain and defiance of *the old theories and forms*. Every phrase announces *new laws* [...];" and that "By this writer *the rules of polite circles are dismissed with scorn*. Your stale modesties, he says, are filthy to such a man as I." (emphases mine)

22 David Howes, "Olfaction and Transition" in *The Varieties of Sensory Experience: A Sourcebook in the Anthropology of the Senses*, ed. David Howes (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 144.

23 Stephen Kern, "Olfactory Ontology and Scented Harmonies: on the History of Smell," *The Journal of Popular Culture* vol. 7, no. 4 (1974): 816.

24 Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass: The First (1855) Edition*, ed. Malcolm Cowley (New York: Viking, 1959), 44; in the deathbed edition of *Leaves of Grass*, the term "body" here is written capitalized (Whitman 1965, 48).

25 Roger Asselineau, *The Evolution of Walt Whitman: The Creation of a Book* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1962), 10, 13.

26 Walt Whitman, *Notebooks and Unpublished Prose Manuscripts vol. IV*, ed. Edward F. Grier (New York: New York University Press, 1984b), 1508.

27 Jay Grossman, *Reconstituting the American Renaissance: Emerson, Whitman, and the Politics of Representation* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003), 19.

as the relationship has been approached either from literary or political aspects, most of the politics-centered approaches—with adjectives such as "inclusive" and "expansive"—put an undue emphasis on the *extent* of representation—class, gender, and race, etc. —at the cost of its *nature*.[28] However, this book argues that the *nature* of the representation matters most; the *nature* of it impacts people's use of self-agency because the representation involves relinquishing their power (Arendt 1963, 237). Still, at a more minute level, the representation can be just a vehicle through which people (indirectly) exercise their power or become a tool to rule them, the distinction to which Whitman repeatedly refers, especially in the context of his poetization.[29] The formation of Whitman's poetics revolves around the *nature* of the representation, i.e., the question of "how to self-govern without the mediation of representation."[30] The following pages demonstrate that

28 Kirsten Harris, *Walt Whitman and British Socialism: "The Love of Comrades"* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 18; Harris states, "In modeling a democracy (and a democratic poetry) that was egalitarian, expansive and inclusive, and characterized by evolutionary progress and the modern, Whitman constructed a democratic vision that was peculiarly American."

29 Walt Whitman, *Notebooks and Unpublished Prose Manuscripts vol. I*, ed. Edward F. Grier (New York: New York University Press, 1984a), 147; Whitman states, "It is not a labor of clothing or putting on or describing—it is a labor of clearing away and reducing—for every thing is beautiful in itself and perfect — and the office of the poet is to remove what stands in the way of our perceiving the beauty and perfection /."

30 With the distinction between the nature and the extent of the representation, this book highlights Whitman's inclusiveness in his vision. In *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition, not only white males but also white females, slaves, Native Americans, and other oppressed groups constitute the body politic. In "Song of Myself," Whitman (1959) writes, "I am the poet of woman the same as the man" (44), "I am the hounded slave" (62), "it [the grass] means, Sprouting alike in broad zones and narrow zones, / Growing among black folks as among white, / Kanuck, Tuckahoe, Congressman, Cuff, I give them the same, I receive them the same" (29), and "Through me many long dumb voices, / Voices of the interminable generations of slaves, / Voices of prostitutes and of deformed persons, / Voices of the diseased and despairing, and of thieves and dwarfs, [...]" (48). These inclusive expressions remain in the deathbed edition of *Leaves of Grass*, except for some changes in wording (Whitman 1965, 52).

However, Whitman's inclusiveness to this extent is temporary. In other words, as Martin Klammer notes, after the first edition, Whitman's vision of the body politic takes on a tint of exclusivity, as evident in his fewer and/or negative portrayals of slaves in his poems and other writings; in short, *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition is the summit to be followed by a decline. (Martin Klammer, *Whitman, Slavery, and the Emergence of Leaves of Grass* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), 159–163). Klammer explains the peculiar inclusiveness related to slaves in the first edition; he (163) states, "Whitman's passionate rhetoric about African Americans developed from a unique and perhaps unrepeatable coalescing of historical and discursive forces at the very moment he was seeking to create a work transcendent and new." In a sense, Klammer's explanation also applies to Whitman's overall inclusiveness in *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition. With its focus on Whitman's experiment of self-government in the formation of his poetics and early works, Whitman's inclusiveness is the keynote of this book.

examining Whitman's restoration of the revolutionary spirit and olfactory language helps to see the Whitmanian relationship between literary and political representation in a new way.

As shown above, the second assumption—Whitman's olfactory language is unworthy of investigation—derives from its incompatibility with Transcendentalism and the general indifference to the sense of smell. However, the intervention of Whitman's restoration of the revolutionary spirit helps to get another look at his olfactory language, i.e., his dedication to self-government in poetization enables Whitman to espouse unconventional olfactory language to rekindle the revolutionary spirit in the minds of Americans.

In Whitman's early poetry, the republican ideals America represents for him are connected to his imagery related to the human body (Whitman 1965, 735).[31] Whitman's poetization of republican self-government centers around the body, which is forefronted by sensuous perceptions through the five senses. The focus is on the acuity of sense, which pertains to the American experiment. It is a sign of health,[32] which is, in turn, an indicator of good physical and mental self-government.[33] In other words, the acuity of sense signifies the physical and mental disposition—the vigor—to continue the American experiment. Here, Whitman's upfront of the sense of smell has a double implication; firstly, it is the sense that embodies human corporeality most,[34] and secondly, he is so vigorous that he can embrace this most primitive sense.[35]

Furthermore, applying some of the theoretical apparatus of the olfactory study expounds how Whitman's olfactory language works in the framework of "how to self-govern without the mediation of representation." First of all, the olfactory immediacy—its collapse of the barrier between the inner and outer, between signifier and signified (Griffero 2022, 82–83)—helps to achieve the po-

31 Sueyoshi Kiyotaka, "Walt Whitman's Common Sense" in *Distinguished Szeged Student Papers 2020*, ed. Attila Kiss (Szeged: JATE Press Kiadó, 2020), 33–60.

32 Kerry McSweeney, *The Language of the Senses: Sensory-Perceptual Dynamics in Wordsworth, Coleridge, Thoreau, Whitman, and Dickinson* (Quebec: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998), 118.

33 Harold Aspiz, *Walt Whitman and the Body Beautiful* (Urbana, Chicago, London: University of Illinois Press, 1980), 241.

34 David Le Breton, "Smell as a Way of Thinking About the World: An Anthropology" in *Olfaction: An Interdisciplinary Perspective from Philosophy to Life Sciences*, eds. Nicola Di Stefano and Maria Teresa Russo (Gewerbestrasse: Springer, 2022), 10–11.

35 Rachel Herz, *The Scent of Desire: Discovering Our Enigmatic Sense of Smell* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2007), 13–14.

etic self-government without the intermediary of representation. Secondly, the aforementioned olfaction's strong suggestiveness of human corporeality comes into play in the realm of the poetic and political self-government, with human presence preceding his absence by representation. To sum up, the sense of smell works best in achieving immediacy without representation (in terms of both poetics and politics), and thus, Whitman's olfactory language is at the heart of his poetry, notably in his conflation of poetics and politics.

2. Methodological Overview

This book consists of Part I, titled "Whitman's Restoration of the Revolutionary Spirit," and Part II, titled "Whitman's Olfactory Language." Part I centers around Whitman's politics, and Part II focuses on his poetics. In conflating his politics and poetics, the book espouses the methodological framework of New Historicism and the anthropology of senses. David S. Reynolds' *Walt Whitman's America: A Cultural Biography* is one of the salient examples of the New Historicism's influence on the criticism of Whitman.[36] Quoting Whitman's saying that "they (the critic[s]) do not take the trouble to examine what they start out to criticize—to judge a man from his own standpoint, to even find out what that standpoint is,"[37] Reynolds (1995, xi–xii) notes that Whitman demands the incorporation of full historical specificity in reading his poetry. Reynolds, who reconstructs Whitman's life and times, ends his "INTRODUCTORY NOTE" by saying, "I have tried to adhere to the historical record instead of imposing today's views on the past" (xii). This book adds the anthropology of smell to Reynolds' New Historicism approach. These two approaches are compatible in that the *empirical* understanding of olfaction—the most "primitive" and "enigmatic" sense (Herz 2007, 13–14, 18, 57)—has not changed much since Whitman's time. (As regards the *scientific* understanding of olfaction, it was in 2004 that the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine was awarded for the discovery of the mechanism of olfaction (24).) In other words, there is little difference between the current and previous generations' understanding of the sense of smell. In the application of

36 Jerome Loving, "Biographies" in *Walt Whitman: An Encyclopedia*, eds. J.R. LeMaster and Donald D. Kummings (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), 62.

37 Horace Traubel, *With Walt Whitman in Camden (January 21 – April 7, 1889)*, ed. Sculley Bradley (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1953), 41.

New Historicism, the sense of smell is *doubly*—besides the ordinary meaning of the term—*the sense of memory*.

While Reynolds' book takes a culture-focused New Historicism approach, Betsy Erkkila's *Whitman the Political Poet* applies a politics-focused New Historicism. In her rescue of "the historic specificity of his time" (Erkkila 1989, 7), Whitman's politics is at the center. According to Erkkila, Whitman's poetics and politics go hand in hand. Among her insights into the relationship between Whitman's poetics and politics, this book expands on her thesis that Whitman aims to regenerate Americans by appealing to the original Revolutionary spirit (3–24). It is her book that makes the author aware of the significance of the influence of Jefferson—the author of *the Declaration of Independence*—and the revolutionary spirit on Whitman. With the further incorporation of the influence of Jefferson, this book explores the theme of Whitman's restoration of the revolutionary spirit.

In this context of expanding on Erkkila's study and as the pertinent study of the aforementioned Whitmanian political and literary representation, Peter J. Bellis's article "Against Representation: The 1855 Edition of *Leaves of Grass*" merits attention. Bellis states, "My objective [...] is not simply to readjust the balance between aesthetics and politics, but to try to move beyond such oppositions—for this, it seems to me, is Whitman's aim in the 1855 *Leaves*. He writes in what Jay Cantor calls "the revolutionary moment."[38] This book delves into what Bellis terms "Against Representation" and "revolutionary moment" through the theme of Whitman's restoration of the revolutionary spirit. Under this theme, it examines the radicalism of the form and content of the various editions of *Leaves of Grass*, with the first edition as the main text. Bellis (1999, 73) notes that Erkkila's book "is a refocused reading that now emphasizes Whitman's political content but understates his formal radicalism; Erkkila never takes full account of Whitman's attack on representation itself, or of his attempt to implicate both himself and his readers in the ongoing democratic process of the poem." In his study, Bellis "take[s] full account of Whitman's attack on representation," but, he does so without a distinction between democracy and republican self-government. By narrowing down the scope of the investigation to Whitman's struggle of "how to self-govern without the mediation of representation," this book examines "Whitman's attack on representation" and conflates the radicalness of form and content in his poetics.

38 Peter J. Bellis, "Against Representation: The 1855 Edition of *Leaves of Grass*," *The Centennial Review* vol. 43, no. 1 (Winter 1999): 73.

3. Jefferson's Ward Republic

In exploring a critical vacuum of the theme of Whitman's restoration of the revolutionary spirit, a similar enterprise of the Founding Fathers is called for. That is Jefferson's ward republic. However, critics of Whitman have overlooked the link between the two enterprises, let alone the link between Whitman and Jefferson. Indeed, incorporating Jefferson into the criticism of Whitman is an uphill task, which is indicated by the reception of Erkkila's *Whitman the Political Poet*. M. Wynn Thomas notes that Erkkila's book is groundbreaking in its "bringing politics into Whitman's poetry."[39] However, Erkkila's approach as a whole is so epochal that some critics have overlooked her emphasis on the influence of Jefferson on Whitman.[40] And in her book, Erkkila herself does not refer to Jefferson's ward republic.

Unlike other Founding Fathers, Jefferson, though belatedly and in vain, proposed to incorporate a concrete organ to experience the revolutionary spirit—proposed to subdivide the county into a smaller unit of the ward republic to promote the spirit of self-government.[41] This book demonstrates that, like Jefferson's ward republic, *Leaves of Grass* aims to open up a space for the exercise of self-agency—the revolutionary spirit of the experiment of self-government.

In Monticello, the author of *the Declaration of Independence* was dissatisfied with how American republicanism unfolded; Jefferson (1907g, 35) stated, "Where then is our republicanism to be found? Not in our Constitution certainly, but merely in the spirit of our people." The dichotomy between "our Constitution" and "the spirit of our people" shows how much Jefferson valued the latter. For Jefferson, the problem of the Constitution is its omission to incorporate a concrete organ to experience the revolutionary spirit. Thus, Jefferson proposed a ward republic as "the dawn of the salvation of the republic."[42] Jefferson

39 M. Wynn Thomas, "Erkkila, Betsy. Whitman the Political Poet [review]," *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* vol. 7, no. 1 (1989): 30.

40 Stephen Railton, "Whitman the Political Poet by Betsy Erkkila [review]," *Nineteenth-Century Literature* vol. 45, no. 1 (June 1990): 103–105; Although Erkkila refers to Jefferson as often as Lincoln through frequent quotes directly from the writings of Jefferson, there is no allusion to Jefferson in his review of Erkkila's book.

41 Thomas Jefferson, *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson vol. XV*, ed. Albert Ellery Bergh (Washington, D.C: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1907g), 37–38.

42 Thomas Jefferson, *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson vol. XII*, ed. Albert Ellery Bergh (Washington, D.C: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1907e), 394.

(1907e, 393–394) modeled it after the New England township, a small political unit full of energetic, participatory momentum that started the American Revolution itself. This book shows that Whitman, like Jefferson, finds this field dynamics vital in restoring the revolutionary spirit.

Jefferson makes it clear that the ward republic outweighs representation. Jefferson (1907g, 33) states, "Governments are republican only in proportion as they embody the will of their people, and execute it" and thereby acknowledges the significance of equal representation. However, unlike other Founding Fathers, Jefferson does not think that the system of representation offers a fundamental solution to American republicanism. For Jefferson, the ward republic is its bulwark. Jefferson (70–71) states:

> The affairs of the larger sections, of counties, of States, and of the Union, not admitting personal transactions by the people, will be delegated to agents elected by themselves; and representation will thus be substituted, where personal action becomes impracticable. Yet, even over these representative organs, should they become corrupt and perverted, the division into wards constituting the people, in their wards, a regularly organized power, enables them by that organization to crush, regularly and peaceably, the usurpations of their unfaithful agents, and rescues them from the dreadful necessity of doing it insurrectionally.

In the last sentence, Jefferson details the comparison between representation and the ward republic. That is, unlike representation, "the division into wards constituting the people, in their wards, a regularly organized power" never "become[s] corrupt and perverted," and thus vanquishes the enemy of American republicanism "regularly and peaceably." For Jefferson, the revolutionary spirit of self-government is paramount, and his ward republic encapsulates matters concerning its sustenance. However, the ward republic was not implemented, and decades later, in its stead, Whitman aims to rejuvenate the revolutionary spirit poetically. Jefferson's ward republic provides a solid reference point for examining Whitman's poetics in the context of the republican experiment of self-government.

4. Whitman's interweaving of air, breath, and the sense of smell in his "autochthonic song"

This section formulates the scope of the book's exploration of "Whitman's olfactory language." As Daniela Babilon (2017, 100, 108–9) argues, in the course of American literature, Whitman is at the vanguard in his "use of the motif of smell." In terms of the five senses, Transcendentalists value the sense of sight most, as shown in Emerson's famous "eye-ball," and devalue the sense of smell, as shown in the previously quoted "deodorise" line of his. While some contemporaneous writers employ the olfactory-related language,[43] Whitman is alone in elevating it to a vital part of his poetics. This book explores this elevation of Whitman, namely, his poetic enterprise of interweaving air, breath, and the sense of smell.

In his notebook for the first *Leaves of Grass*, Whitman (1984a, 195) experiments with combinations of some words:

> Breathjuice—Airscents—Airsmells—Airodor—Loveodor—Airdrifts—Breathsmoke—Airjuice for you—Airsough.

The words included in this "language experiment" are, in the order of appearance, "breath," "juice," "air," "scents," "smells," "odor," "love," "drifts," "smoke," and "sough." Among them, this book focuses on the tripartite relationship of "air," "breath," and the words related to the sense of smell, such as "scents," "smells," and "odor." In other words, Whitman's endeavor to interweave air, breath, and the sense of smell—this particular experiment of poetic self-government—is one of

43 Although the sense of smell remains at the periphery of Transcendentalists' literary project, some, such as Henry David Thoreau and Herman Melville, utilize it, as Babilon (2017, 89, 94–100) notes. According to her, in Walden, Thoreau utilizes the sense of smell in relation to his awareness of its role in memory, and in Moby-Dick, Melville uses it as a vehicle for socio-cultural criticism. Other examples of the use of smell include Emily Dickinson's "They have a little Odor—that to me" and Thomas Wentworth Higginson's "The Procession of the Flowers." Dickinson's poem reads, "They have a little Odor—that to me / Is metre—nay—'tis Poesy —/ And spiciest at fading—celebrate—/ A Habit—of a Laureate—." (Emily Dickinson, *The Poems of Emily Dickinson: Reading Edition*, ed. R. W. Franklin (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), 229). The poem is surprisingly evocative of Whitman in that Dickinson writes, "a little Odor" is "Poesy." As regards Higginson's prose, Chapter 4 of this book reviews it in the context of the difference between him and Whitman.

the overarching themes of the book. A two-stage approach helps to appreciate this tripartite relationship of air, breath, and the sense of smell.

Firstly, let us look at the relationship between air and breath. The relationship is doubly important since it has both bodily and poetic implications. On the one hand, Whitman views breathing as the most vital function of the human body, which the beginning of "Song of Myself" indicates.[44] On the other hand, as Whitman (1965, 150) writes in "Song of the Open Road," air furnishes the breath to speak.[45] This poetic function of breath, with the underpinning of the bodily function, is core to Whitman's enterprise of writing his "autochthonic song [...] coming from its own soil and soul."[46] Whitman repeatedly writes about the relationship between air and breath, with *America* as an essential element in the link; he wrote, "This is the breath for America, because it is my breath, / This is for laws, songs, behavior, / This is the tasteless water of Souls this is the true sustenance" (1965, 623) and "American air I have breathed, breathe henceforth also of me / American ground that supports me, I will support you also." [...] "A remembrance * * * * */ A breath to American air, / Remembrance for a breed of full-sized young men and women."[47] The significance of "air" augments when "open" is added to "air"; Whitman (1899, 67; 1959, 82) states, "We have had man indoors and under artificial relations [...] but never before have we had man in the open air, his attitude adjusted to the seasons and as one might describe it, adjusted to the sun by day and the stars by night" and "And I swear I never will translate myself at all, only to him or her who privately stays with me in the open air." Like "American air," "the open air" is the central aspect of Whitman's "autochthonic song." Whitman's bodily and poetic breath is his "autochthonic song" made of "American air," "the open air."

Inseparable from this Whitmanian relationship between air and breath is the sense of smell. Generally speaking, the sense of smell is associated with the perception of air and breath (Griffero 2022, 79), and Whitman is known to have

44 Chapter 4 of the book investigates the first five stanzas of "Song of Myself," with attention to Whitman's intertwining of air, breath, and the sense of smell.

45 Section 3 of the poem starts with the line "You air that serves me with breath to speak!"; Whitman (1984a, 127) also writes, "The air which furnishes me the breath to speak is subtle and boundless—but what is it compared to the things it serves me to speak—the meanings—."

46 Walt Whitman, *Prose Works 1892 vol. II, Collect and Other Prose*, ed. Floyd Stovall (New York: New York University Press, 1964), 667.

47 Walt Whitman, *Notes and Fragments: Left by Walt Whitman*, ed. Richard Maurice Bucke (London: Talbot, 1899), 13.

had a keen sense of smell.[48] In the above "language experiment" of forming the tripartite relationship between air, breath, and the sense of smell, Whitman goes as far as to test three kinds of words related to olfaction — "scents," "smells," and "odor" — to explore the possibility of his "autochthonic song" made of his olfactory language. Taking a cue from Whitman, this book explores why and how Whitman incorporates his olfactory language in his poetry. With the interdisciplinarity of literary and olfactory studies, Part II of the book examines Whitman's intertwining of air, breath, and the sense of smell, an examination done with an eye to his restoration of the revolutionary spirit of self-government. That is, it also investigates the tripartite relationship of air, breath, and the sense of smell in the context of Whitman's conflation of his aesthetics and politics.

5. The Structure of the Book

The book consists of two parts that comprise three chapters. Both parts examine how Whitman self-governs his poetics without the intermediary of representation at the thematic, structural, and language levels. Although the line separating the two parts blurs, Part I examines Whitman's poetics at the thematic and structural levels, and Part II investigates it at the language level.

The book begins by examining Whitman's choice of poetry as his medium. In so doing, it associates Whitman's poetics with Jefferson's ward republic. Chapter 1 sets the tone for the book; like Jefferson's ward republic, Whitman's poetic enterprise is to restore the revolutionary spirit of the experiment of self-government. In connecting the two enterprises that appear disconnected, the chapter extensively quotes from Jefferson's and Whitman's writings, including his journalistic articles. This new link puts Whitman's poetics in a new light; Whitman's "interior American republic" (Whitman 1855b) is a further subdivision of Jefferson's ward republic, and in this small republic, self-government without the intermediary of representation becomes more accessible. Like Jefferson's undertak-

48 John Bailey, *Walt Whitman* (London: Macmillan and Co, 1926), 210–211; Bailey quotes Whitman's lines from "BIRDS MIGRATING AT MIDNIGHT": "In the silence, shadow and delicious odor of the hour, (the natural perfume belonging to the night alone,) I thought it rare music. You could *hear* the characteristic motion—once or twice "the rush of mighty wings," [...] (Walt Whitman, *Specimen Days & Collect* (Philadelphia: Rees Welsh & Co., 1882), 84, original emphasis). Bailey notes, "This has a special interest as illustrating what all his friends record of the exceptional acuteness of his powers of hearing and smell."

ing, *Leaves of Grass* aims to open up a space for exercising self-agency and restore the revolutionary spirit of the experiment of self-government.

Chapter 2 focuses on the structure of Whitman's poems. It examines Whitman's catalogue—the basic unit of his poetry—in the framework of the three overthrows: the political overthrow of the old system, the poetic overthrow of the literary convention, and the personal overthrow of the former way of life. The previous chapter's study on the relationship between Whitman's poetics and Jefferson's ward system is the basis of this chapter's investigation because the spirit of the experiment of self-government, the tenet of the ward system, is a thread that runs through all three overthrows. Following Jefferson's dictum "divide the counties into wards" (Jefferson 1907f, 423; 1907g, 37), Whitman "divides the poem into catalogues." These two principles signify the true overlap of the political and literary overthrows of the old systems—*the Declaration of Independence* and *Leaves of Grass*. Although there are few explicit political contents in Whitman's catalogues, his political overthrow is already internalized in his catalogues. In this sense, Whitman's journey of self-expansion in "Song of Myself" involves poetic and personal overthrow as well as political overthrow. The energy for the journey is self-generative within the poem, and the catalog itself provides it. Whitman's catalogue is not an empty space but is charged with the field dynamics of the American Revolution, the spirit of the experiment of self-government. With the three overthrows, Whitman's "perpetual journey" (Whitman 1959, 79) via the catalogue equals Jefferson's "permanent revolution" (Jefferson 1907g, 464).

Chapter 3 examines the theme of Whitman's poetics. It studies Whitman's concept of "pride" — "a *motif* of nearly all my verse" (Whitman 1965, 571, original emphasis)—in the context of the American experiment. While "catalogue" overthrows the old way of politics, poetics, and personal life, it is through his concept of "pride" that Whitman seeks to synthesize self-government in those three realms. This chapter delves into Whitman's incorporation of corporeality into "pride" because the exercise of self-agency requires both spiritual and physical exertion and the incorporation expands the domain of the exercise of self-agency to cover mundane everyday life. The intertwining of spirituality and corporeality in the daily-life experiment figures as a way for Americans to be "a great poem." This emphasis on spiritual and physical disposition dates back to the revolutionary origin of the nation. The exercise of self-agency in ordinary life is to inherit the Founding spirit of the experiment of self-government. Through the interplay that centers around "pride," Whitman urges Americans to show ca-

pacity for self-government. He seeks to remind them that self-government is an unceasing experiment and that invigorating pride is indispensable in the experiment. Whitman's "pride" is an invigorating pride to continue the experiment of self-government.

Part II of the book shifts the critical focus from Whitman's theme and structure to his language, with the motif of Whitman's intertwining of air, breath, and the sense of smell at the forefront. Chapter 4 examines Whitman's olfactory language as the main element of what he calls "new decorums," his language-level self-government without the mediation of representation. The chapter begins with an account of the difference between Whitman and Transcendentalists through the lens of olfaction. Although Emerson's reception of *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition is known to be positive, he also notes, "There are parts of the book where I hold my nose as I read," and demands that Whitman "deodorize" such parts. While Transcendentalists' demand to "deodorize" Whitman's olfactory language persists, Whitman—proclaiming, "For the old decorums of writing he substitutes new decorums" (Whitman 1855b)—continues to "odorize" his poetry. The "deodorization" of a text encompasses the fundamental issue of purity and filth, extending to the difference in the underlying concept of poetry—pure representation or pure presence—between Transcendentalists and Whitman. In the first five stanzas of "Song of Myself," Whitman's olfactory language portrays his transformation into a poet described in the Preface and smooths out this transition. There is a parallel between the metamorphoses of Whitman and the transformation of the valence of his olfactory language. As his transition progresses, the valence of olfactory language shifts from negative, neutral, and finally to positive. Whitman's replacement of "the old decorums" with "the new decorums" occasions the gradual decrease in the artificiality attached to olfactory language, which in turn represents the overall diminution of the literary conventionality of the poem. Whitman sloughs off the artificiality to the extent that he can communicate with "a spirit," which spreads his "barbaric yawp" (Whitman 1959, 85). Whitman entrusted his career as a poet to olfactory language. "The smoke" (25–26) is the first word of his first catalogue—a symbol of "the new decorums" brimming with the vigor of the five senses—which shoves "the old decorums" out of its way in the poem.

Chapter 5 focuses on Whitman's incorporation of the body into his poetry, which implicates the presence of people—characters and Whitman himself—instead of their absence by representation. Regarding Whitman's incorporation of

the body, the critics' focus has been on the influence of phrenology. This chapter does not address Whitman's metaphysical merger of body and soul[49] but instead delves into the linguistic implications of phrenology. The phrenological textuality of the body helps Whitman to gain a visual "bodily sign" without the intermediary between sign and signified. By extension, this chapter delves into Whitman's olfactory "bodily sign" with William Fishbough's doctrine of the "aromal sphere"[50] as the reference point. The "aromal sphere" is the olfactory rendition of phrenology (physiognomy) in that the inside is perceived from the outside. The examination of Whitman's poems through the "aromal sphere"—his olfactory bodily sign—finds that it serves two purposes; it gives basis not only for the immediacy of his language but also for the immediacy of his poetry. Section 39 of "Song of Myself" exemplifies Whitman's poetization via "the odor of his body or breath" (Whitman 1959, 70). In the three stages of poetization, firstly, Whitman's inner—mental—and outer—physiological—traits are catalogued. Secondly, Whitman depicts the process of distilling those traits into his essence. Lastly, what happens to his essence is shown. The transition from the first to the second stage concerns the immediacy of the language, and the transition from the second to the third stage witnesses the immediacy of his poetry. The olfactory immediacy of "the odor of his body or breath" brings off a double signification; it signifies both the body issuing from language and Whitman springing out of his poetry. As a bodily sign, Whitman's olfactory language is essential to Whitman's poetry of self-government without the mediation of representation.

The last chapter of the book studies "The Prairie-Grass Dividing" as the culmination of Whitman's conflation of his restoration of the revolutionary spirit and his olfactory language. The poem begins with the lines "The prairie-grass dividing, its special odor breathing, / I demand of it the spiritual corresponding" (Whitman 1965, 129). The "dividing" in the first line has a double meaning: geographically "dividing" the Prairie area from the other regions and spiritually "dividing" —extracting the essence of America. Also, the upfront of the olfaction— "its special odor breathing" —serves as a thematic undercurrent since the sense of smell plays a central role in "materialization" or "coming into be-

49 Arthur Wrobel, "Whitman and the Phrenologists: The Divine Body and the Sensuous Soul," *PMLA* vol. 89, no. 1 (Jan. 1974): 17–23.

50 William Fishbough, "Spheres," *The American Phrenological Journal. And Repository of Science, Literature, and General Intelligence*, vol. XVII, no. 1 (Jan. 1853): 8–10.

ing."[51] This contextualization leads to the third and fourth lines where Whitman "demands" new emanations from within: "the most copious and close companionship of men" and "words, acts, beings" (Whitman 1965, 129). The lines after the fifth to the end refer to the innately endowed characters of this newly issued "Those of inland America" (129). The chapter shows that there are two correspondences in the poem: besides the thematic correspondence between the material and the spiritual, there is another correspondence, the temporal correspondence between the past and the future. These two correspondences center around the event of breathing the prairie-grass's special odor, through which the catalogued attributes of the inhabitants arise. Most importantly, in his Founding of the Prairie-Grass commune, a space for the experiment of self-government, Whitman, unlike the Founding Fathers, incorporates the revolutionary spirit of the experiment of self-government, with the sense of smell as its medium. Breathing the prairie-grass's special odor—an immediate sensuous experience—evokes pride in the original spirit of the American experiment of self-government. This affective binding force—olfactory memory—unites "Those of inland America" without the distinction between ruler and ruled. In Whitman's footsteps, with the daily dose of the prairie-grass's special odor, the succeeding generations form their beliefs, attitudes, and behavior with both the ancestors and descendants in mind. "The Prairie-Grass Dividing" epitomizes the conflation of Whitman's restoration of the revolutionary spirit and his olfactory language.

51 Alfred Gell, "Magic, Perfume, Dream" in *Symbols and Sentiments: Cross-cultural Studies in Symbolism*, ed. Ioan Lewis (London: Academic Press, 1977), 28.

Part I:

Whitman's Restoration of the Revolutionary Spirit

Chapter 1

The American Revolutionary Spirit: Jefferson's Ward System and Whitman's Poetics[52]

Introduction

It is arduous to conduct an exhaustive study on the chronology of the birth of *Leaves of Grass* 1855 (the first) edition[53] since there are two obstacles. Firstly, Whitman's remarks are contradictory (M. Miller 2010, 4, 37). Secondly, manuscript evidence is "scant and inaccessible" (xiii). However, the gestation period of *Leaves of Grass* can be narrowed down to the period around from 1847 to 1854 (36–38), with which Whitman himself (1882, 278) and his biographer Richard Maurice Bucke agree.[54] Besides, the catalyst for the birth of *Leaves of Grass* also has suffered from the same problem of uncertainty; the leading cause here is that Whitman was manipulative in making his public image (M. Miller 2010, 86), and thus critics' explanations have ranged from mystical experience, Transcendentalism, politics, to sexuality (xiii, 9–10).

Among these explanations, this chapter views the U.S. political crisis as one of the causes of Whitman's transformation from journalist to poet. For instance, in *Whitman the Political Poet*, Betsy Erkkila (1989, 44, 48) states that the deepening of the political crisis in the 1840s and 1850s—the slavery and the disunion—and Whitman's disillusionment about the party politics pushed him to adopt an alternative medium of poetry instead of journalism. This chapter takes a cue from Erkkila's insight, especially the role of the revolutionary spirit in Whitman's poetic rejuvenation of America (Erkkila 1989, 22).

52 An earlier version of this chapter was published in *Ad Americam. Journal of American Studies* vol.24, (2023): 129–145.

53 Matt Miller, *Collage of Myself: Walt Whitman and the Making of Leaves of Grass* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), xiii, 1.

54 Richard Maurice Bucke, *Walt Whitman* (Glasgow: Wilson & McCormick, 1884), 135.

The American revolutionary spirit deserves scrutiny. In general, the revolutionary spirit bears two-sidedness: the spirit of the new and the concern with stability based on it (Arendt 1963, 222–223). In the American Revolution, the mainspring lay in the spirit of experiment of self-government.[55] It is essential to view the American revolutionary spirit as an entity separate from the Revolution itself, even though both were interconnected and influenced each other in the events leading up to the establishment of the Constitution (Arendt 1963, 141–142).[56]

The American Revolution is distinctive in its unfolding. First of all, after the overthrow of the old government by *the Declaration of Independence*, the liberated Americans—with the experience of de facto self-government in the colonial era—did not degenerate into the state of nature and, in its stead, moved to establish state constitutions (141, 166). In the course of the Revolution, Americans located the authority in the very act of constituting a new nation; the Founding Fathers themselves were aware that they were the Founding Fathers (204). This common initiative, the revolutionary spirit, is an essential requirement for revolution in general (116), and in the American Revolution, the conversancy with various spontaneously-made compacts in the colonial self-government, such as the Mayflower Compact, came to be the source of strength that helped to overcome British rule (167–168, 178). Thus, Jefferson rounds off *the Declaration of Independence* with the line "And for the support of this Declaration [...], we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes & our sacred Honor."[57]

The Declaration of Independence overthrew British rule, and the American Revolution moved to the next phase of founding a body politic through the Federal Constitution. It is generally accepted that "Constitutions resolve revolutions."[58] However, Hannah Arendt has a more refined understanding. Against

55 Gordon S. Wood, *The Idea of America: Reflections on the Birth of the United States* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2011), 326.

56 Gordon S. Wood notes that the Revolutionary War became a big business, negatively affecting Americans' character. Wood (2011, 138–139) writes, "The wholesale pursuits of private interest and private luxury were, they (The Federalists) thought, undermining America's capacity for republican government. They designed the Constitution in order to save American republicanism from the deadly effects of these private pursuits of happiness."

57 Thomas Jefferson, *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson vol. I*, ed. Albert Ellery Bergh (Washington, D.C: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1907a), 38.

58 Robert A. Ferguson, *The American Enlightenment 1750–1820* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997), 144.

the idea that the Constitution is counter-revolutionary, she (1963, 142) asserts that the Constitution is a necessary step in the revolution. According to her (232), the problem of the American Revolution is that with the resolution of the revolution, the distinctive American revolutionary spirit—the fountainhead of the revolution—came to be eclipsed by the Constitution—the result of it. In other words, the only one side of the revolutionary spirit—the concern with stability—was forefronted at the sacrifice of the other side of it—the spirit of something new. Here, Jefferson parted company with other Founding Fathers (235–236); he sought the survival of the initial revolutionary spirit (126). Against the conventional wisdom that the Constitution is permanent and the revolutionary spirit temporary, Jefferson thought the other way around; the Constitution is temporary[59] and the revolutionary spirit permanent.[60] Jefferson was fully aware of the revolutionary origin of the new Republic, and thus also aware that the survival of it depends on the survival of the revolutionary spirit (Arendt 1963, 126). In this context of perpetuating the revolution, with the knowledge that the revolutionary spirit can be appreciated only in the actions similar to those in the Revolution (234–235), Jefferson (1907g, 37–38) vainly proposed a ward system as a concrete governmental organ, a system of a county subdivision into smaller units to promote the revolutionary spirit through self-government.

Whitman was conversant with the revolutionary origin of America, especially the significance of the revolutionary spirit (Erkkila 1989, 3–24). But, besides the aforementioned two-sidedness related to the American revolutionary spirit, the temporal (and concomitant spiritual) gap between the era of the Revolution and of Whitman made it hard for (other) Americans to appreciate the spirit. Under these circumstances, Whitman, like Jefferson, advocated perpetual Revolution. Whitman states:

> Washington made free the body of America, for that was first in order —Now comes one who will make free the American soul. —[61]

59 Thomas Jefferson, *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson vol. VII*, ed. Albert Ellery Bergh (Washington, D.C: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1907d), 459. In light of generational change, Jefferson was against the permanent constitution; he was not against the constitution per se.
60 Thomas Jefferson, *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson vol. VI*, ed. Albert Ellery Bergh (Washington, D.C: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1907c), 57–59.
61 Walt Whitman, *Walt Whitman's Workshop: A Collection of Unpublished Manuscripts*, ed. Clifton Joseph Furness (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1928), 35.

The quote demonstrates two features of Whitman's revolution. The first is that Whitman embarks on his revolution; in Robert G. Ingersoll's words, *Leaves of Grass* is "*a declaration of independence*."[62] The other is that while Whitman pays tribute to the body politic of America, his revolution is of "the American soul." In this context, this chapter investigates the relationship between Jefferson's ward system and Whitman's poetic revolution. Whitman wrote in *Talbot Wilson Notebook*:

> [T]he people of this state ~~shal~~ [sic] instead of being ruled by the old complex laws, and the involved machinery of all governments hitherto, shall be ruled mainly by individual character and conviction. —The recognized character of the citizen shall be so pervaded by the best qualities of law and power that law and power shall be superseded from the government and transferred to the citizen[63]

The tenet of the quote, especially the phrase "law and power shall be superseded from the government and transferred to the citizen," is full of revolutionary charge. What Whitman asserts amounts to the essence of Jefferson's ward system. Indeed, Whitman—in 1846, around the time when he started hatching his poetic enterprise—showed great interest in Jefferson's ward system. This chapter demonstrates that Jefferson's ward system has a bearing on the formation of Whitman's poetics. It does not aim to solve the issue concerning the evolution of *Leaves of Grass* definitively but rather to offer a new possibility; it is not about a complete unfolding of Whitman's poetics but one of its aspects. As Matt Miller (2010, 9–10) notes, Whitman might have known what to write in 1847—however vague these things were—but indeed not how to write it, and he took time to create his distinctive style in the negotiation between what to write and how to write it. Although Whitman's poetics and Jefferson's ward system appear unconnected,[64] there are compelling links between the two en-

62 Robert G. Ingersoll, *Walt Whitman: An Address* (New York: The Truth Seeker Company, 1890), 13, 25–26.

63 Walt, Whitman, "Talbot Wilson Notebook" in *The Walt Whitman Archive*: https://whitmanarchive.org/manuscripts/notebooks/transcriptions/loc.00141.html

64 For instance, as mentioned in the Introduction, Betsy Erkkila's *Whitman the Political Poet*—the canonical work on the political aspects of the poetics of Whitman—does not touch on Jeffer-

terprises, the links that center around the perpetuation of the American revolutionary spirit.[65]

1. Jefferson's Ward System and Whitman's Poetic Enterprise

The general degeneracy of America at Whitman's time was foreseen even from the outset; in 1785, Jefferson stated, "From the conclusion of this war we shall be going down hill."[66] Facing what he viewed as the U.S.'s degeneration, Jefferson exerted considerable effort to get the nation back on track. The major ones include the Revolution of 1800—what Jefferson (1907g, 212) calls "as real a revolution in the principles of our government as that of 1776 was in its form"—and the breaking down of the bureaucracy during his presidency (Wood 2011, 247). Still not assured,[67] Jefferson in Monticello proposed a ward system. Although the ward system was not implemented, it is noteworthy. Called "the dawn of the salvation of the republic" by Jefferson (1907e, 394) himself, the ward system has a special significance; John Dewey maintains that ward system is "an essential part of Jefferson's political philosophy"[68]; Michael P. Zuckert views it as "the most remarkable and the most important"[69] in Jefferson's political philosophy; and Hannah Arendt (1963, 255) calls it as "a new form of government rather than a mere reform of it or a mere supplement to the existing institutions."

Intriguingly, Whitman, editor of *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, showed a particular interest in Jefferson's ward system. Although the term "ward system" or

son's ward system.

65 Although this chapter expands on Jefferson's ward system from the perspective of criticism concerning Whitman, Jefferson's ward system remains as it is: a political theory that never went into effect.

66 Thomas Jefferson, *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson vol. II*, ed. Albert Ellery Bergh (Washington, D.C: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1907b), 225.

67 Alan Taylor, *Thomas Jefferson's Education* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2019), Chapter 8, Kindle.

68 John Dewey, "Thomas Jefferson and The Democratic Faith" in *Jefferson Reader: A Treasury of Writings About Thomas Jefferson*, ed. Francis Coleman Rosenberger (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, Inc., 1953), 208–218; Dewey maintains that ward system clarifies Jefferson's view on self-government, which tends to be colored by his other tenets of "a glorification of state against Federal governments" and of "government as a necessary evil."

69 Michael P. Zuckert, "Founder of the Natural Rights Republic" in *Thomas Jefferson and the Politics of Nature*, ed. Thomas S. Engeman (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2000), 49.

the name of Jefferson are not explicitly mentioned, Whitman's familiarity with Jefferson's political philosophy enabled him to detect and appreciate the significance of the ward system. In the entry "A Great Principle in a Few Words," dated May 1846, Whitman (1998, 374) referred to an article in *The New York Evening Post*—his favorite paper (81–82) —which featured "ward system" as "the change that is required." First, Whitman (374) summarized the article by stating, "All that would be necessary is to restrict the powers of government, as far as possible, to the authorities of the township or counties, or school districts. The great evil of our system has been the centralization of political power." Then, Whitman (374) quoted from *The New York Evening Post* article:

> It can only be removed by the dispersion of that power into smaller masses. We believe that nearly two-thirds of the authority now exercised at Albany could be much better applied in rightly organised townships: that the exercise of it would be more effective and less corrupt: that it would bring responsibility much nearer to the people: that it would tend to spread a more enlarged and intelligent spirit of freedom among the electors: that it would extract a great deal of bitterness from our state controversies: and in the end strengthen the attachment of the people to their government, and cement the bonds of peace and order among themselves.

The comparison between the above quote and the content of Jefferson's letter to Samuel Kercheval in July of 1816 (1907g, 37–38) is revealing; the contents are the same; "rightly organized townships"—from which Jefferson (1907e, 393–394) molded ward system—correspond to "wards" in Jefferson's letter:

> The organization of our county administrations may be thought more difficult. But follow principle, and the knot unties itself. Divide the counties into wards of such size as that every citizen can attend, when called on, and act in person. Ascribe to them the government of their wards in all things relating to themselves exclusively. A justice, chosen by themselves, in each, a constable, a military company, a patrol, a school, the care of their own poor, their own portion of the public roads, [...] will relieve the county administration of nearly all its business, will have it better done,

> and by making every citizen an acting member of the government, and in the offices nearest and most interesting to him, will attach him by his strongest feelings to the independence of his country, and its republican constitution.

It is salient that both Whitman's summary and the quote from *the Evening Post*—after the decades of Jefferson's writing—reveal the essence of Jefferson's "ward system" and encompass the key notions: "The great evil of our system has been the centralization of political power," "the dispersion of that power into smaller masses," "the exercise of it would be more effective and less corrupt," "it would bring responsibility much nearer to the people," "a more enlarged and intelligent spirit of freedom among the electors," and "strengthen the attachment of the people to their government, and cement the bonds of peace and order among themselves." In short, Whitman's quote from *The Evening Post* is a carbon copy of Jefferson's notion of the "ward system," which Whitman calls "A Great Principle."

Moreover, Whitman, within a month (June 1846), follows up on the ward system in the entry titled "Cut Away!" Whitman (1998, 456) starts the editorial with an irony: "That there are 'great measures' before the Congress of the United States, nobody doubts." However, Whitman (457) negates "great measures" by proposing an alternative view: "The great labor of political reform, indeed, is more a labor of cutting away than adding to." Whitman continues:

> The more we think of that idea of small districts, and letting each one manage its own affairs, as to it seemeth best—under the high control of a few simple and general laws—the more we like it.

Unlike the editorial written in May 1846, this one is Whitman's original. Whitman seems to have done some homework in examining Jefferson's ward system firsthand; the phrase "that idea of small districts, and letting each one manage its own affairs" is the concise summary of Jefferson's writing. Whitman was fascinated by Jefferson's ward system when he hatched his poetic enterprise.

Whitman's interest in Jefferson's ward system helps to notice a parallel between the goals of Whitman's poetic enterprise and Jefferson's ward system. On the one hand, Erkkila (1989, 49) states:

> Whitman's poet participates in the act of national creation by carrying on the revolutionary task of transferring power from the government to the individual, [...]

On the other hand, Arendt (1963, 251) notes:

> [H]e [Jefferson] expected the wards to permit the citizens to continue to do what they had been able to do during the years of revolution, namely, to act on their own and thus to participate in public business as it was being transacted from day to day.

These two quotes illustrate the emphasis shared by the endeavors of Whitman and Jefferson on the continuous experience of the American Revolution. Both of them seek to create, in Arendt's words, "a new public space for freedom which was constituted and organized during the course of the revolution itself" (249). The doctrine of the ward system is tantamount to that of Thomas Paine's revolutionary pamphlet *Common Sense*; "We have it in our power to begin the world over again."[70]

In his self-review of *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition, Whitman (1855b) states, "The interior American republic shall also be declared free and independent." With the aforementioned quote, "Washington made free the body of America, for that was first in order—Now comes one who will make free the American soul," it is expressly indicated that Whitman, in his revolution, intends to go further than the Founding Fathers—beyond the body politic of America into the individual soul of Americans. Whitman's "interior American republic" is a further subdivision of Jefferson's "ward republic." Whitman's focus on the individual soul of Americans is in line with the American revolutionary heritage; John Adams states, "The Revolution was in the Minds of the People."[71] Whitman, after the decades of the Revolution, sought to bring it back "in the Minds of the People."

Another difference between the two revolutions is that while the American Revolution means a joint venture, as shown in the introduction of this chapter,

70 Thomas Paine, *Rights of Man, Common Sense and Other Political Writings*, ed. Mark Philp (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 53.

71 John Adams, *The Adams-Jefferson Letters: The Complete Correspondence between Thomas Jefferson and Abigail and John Adams*, ed. Lester J. Cappon (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 455.

Whitman's revolution is an individual, quixotic venture. Still, Whitman's lonely revolution is justified. The vital thing is to show that Whitman, just an obscure New Yorker, can rise and act; the self-publishing of *Leaves of Grass* on Independence Day of 1855 intended to set a new precedent; the act itself has significance. Just as the Founding Fathers were aware that they were the Founding Fathers, Whitman was aware that he—through his act of revolution—joined the band of the Founding Fathers.

To conclude, Whitman's "interior American republic" is a further subdivision of Jefferson's "ward republic." The American revolutionary spirit must be nurtured deeper in individual Americans' minds. Jefferson's statement, "Each ward would be a small republic within itself" (1907h, 46), translates into Whitman's assertion that each *individual* would be a small republic within himself. Like Jefferson's ward system, Whitman's poetry obliges individual Americans to re-embrace the American revolutionary spirit. The following section will explore Jefferson's ward system.

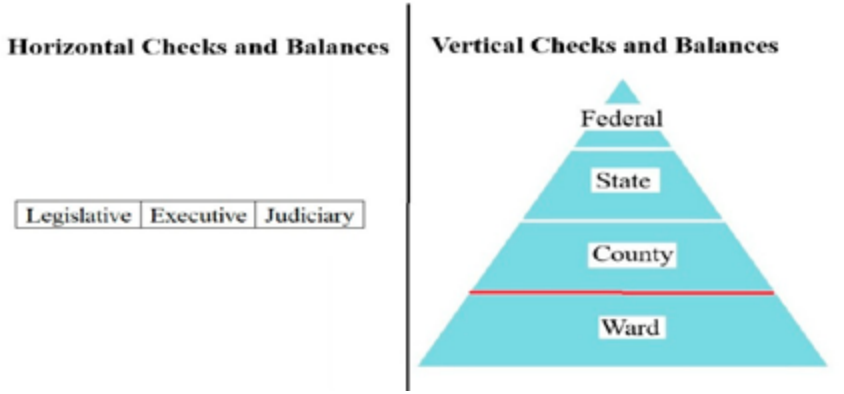
2. Jefferson's Ward System

For Americans, Robert E. Shalhope notes, "the two great guarantors of liberty" are "the good character of the people and the proper structure of government,"[72] yet both of which betrayed the sign of degeneration in the eyes of Jefferson. The ward system is a measure with the potential to regain, at once, both the proper structure of government and the good character of the people.

As regards the checks and balances for the government, there are two ways: horizontal—i.e., division of the power among a legislature, executive, and judiciary—as well as vertical—i.e., division of the power among the different levels of authorities such as federal, state, county, and "ward republic." When the comparison between the two systems of checks and balances is put into a chart, it is like the one below.

Jefferson is unique in putting the vertical approach above the widely accepted horizontal one, which Montesquieu (1897, 163) espoused. Whereas horizontal checks and balances concern the checks and balances *among those in power*, ver-

72 Robert E. Shalhope, "Thomas Jefferson's Republicanism and Antebellum Southern Thought," *The Journal of Southern History* vol. 42, no. 4 (November 1976): 533.



tical checks and balances provide *ordinary people* with a participatory space for an experiment in self-government. Thus, in this vertical "gradation of authorities," Jefferson values the "ward republic" most.[73] In the letter to Joseph C. Cabell from February of 1816, Jefferson (1907f, 421–422) said:

> [T]he secret will be found to be in the making himself the depository of the powers respecting himself, so far as he is competent to them, and delegating only what is beyond his competence by a synthetical [sic] process, to higher and higher orders of functionaries, so as to trust fewer and fewer powers in proportion as the trustees become more and more oligarchical [sic]. The elementary republics of the wards, the county republics, the States republics, and the republic of the Union, would form a gradation of authorities, standing each on the basis of law, holding every one its delegated share of powers, and constituting truly a system of fundamental balances and checks for the government.

Jefferson asserts that his vertical approach to checks and balances for government is superior to the horizontal one. Also noticeable is that the flow of the delegation is from the bottom—ward republic—to the top—national government. For instance, a ward republic delegates "only what is beyond its competence" to a

73 Thomas Jefferson, *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson vol. XIV*, ed. Albert Ellery Bergh (Washington, D.C: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1907f), 421–422.

county. Most importantly, this way of delegation goes a long way to preventing the concentration of power at the higher-ups. In the same letter to Cabell, Jefferson (1907f, 423) said:

> "[D]ivide the counties into wards." Begin them only for a single purpose; they will soon show for what others they are the best instruments. [...] as I am sure they have the will, to fortify us against the degeneracy of one government, and the concentration of all its powers in the hands of the one, the few, the well-born or the many.

In the aforementioned letter to Kercheval, Jefferson (1907g, 37–38) also enumerates the benefits of ward republic; first of all, it provides the citizens with the opportunity to experience self-government by doing the municipal tasks at hand; secondly, those tasks are better handled by the citizens, which leads to alleviation of the county burden; and thirdly, through the experience of self-government, they can develop the affection to the independence of their country, and its republican constitution. In the letter to John Cartwright from June of 1824, Jefferson (1907h, 46) repeats the advantages of the ward republic:

> Each ward would thus be a small republic within itself, and every man in the State would thus become an acting member of the common government, transacting in person a great portion of its rights and duties, subordinate indeed, yet important, and entirely within his competence. The wit of man cannot devise a more solid basis for a free, durable and well-administered republic.

Here, the comparison between the two letters—to Kercheval in 1816 and Cartwright in 1824—shows how Jefferson was impacted by the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which occurred after 1816 and before 1824. The Missouri Compromise draws the line along the latitude of 36°30', which divides the U.S. into Northern free-states and Southern slave-states. Jefferson (1907g, 249) called the Missouri Compromise "a fire-bell in the night" because the federal government encroached on the right of the State to self-govern (Shalhope 1976, 548) and because of the sectional division it caused.[74] Shedding light on "ward republic"

74 Peter S. Onuf, *Jefferson's Empire: The Language of American Nationhood* (Charlottesville:

with an eye on the comparison of these two letters helps to grasp Jefferson's perspective on self-government against a background of changing socio-political circumstances. (As Erkkila (1989, 12, 44) notes, the Missouri Compromise of 1820 coincided with Whitman's birth in 1819; as a journalist and poet, Whitman confronted the later escalation of the North-South sectional division caused by the Missouri Compromise.)

The main thrust on "ward republic" in the letters to Kercheval from 1816 and Cartwright from 1824 mostly overlaps, but the contexts of these letters differ—before and after the Missouri Compromise of 1820. Whereas the tone of the letter of 1816 is relatively positive, with its central theme of equal representation, the tone of 1824 is less optimistic, with its exclusive focus on the Constitution and the government structure.

In the letter to Kercheval from 1816, Jefferson begins with the importance of equal representation in republicanism and moves to the legislature, executive, and judiciary at the national level and then to the county level. Jefferson (1907g, 33) said, "We had not yet penetrated to the mother principle, that "governments are republican only in proportion as they embody the will of their people, and execute it." Hence, our first constitutions had really no leading principles in them." However, his appraisal of the overall political scene is positive (35):

> Where then is our republicanism to be found? Not in our Constitution certainly, but merely in the spirit of our people. That would oblige even a despot to govern us republicanly. Owing to this spirit, and to nothing in the form of our constitution, all things have gone well.

In the context of heightening equal representation, Jefferson (38) proposed "marshal[ing] our government into, 1, the general federal republic [...]; 2, that of the State [...]; 3, the county republics [...]; and 4, the ward republics [...]." Importantly, while Jefferson was developing his argument, he only surveyed the status quo and recommended his ideas without directly attacking the government structure.

On the contrary, the letter to Cartwright in 1824 is filled with a sense of urgency. Jefferson (1907h, 42–44) begins with the analysis of the Constitution, which dates back to the old history of England, and proceeds to the American Consti-

University Press of Virginia, 2000), 113.

tution. Jefferson (45) said, "The constitutions of most of our States assert, that all power is inherent in the people; that they may exercise it by themselves, in all cases to which they think themselves competent, [...] or they may act by representatives, freely and equally chosen." In this way, the topic of equal representation in the letter to Kercheval in 1816 is reduced to merely a part of the more prominent theme of the exercise of power by people themselves. In this context, Jefferson (46) presents his proposal; "My own State has gone on so far with its *premiere ebauche*; but it is now proposing to call a convention for amendment. Among other improvements, I hope they will adopt the subdivision of our counties into wards."

Furthermore, after this proposition of "wards," Jefferson moved to the proper structural relationship between the states and the federal government. First of all, Jefferson (47) categorically denies the subordination of the States to the federal government:

> To the State governments are reserved all legislation and administration, in affairs which concern their own citizens only, and to the federal government is given whatever concerns foreigners, or the citizens of other States; these functions alone being made federal. The one is the domestic, the other the foreign branch of the same government; neither having control over the other, but within its own department.

What made Jefferson revisit the topic of the proper structure of government and, thus, what made the difference between the two letters salient was the Missouri Compromise of 1820. In Jefferson's view, it is about "the power of the central government to regulate the internal affairs of the states" (Shalhope 1976, 548). Consolidation—concentration of the power—is the anathema of Jefferson; he (1907g, 341) said, "by consolidation first, and then corruption, its necessary consequence." For Jefferson, the Missouri Compromise could become the precedent in which Congress would impose its will upon States as it sees fit and have a deteriorating effect on the American self-government. Thus, he (249) called the Missouri Compromise "the knell of the Union." With the solidarity felt in the Revolution gone and the Northern-Southern demarcation line drawn, Jefferson foresaw what would happen, namely the Civil War in the 1860s. As Peter S. Onuf (2000, 129) points out, Jefferson's stake is "the legacy of the American Revolution, and of his whole political career"; the American

revolutionary spirit expressed in *The Declaration of Independence* is in danger of becoming a dead letter.

In this context, the "ward republic" gains utmost importance. Its benefits are appealing: to enhance both the character of the people and the power relationships between the local and the central government through direct participation in the self-government of the ward republic. There, people could learn to exercise their power, construe the Constitution on their own, and thus, prevent Congress and the Supreme Court from encroaching on their rights guaranteed by the Constitution. In this way, American republicanism would become more robust, and the bulwark of liberty could be strengthened against the consolidation by the federal government. The solid establishment of self-government by a system like the ward republic—the vertical checks and balances of the government—might prevent a national crisis such as the Missouri Compromise. However, Jefferson's ward republic went no further than being a theory; it never went into effect. In the meantime, the ills of America came to take more pernicious forms in the age of Jackson. Both the horizontal checks and balances—the structure of government—and the vertical aspects—the character of people—showed the symptoms of degradation, which the following section will explore.

3. Whitman: A Man of Jeffersonian Principles Turned into a Poet

Whitman became attracted to Jefferson's ward system with good reason. Whitman owned a nine-volume set of *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, published in 1853–1854 (Erkkila 1989, 19), but he had been conversant with Jefferson's political philosophy a long time before. On August 1846[75], in the entry titled "The Principles We Fight For," Whitman lays out Jeffersonian principles. Whitman wrote:

> Jefferson lays down the following principles:
>
> The People—the only source of legitimate power.
> The absolute and lasting severance of Church from State.

75 This editorial was published a few months after Whitman encountered the idea of Jefferson's ward republic. If the exposure to this concept, serving as an eye-opener, led Whitman to write this editorial, the ward republic had all the more significance for Whitman.

> The freedom, sovereignty, and independence of the respective States.
> The Union—a confederacy, a compact, neither a consolidation, nor a centralization.
> The Constitution of the Union; a special grant of powers, limited and definite.
> The civil paramount to the military power.
> The representative to obey instructions of his constituents.
> Election free, and suffrage universal.
> No hereditary office, nor order, nor title.
> No taxation beyond the public wants.
> No national debt, if possible.
> No costly splendor of administration.
> No proscription of opinion, nor of public discussion.
> No unnecessary interference with individual conduct, property, or speech.
> No favored classes, and no monopolies.
> No public monies expended, except by warrants or a specific appropriation.
> No mysteries in government inaccessible to the public eye.
> Public compensation for public services, moderate salaries, and strict accountability.[76]

The lengthy list presages the parallelisms of Whitman the poet.[77] The list contains two crucial pieces of information; firstly, Whitman had a firm grip on Jefferson's political philosophy, as shown by "The People—the only source of legitimate power" and "The Union—a confederacy, a compact, neither a consolidation, nor a centralization," and secondly, Whitman equated the Democratic party's principles with Jefferson's principles. However, this equation would invite trouble for Whitman the party journalist; the reality he faced was different. What Whitman

76 Walt Whitman, *The Collected Writings of Walt Whitman: The Journalism II: 1846–1848*, ed. Herbert Bergman (New York: Peter Lang, 2003), 36–37.

77 C. Carroll Hollis, *Language and Style in Leaves of Grass* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1983), 30, 34, 50, 70, 139, 226, 229, 250; Hollis notes that Whitman the poet frequently uses anaphora (the repetition of opening words, such as "No" in the quote) and other paralleling devices.

viewed as Jefferson's principles ceased to be the principles of the time. The relationship between the government and people at the time was under the sway of the expansion of both popular government and industrialization,[78] which, in turn, exposed people to more risk of corruption in the structure of government and their character.

In *The Jacksonian Persuasion: Politics & Belief*, Marvin Meyers maintains: "The political machine reached into every neighborhood, inducted ordinary citizens of all sorts into active service."[79] On the surface, it seems that people became empowered as in Jefferson's ward system, but this came with the degradations in the aforementioned Jefferson's "the two great guarantors of liberty" (Shalhope 1976, 533), namely, the proper structure of government and the good character of the people. As regards the change in structure of government, William E. Nelson (1982, 40), in *The Roots of American Bureaucracy, 1830–1900*, states:

> All institutions of government—legislative, executive, and judicial—had come to be perceived at bottom as political institutions making inevitable policy choices as a matter of will. One consequence of this perception was to blur distinctions among the ways in which different governmental institutions functioned—distinctions that had been important to the revolutionary and Jeffersonian generations and that underlay the doctrine of separation of powers.

Two deviations from the Founding principle emerged: 1) the diminution of checks and balances by the separation of legislative, executive, and judicial institutions and 2) the consolidation of power through the emergence of bureaucracy. For instance, judicial review, which Jefferson (1907g, 213) adamantly opposed, came to be generally accepted (Nelson 1982, 38). Apart from that, based on "a matter of will" (of people), the Jacksonians "built up the federal bureaucracy" with the presidency as "the most popular and powerful office in the nation" (Wood 2011, 248).

The important factors to consider are America's Industrial Revolution, which began during the age of Jackson,[80] and the ensuing expansion of the private realm.

78 William E. Nelson, *The Roots of American Bureaucracy, 1830–1900* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1982), 9–10.

79 Marvin Meyers, *The Jacksonian Persuasion: Politics & Belief* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), 7.

80 William Nester, *The Age of Jackson and The Art of American Power, 1815 – 1848* (Washing-

Arendt (1963, 252–253)—who praises Jefferson's caliber in foreseeing the risk of the corruption of people and taking precautions against it, namely, his attempt to introduce the ward system—points out:

> [U]nder conditions [...] of rapid and constant economic growth, that is, of a constantly increasing expansion of the private realm [...] the dangers of corruption and perversion were much more likely to arise from private interests than from public power.

The expansion of the private realm gave rise to the reconfiguration of the public realm so that the latter could cope with the improvement in industry and transportation (Nelson 1982, 9). In a sense, the Jacksonians responded to these socio-economic changes, but, with the result of estrangement from Jeffersonian principles, i.e., with the corruption of the structure of government and people. In terms of people's character, with the development mentioned above, mutual *dependence* emerged between government and people via *interest*, exemplified by the spoils system (Wood 2011, 248). This is diametrically opposite to Jefferson's view of the good American character—*virtuous* and *independent*.[81] In the entry "New light and Old," Whitman (2003, 301) deplores:

> In plain truth, "the people expect too much of the government." Under a proper organization, [...] the wealth and happiness of the citizens could be hardly touched by the government—could neither be retarded nor advanced. Men must be "masters unto themselves," and not look to presidents and legislative bodies for aid. In this wide and naturally rich country, the best government indeed is "that which governs least."

Whitman was on to something; something was wrong with America. Present-day political science helps to explicate Whitman's discomfiture. Nelson's clarification of the related terminologies is profitable (1982, 2–3):

ton, D.C: Potomac Books, 2013), 189.

81 Jean M. Yarbrough, *American Virtues: Thomas Jefferson on the Character of a Free People* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 48.

> In antebellum America the democratic ideal of popular self-rule was translated into a reality of party government through the medium of yet a third concept—that of the rule of the majority.

Nelson (3n) emphatically makes a distinction between 1) democracy— "any polity in which the people freely select their rulers," 2) majority rule— "a system of government in which at least the members of the legislative branch are elected to office by one more than half the people who are eligible to vote and who do in fact vote," and 3) party government— "a system of government in which officials are selected and maintained in office by a political organization, usually from among its members." Antebellum America witnessed an emerging form of party government by the Democratic party, exemplified by the spoils system of an unprecedented degree (Nester 2013, 299). Whitman's discomfiture stems from a dilemma: on the one hand, Whitman the party journalist took party government as a given; on the other hand, he adhered to Jeffersonian principles.

What threw the discrepancy between his ideal and the actuality into sharp relief is Whitman's involvement in the Wilmot Proviso controversy[82] and ensuing excommunication from *the Brooklyn Daily Eagle* (Whitman 1920, xxx–xxxv). As editor of the paper, Whitman (2003, 348) called the Wilmot Proviso "the Jeffersonian proviso" and stuck to it in the face of the party platform that rejected it (Morrison 1967, 80–81). Whitman became aware that party loyalty precedes (his understanding of) party principles. For Whitman, the rejection of "the Jeffersonian Proviso" is the rejection of Jefferson, which, in turn, meant that the Democratic party abandoned its principle. His personal experience in the Wilmot Proviso controversy brought home to Whitman the actuality of party government in which party politics ran roughshod over the popular opinion on the extension of slavery. In other words, Whitman became aware that he had overestimated the Democratic party; he (2003, 228, original emphasis) had stated, "*true liberty could not long exist in this country without our party*." Whitman

82 Introduced in August of 1846, the Wilmot Proviso aimed to ban slavery within the land acquired due to the Mexican War; it is an amendment attached to a bill appropriating money to be used to negotiate the Treaty with Mexico. (Walt Whitman, *The Gathering of the Forces vol. I,* ed. Cleveland Rogers and John Black. New York: Putnam, 1920, 182). The Wilmot Proviso caused Northern-Southern sectional controversy on slavery all over the nation. (Chaplain W. Morrison, *Democratic Politics and Sectionalism: The Wilmot Proviso Controversy.* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1967, 31–34).

(36–37, 347) had viewed the Democratic party as a party of Jefferson's doctrine, the safeguard of the revolutionary spirit (Erkkila 1989, 19–20), but it was not (or ceased to be so). Whitman was disillusioned and forced to reflect on his life and reconstruct his *raison d'être*. Nevertheless, for Whitman, the fact remains that he overcame the temporal barrier to inherit the Republican virtue that Jefferson intended to foster among people. These developments coincided in 1847–48 when Whitman embarked on his poetic enterprise.

The change in Whitman's self-perception is revealed in the comparison between his use of the trope "door" in his editorial and "Song of Myself." On the one hand, in July of 1846—before the introduction of the Wilmot Proviso, and thus his disillusionment about the Democratic party, Whitman (1998, 481) wrote an editorial titled "Swing Open the Doors!" in which he states, "We must be constantly pressing onward—every year throwing the doors wider and wider—and carrying our experiment of democratic freedom to the very verge of the limit." On the other hand, in "Song of Myself," Whitman (1959, 48) wrote:

> Unscrew the locks from the doors!
> Unscrew the doors themselves from their jambs!

As regards the implication of Whitman's trope "door" in these two writings, Erkkila (1989, 43) emphasizes the continuity between the two Whitmans—Whitman the journalist and Whitman the poet.[83] However, Whitman's use of "door" here instead shows the break between the two Whitmans. The difference in Whitman's perspective is salient: one within the existing institutions and the other outside them. On the one hand, in his editorial of 1846—before his disillusionment about the Democratic party—Whitman states, "every year throwing the doors wider and wider." The comparative form (wider and wider) indicates that Whitman based his idea on the existing institutions; he still had a unified vision of the American experiment, the Democratic party, and himself. On the other hand, the lines "Unscrew the locks from the doors! / Unscrew the doors themselves from their jambs!" in "Song of Myself" suggests that there was no such unified vision anymore; Whitman became more radicalized and demanded

83 Erkkila states, "his phrases (the quote in "Swing Open the Doors!") roll with the participial rhythms of his later free-verse poems, and his open-door image anticipates the democratic challenge he hurls at his readers in "Song of Myself," and "Whitman's Eagle editorials were a prose dress rehearsal for the political text of his poems."

to uproot the existing systems (and set up a new system like Jefferson's ward system). The above lines in "Song of Myself" reflect Whitman's urge to continue the American experiment in its original spirit.

Whitman's choice of poetry as his medium to address the issues in America is not singular. Generally, as Shira Wolosky notes, "Poetry is conceived as actively participating in the national life" at Whitman's time.[84] More specifically, in the context of the Revolution, Edward Tand states, "A whole body of poetry on revolutionary participants appeared in popular literature during the late 1830s and early 1840s."[85] Whitman was not alone in choosing the medium of poetry to retrieve the revolutionary spirit and thus fill the generation gap in this respect. However, unlike other poets, Whitman sought to do more than prevent it from wearing thin with time. To refine the understanding of Whitman's enterprise, Arendt's insight—though she does not refer to Whitman—is helpful (1963, 280):

> This, and probably much more, was lost when the spirit of revolution—a new spirit and the spirit of beginning something new—failed to find its appropriate institution. There is nothing that could compensate for this failure or prevent it from becoming final, except memory and recollection. And since the storehouse of memory is kept and watched over by the poets, whose business it is to find and make the words we live by, [...]

Without an "appropriate institution" such as Jefferson's ward system—with the disqualification of the Democratic party, poetry is the "second-best" institution to regain and retain the revolutionary spirit. Whitman was aware of where the problem lay. This is not just a matter of the generation gap but about the aforementioned paradox of the revolutionary spirit —its two-sidedness of the spirit of the new and the concern with stability, and thus it can be experienced only in the revolution itself without removes—without even the mediation of the Founding Fathers. Just as the ward system is a continuous revolution for Jefferson, the poetry is the same for Whitman. Furthermore, this paradox inherent to

84 Shira Wolosky, "Preface: The Claims of Rhetoric" in *The Cambridge History of American Literature, vol.4 Nineteenth-Century Poetry 1800–1910*, ed. Sacvan Bercovitch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 148.

85 Edward Tang, "The Civil War as Revolutionary Reenactment: Walt Whitman's "The Centenarian's Story," *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* vol. 21, no. 3 (2004): 138.

the revolutionary spirit is *the Original Paradox* with capitals of O and P, —like the Original Sin, which precedes other paradoxes of the relationship between the individual and the mass, between the states and the federal government (Reynolds 1995, 112). With the help of the medium of poetry, Whitman sought to have it both ways—the spirit of the new and the durability based on it, two sides of the revolutionary spirit, *and then cope with other paradoxes*. (Re)gaining the revolutionary spirit for himself and other Americans is the first thing to do. Whitman intended *Leaves of Grass* to be "the salvation of the republic," as in the aforementioned Jefferson's words about the ward system.

This—Whitman's poetic "salvation of the republic"—takes greater significance in the context specific to the U.S. in the 1850s—the Northern-Southern sectionalism over the slavery issue. The American Revolution was viewed as the best way to express national ideas,[86] but its legacy was far from consensual and became a point of contention between the North and the South (Grant 2000, 28–29). Two Founding Documents—*The Declaration of Independence* and the Federal Constitution—came to signify the opposition between the North and the South; the North prioritized *the Declaration* over the Constitution, and the South vice versa.[87] In the slavery controversy, the North forefronted equality expressed in *the Declaration*, and the South right to property in the Constitution (Hattem 2020, 34, 48). While putting *the Declaration* above the Constitution (Erkkila 1989, 19, 46), Whitman the poet (1959, 110) shied away from taking sides and opted for the medium of poetry so that he could convey a unifying, de-sectionalized rendering of the American Revolution.[88]

Arendt (1963, 166) states, "What the American Revolution actually did was to bring the new American experience and the new American concept of power out into the open." Likewise, in his revolution, Whitman brought "the new *individual* American experience into the open." Here, "into the open" corresponds to his key phrase— "in the open air." Whitman (1899, 67) wrote:

86 Susan-Mary Grant, *North over South: Northern Nationalism and American Identity in the Antebellum Era* (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2000), 25.

87 Michael D. Hattem, "Citizenship and the Memory of the American Revolution in Nineteenth-Century Political Culture," *New York History* vol. 101, no. 1 (Summer 2020): 40, 43.

88 In "The Sleepers," Whitman writes lines that render the American Revolution de-sectionalized— "Now of the old war-days .. the defeat at Brooklyn; / Washington stands inside the lines .. he stands on the entrenched hills amid a crowd of officers, / His face is cold and damp .... he cannot repress the weeping drops .... he lifts the glass perpetually to his eyes .... the color is blanched from his cheeks, / He sees the slaughter of the southern braves confided to him by their parents."

> We have had man indoors and under artificial relations—man in war, in love (both the natural, universal elements of human lives) —man in courts [...] but never before have we had man in the open air, his attitude adjusted to the seasons and as one might describe it, adjusted to the sun by day and the stars by night.

Whitman brought "man in the open air" into the open; ordinary people are at the center of his poetry. Ordinary people talking about themselves, about the "interior American republic," has significance. In *Leaves of Grass*, "The glory of simple life was sung; a declaration of independence was made for each and all" (Ingersoll 1890, 13).

Whitman linked his poetic enterprise of the revolutionary spirit with a cure for the ills of individual morals. In the editorial (March 1846) on the License Law, with the title "You Cannot Legislate Men into Virtue!" Whitman (1998, 290) states:

> It is amazing, in this age of the world—with the past, and all its causes and effects, like beacon lights behind us—that men show such ignorance, not only of the province of law, but of the true way to achieve any great reform. Why, we wouldn't give a snap for the aid of the legislature, in forwarding a purely moral revolution! It must work its way through individual minds.

Later, in his preparatory note for the future *Leaves of Grass*, Whitman (1899, 30) expands on this theme:

> What would it bring you to be elected and take your place in the Capitol?
> I elect you to understand; that is what all the offices in the Republic could not do.

Interestingly, unlike the aforementioned break in Whitman's self-perception, as seen through his use of the trope "door," the comparison between the two writings here reveals a *continuation* of his view on morals. From the outset, Whitman maintained that "a purely moral revolution [...] must work its way through individual minds," not through political institutions. Whitman's saying that his po-

etry is more potent than the sum of governmental power constitutes the expansion of his editorial of the past. In his continual emphasis on "Moral revolution," Whitman followed in the footsteps of Jefferson (1907b, 230), who maintained that spirit of people precedes systems of government. At Whitman's time, "Moral revolution" became crucial in republican self-government; the Founding Fathers' concern that "popular power be limited by popular rights" (Nelson 1982, 5) markedly resurfaced in the slavery controversy. The aforementioned socio-economic-political changes made the redemption from the corruption of people an urgent task, which Whitman sought to achieve through his revolutionary poetry.

Conclusion

This chapter has linked Whitman's poetics with Jefferson's ward republic in the context of Whitman's choice of poetry as his medium. Whitman's poetic enterprise is put within the framework of the American experiment of self-government; like Jefferson's ward republic, Whitman's poetic enterprise opens up a space for exercising self-agency and thus restores the revolutionary spirit of the experiment of self-government. Anxious about the degeneration of the republic, both Jefferson and Whitman view their enterprises—ward republic and *Leaves of Grass*—as "the salvation of the republic." This perspective puts Whitman's poetics in a new light; Whitman's "interior American republic" is a further subdivision of Jefferson's ward republic, and in this small republic, self-government without the intermediary of representation becomes more accessible.

This link between Jefferson and the poet provides a foundation for the book's exploration of the formation of Whitman's poetics. The next chapter studies Whitman's catalogue from the perspective of republican self-government. Following Jefferson's dictum "divide the counties into wards" (Jefferson 1907f, 423; 1907g, 37), Whitman "divides the poem into catalogues." These two principles signify the true overlap of the political and literary overthrows of the old systems—*the Declaration of Independence* and *Leaves of Grass*.

Chapter 2

Whitman's Catalogue and the Three Overthrows

Introduction

This chapter studies Whitman's catalogue in the framework of the three overthrows: the political overthrow of the old system, the poetic overthrow of the literary convention, and the personal overthrow of the former way of life. The previous chapter's study on the relationship between Whitman's poetics and Jefferson's ward system is the basis of this chapter's investigation because the spirit of the experiment of self-government, the tenet of the ward system, is a thread that runs through all three overthrows. Firstly, this chapter examines the relationship between Whitman's political and poetic overthrows by comparing his poetic enterprise and Jefferson's political enterprise. Then, the relationship between Whitman's poetic and personal overthrows will be investigated with attention to the role his catalogue plays in his "perpetual journey" (Whitman 1959, 79). Just as Jefferson's ward system is for "permanent revolution" (Jefferson 1907g, 464),[89] Whitman's catalogue is for the "perpetual journey" of the three—political, literal, and personal—overthrows.

Whitman's catalogue is a list of words. Due to its unique style and its prevalence in his poems, Whitman's catalogue has attracted broad critical attention.[90] At its worst, it is viewed as "an auctioneer's inventory of a warehouse"[91] and at its best, when considered as rhetoric, it is "the reiteration of analogous images

89 Richard K. Matthews, *The Radical Politics of Thomas Jefferson* (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1984), 81; Matthews links permanent revolution with the ward system. He states, "Indeed, among the Founding Fathers, Jefferson alone wishes to institutionalize general education, participatory democracy, and permanent revolution through the establishment of ward-republics."

90 Edwin Haviland Miller, *Walt Whitman's "Song of Myself": A Mosaic of Interpretations* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1989), 142.

91 Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The Selected Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Joel Myerson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 390.

or statements in paratactic form, in prose or verse."[92] Compared with the critics contemporary with Whitman, those nowadays have a more favorable view of his catalogue technique (E. Miller 1989, 141–145). Section 15 of "Song of Myself" (Whitman 1959, 37–40)—the catalogue consisting of around seventy lines—is one of the foci in the criticism of Whitman.

> The pure contralto sings in the organ loft,
> The carpenter dresses his plank....the tongue of his foreplane whistles its wild ascending lisp,
> The married and unmarried children ride home to their thanksgiving dinner,
> The pilot seizes the king-pin, he heaves down with a strong arm,
> The mate stands braced in the whaleboat, lance and harpoon are ready,
> The duck-shooter walks by silent and cautious stretches,
> The deacons are ordained with crossed hands at the altar, [...]

The uncontextualized actions, actions "isolated [...] from questions of motive, purpose, and consequence,"[93] constitute the catalogue, which Randall Jarrell sums up neatly; he states, "It is only a list—but what a list! And how delicately, in what different ways—likeness and opposition and continuation and climax and anticlimax—the transitions are managed, whenever Whitman wants to manage them."[94] While the critical focus on the Whitmanian catalogue has been its signification—either transcendental "unity in diversity" (Buell 1974, 166–187) or democratic "many in one" (Erkkila 1989, 87–89), some critics pay attention to its function. M. Wynn Thomas (1987, 80) notes, "It is catalog rhetoric that enables Whitman to move so fast through the circuit of social phenomena that the catastrophe of the underlying logic cannot touch him." John B. Mason, focusing on "the issue of how the catalogues work," observes that the Whitmanian catalogue is a rhetorical device for the two journeys of Whitman and the reader.[95]

92 Lawrence Buell, *Literary Transcendentalism: Style and Vision in the American Renaissance* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1974), 166.
93 M. Wynn Thomas, *The Lunar Light of Whitman's Poetry* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1987), 56.
94 Randall Jarrell, *Poetry and the Age* (New York: The Ecco Press, 1980), 121.
95 John B. Mason, "Walt Whitman's Catalogues: Rhetorical Means for Two Journeys in "Song

This chapter contributes to the scholarly conversation on the function of the Whitmanian catalogue, focusing on his scheme of the three overthrows. A unique aspect of this investigation is the incorporation of Jefferson's ward system. Called "the salvation of the republic," Jefferson's ward system is to subdivide the county into smaller units of the ward republic to create space for the ordinary Americans' self-government as experienced in the Revolution (Jefferson 1907e, 393–394). Following Jefferson's dictum "divide the counties into wards" (Jefferson 1907f, 423; 1907g, 37), Whitman "divides the poems into catalogues." At the conceptual level, Whitman's political overthrow is internalized in his catalogues. Like Jefferson's ward republic, Whitman's catalogue provides a "liberating place" (Bellis 1999, 90) for using self-agency; the catalogue itself has the field dynamics of generating the energy for the "perpetual journey." Constituted as the most basic unit of his poems (Erkkila 1989, 87–88), the Whitmanian catalogue is not empty space but charged with energy. The following section investigates the relationship between Whitman's political and poetic overthrow.

1. *The Declaration of Independence* and *Leaves of Grass*: The Political and Poetic Overthrows

In the middle of the 1850s, after the period of the substitution of republicanism by democracy (Wood 2011, 190), republicanism again came to the fore. With the escalating Northern-Southern antagonism over slavery, the question of "authentic republicanism" loomed large (Shalhope 1976, 549–551). The North and the South claimed to be the sole inheritor of American republicanism, with the most hatred between the two adversaries.[96] The degeneration of Americans—exemplified by the dysfunction of the U.S. political system—troubles Whitman, who (1928, 81–82) states:

> Our country seems to be threatened with a sort of ossification of the spirit. [...] I do not believe the people of these days are happy.

of Myself" *American Literature* vol. 45, no. 1 (March 1973): 34–49.

96 Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 313.

> The public countenance lacks its bloom of love and its freshness of faith. — For want of these, it is cadaverous as a corpse.

Whitman opts to regenerate Americans by appealing to the original Revolutionary spirit (Erkkila 1989, 44). The mainspring of the American Revolution lay in the spirit of the experiment of self-government (Wood 2011, 326), expressed in *the Declaration of Independence*. Just as *the Declaration of Independence* incarnates the political overthrow of the political Old system, Whitman's free verse embodies his literary overthrow of the poetic conventions of meter and rhyme (Erkkila 1989, 86). But more specifically, what spearheads Whitman's overthrow is his catalogue—the elemental and foundational unit of his poems (87–88). This chapter shows that the true overlap of Jefferson's and Whitman's overthrows lies in the conceptual relationship between Jefferson's ward republic—a political organ of the spirit of *the Declaration of Independence*—and the Whitmanian catalogue.

The poems in *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition have no title or stanza number. All there are the enumerations of the catalogues, including those in the Preface. Ivan Marki notes that "Song of Myself" in the edition is so dense with Whitman's catalogues that the poem can be viewed as "a grand catalogue."[97] Whitman's catalogues abound most in the 1855 edition and dwindled to zero after the 1860 edition of *Leaves of Grass* (E. Miller 1989, 142).[98] True, the first thing to notice in Whitman's catalogue is egalitarian inclusiveness; Laurence Buell (1974, 167) notes that the catalogue "adheres to a sort of prosodic equalitarianism: each line or image is of equal weight in the ensemble; each is a unit unto itself." However, this equalitarianism becomes possible by both horizontal and vertical leeway for the experiment of self-government. That is, the equalitarian contents within a given catalogue are premised on the overall "grand catalogue" structure conceived with an eye on vertical—not top-down but bottom-up—checks and balances. This field dynamics of the catalogue cancels the conventional hierarchy and opens up a liberating place.

Limited is the number of reference points for the vertical mechanism in Whitman's poetry. Often quoted are his lines that "the genius of the United

97 Ivan Marki, *The Trial of the Poet: An Interpretation of the First Edition of Leaves of Grass* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 199.

98 John B. Mason, "Catalogues" in *Walt Whitman: An Encyclopedia*, eds. J.R. LeMaster and Donald D. Kummings (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), 107–8.

States is not best or most in its executives or legislatures, [...] .... but always most in the common people" (Whitman 1959, 5–6) in the Preface to *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition and that "law and power shall be superseded from this government and transferred to the citizen" (1984a, 81) in one of his notebooks. Compared with these lines, Jefferson's ward system serves as a vantage point, access to the logic that helps to highlight the difference between the vertical and horizontal checks and balances (see Chapter 1). Hitherto, when the critics of Whitman refer to his politics, they mostly rely on the horizontal mechanism—the Federal Constitution—as the ersatz of the vertical mechanism; for instance, Betsy Erkkila (1989, 95) states, "The self that emerges in "Song of Myself" is united by the same constitutional system of checks and balances—between the one and the many, self and other, liberty and union, urban and agrarian, material and spiritual—that Whitman envisioned for the American republic." True, this is the image of the beginning of "Song of Myself."[99] However, the intervention of the ward system—when the focus is on the revolutionary spirit of self-government, i.e., how to self-govern without the mediation of representation—enables a different approach to Whitman's politics.

In Jefferson's mind, the ward system is closer to the Revolutionary spirit in *the Declaration of Independence* than the Federal Constitution is. In a letter to Samuel Kercheval in 1816 that commends the ward system, Jefferson (1907g, 35) states, "Where then is our republicanism to be found? Not in our Constitution certainly, but merely in the spirit of our people. [...] Owing to this spirit, and to nothing in the form of our constitution, all things have gone well." American republicanism lies not in the Constitution but "in the spirit of our people." Jefferson proposed the ward system as a *replacement* for the Federal Constitution that is colored by the horizontal checks and balances of the British system (Zuckert 2000, 48). For Jefferson, the distinction between vertical and horizontal checks and balances constitutes the key difference between the New World and the Old World systems. In the often-mentioned two overthrows of the political and literary systems of the Old World—in the association between *the Declaration of Independence* and *Leaves of Grass*, the priority must be given to the vertical mechanism over the horizontal one.

99 In stating the quote, Erkkila refers to the first three lines of "Song of Myself" —I celebrate myself, / And what I assume you shall assume, / For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.

This emphatic shift from the horizontal to the vertical mechanism—from the Constitution to the spirit of the Revolution in the *Declaration of Independence*—entails the critical implication of Whitman's works. Hitherto, the scholarly tradition has taken for granted the close relationship between Whitman's literary and political representation (J. Grossman 2003, 19), but the (political) issue of representation comes to the fore *only* under the system of the Constitution. In a letter to John Cartwright in 1824 that commends the ward system, Jefferson (1907h, 45) makes a distinction: firstly, the republican citizens may exercise their power by themselves, *or* they may exercise their power through their representatives. This distinction is the key to the appreciation of Whitman's endeavor to regenerate Americans; the emphasis is on the exercise of the power by themselves. Thus, "political action" (Buell 1974, 167; Erkkila 1989, 91), the scholarly tradition associates with the Whitmanian catalogue, also takes the aspect of more of the republican self-government than democratic equality through representation. The Whitmanian catalogue comes to be more a "republican catalogue" than a "democratic catalogue" (Buell 1974, 167; Erkkila 1989, 101), as the critics have called it. This is especially true for *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition; in the book, the term republic(s) appears more often than the term democracy does.[100] The aforementioned decreasing number of the usage of catalogue—meanwhile, Whitman becomes more and more "the poet of democracy"—also conversely suggests the "republican" aspects of the catalogue.

The critics' prevailing focus on what happens within each catalogue attests to Whitman's success in his catalogue; if the self-government in each catalogue flourishes, all is well. At the same time, the critics' treatment of the Whitmanian catalogue testifies to another success of achieving the self-effacingness of his literary devices, one of the foremost literary goals of Whitman.[101] In the Preface to *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition, Whitman (1959, 12) refers to his catalogue technique:

> Without effort and without exposing in the least how it is done the greatest poet brings the spirit of any or all events and passions and scenes and persons some more and some less to bear on your individual character as you hear or read.

100 The term republic(s) appears five times (Whitman 1959, 8, 18, 23, 71, 122) and the term democracy twice (48, 142).

101 Mark Bauerlein, *Whitman and the American Idiom* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1991), 50–51.

The meaning of the opening line, "Without effort and without exposing in the least how it is done," can be amplified when this quote is read along with another line in the Preface that refers to the more general rule about the literary self-effacingness— "What I experience or portray shall go from my composition without a shred of my composition" (13). The Whitmanian catalogue is intended to function without revealing itself *as a literary device*. This self-effacingness of the catalogues themselves helps the critics to overlook the role the Whitmanian catalogues play in a larger vertical framework as in the ward system and to highlight only the horizontal aspects—equalitarianism—of the contents within the catalogues. The following section investigates the interplay between Whitman's poetics and politics in his poetization via the catalogue.

2. The Relationship between the Political and Poetic Overthrow in Whitman's Poetization via the Catalogue

Whitman's literary principle of "dividing the poems into catalogues" can be traced to his journalistic articles about Jefferson's ward system (see Chapter 1). After calling the ward system "A Great Principle" (1998, 374), Whitman (457) states in the subsequent article "Cut Away!":

> The more we think of that idea of small districts, and letting each one manage its own affairs, as to it seemeth best—under the high control of a few simple and general laws—the more we like it.

Whitman's journalistic belief in local self-government develops into his philosophy of the literary catalogue. The rephrases of "small districts" as a "catalogue" and "letting each one manage its own affairs" as "the poetic self-government" show that these journalistic lines are prophetic of the literary device of the catalogue. This emphasis on the poetic self-government runs through Whitman's "Rules for Composition" (1984a, 101):

> [...]
>
> Take no illustrations whatever from the ancients or classics, nor from the mythology, [...].— Make no mention or allusion to them

> whatever, except as they relate to the New, present things to our country to American character or interests.— Of specific mention of them, even for these purposes, as little as possible.—
>
> [...]
>
> Common idioms and phrases—Yankeeisms and vulgarisms—cant [sic] expressions, when very pat only.—

Just as in politics, first of all, "Common idioms and phrases" exercise their power by themselves, and only when doing so is difficult do they exercise their power with the help of literary conventions. It must be noted here that Whitman's "Common idioms and phrases" refers not to literary conventions but to "Yankeeisms and vulgarisms," their antithesis. The last line of the first paragraph— "Of specific mention of them, even for these purposes, as little as possible" —is a paraphrase of the line of Jefferson (1907f, 421–422)— "delegating only what is beyond his competence by a synthetical [sic] process, [...], so as to trust fewer and fewer powers in proportion as the trustees become more and more oligarchical [sic]." Just as in Jefferson's ward system, the vertical checks and balances—putting "Common idioms and phrases" above the literary convention — are vital for Whitman, who endeavors to regenerate Americans.

It is in securing the self-government of "Common idioms and phrases" that Whitman espouses the catalogue structure. As Peter J. Bellis (1999, 77) notes, Whitman's flow of thinking is observed in his manuscript, in which, at first, Whitman (1984a, 146) enumerates the nicknames of omnibus drivers.

> Dry Dock John Raggedy Jack Smith's Monkey Emigrant Wild man of Borneo Steamboat Elephant Buffalo Santa Anna Blind Sam Rosy Baltimore Charley Long Boston Short Boston Maneyunk Pretty Ike Jersey Mountaineer.

Whitman (147) continues:

> It is not a labor of clothing or putting on or describing—it is a labor of clearing away and reducing—for every thing is beautiful in itself

> and perfect — and the office of the poet is to remove what stands
> in the way of our perceiving the beauty and perfection /

Via the catalogue of the nickname of omnibus drivers—representing "Yankeeisms and vulgarisms," Whitman illustrates "clearing away and reducing" and "remov[ing] what stands in the way of our perceiving the beauty and perfection." Here, the link between Whitman's poetics and politics is observed; "clearing away and reducing" here corresponds to "letting each one manage its own affairs" in "small districts" in his editorial "Cut Away." Epitomizing "Yankeeisms and vulgarisms," the catalogue of the nickname of omnibus drivers precedes the literary conventions.

Besides embodying the poetic self-government, Whitman's catalogue takes a broader aspect of self-government in the context of the revolutionary origin of America. In *An American Primer*, Whitman (1904, 31–34) states, "I say that nothing is more important than names [...] No country can have its own poems without it have its own names. [...] There is so much virtue in names that a nation which produces its own names, haughtily adheres to them, and subordinates others to them, leads all the rest of the nations of the earth." Naming something peculiar to America—its nature, geography, politics, and so on—and bringing it into the open are vital to the nation-building (Erkkila 1989, 11–12), and this is exactly what Whitman does in *Leaves of Grass*. These acts are the republican enterprise of self-government, namely, the self-expression that originates in *the Declaration of Independence*. Jefferson (1907h, 118) states, "It [*the Declaration of Independence*] was intended to be an expression of the American mind, and to give to that expression the proper tone and spirit called for by the occasion." Correspondingly, Whitman calls the Preface "the expression of their [free-souled persons'] own best feelings" and his book "American Life, from a Poetical Loafer's Point of View."[102]

In his conflation of these different levels of self-government— the self-government in the poetization and the broader self-expression of America, Whitman (1965, 642–649) acknowledges his inclination for cataloguing in "Pictures," an unpublished poem written before 1855:

102 Walt Whitman, Review of *Leaves of Grass* (1855), *Life Illustrated* (July 1855 (a)). https://whitmanarchive.org/item/anc.00175

> This, (I name every thing as it comes,) This is a beautiful statute, long lost, dark buried, but never destroyed — now found by me, and restored to the light;
>
> [...]
>
> —And here, (for still I name them as they come,) here are my timber-towers, guiding logs down a stream in the North;

Whitman's parenthetical asides "I name every thing as it comes" and "for still I name them as they come" show his persistent determination to pursue his naming, i.e., catalogue. In his final years, when retorting the negative view of his catalogue, Whitman recapitulates his notion of it. Whitman (Traubel 1953, 324) told Traubel:

> They call the catalogue names: but suppose they do? it is names: but what could be more poetic than names?
>
> [...]
>
> I have often resolved within myself that I would write a book on names—simply names: it has been one of my pet ambitions never realized.

For Whitman, names are most poetic, and "writing a book on names" is his "pet ambition." Then, the aforementioned catalogue of the nicknames of omnibus drivers harbingers this "pet ambition" of his.

To conclude, Whitman's catalogue adheres to the republican self-government at two levels: the self-government in poetization and the broader self-expression of America. More of the republican self-government than the democratic representation, Whitman's catalogue is a space where the vigor of the people necessary to continue the experiment of self-government is expressed by correspondingly vigorous language. Just as Jefferson's ward system aims to provide access to the revolutionary spirit through using the self-agency daily, Whitman's catalogue opens up a space where the poetic self-government is practiced without the intermediary of representation. The following section synthe-

sizes his poetic, personal, and political overthrow through Whitman's journey in "Song of Myself."

3. The Synthesis of the Three Overthrows in Whitman's Journey

This section begins by examining the relationship between Whitman's poetic overthrow—his catalogue—and his personal overthrow—his "perpetual journey," the relationship that extends to his political overthrow. Drawing on John B. Mason's "Walt Whitman's Catalogues: Rhetorical Means for Two Journeys in "Song of Myself," this section delves into the Whitmanian journey.

Firstly, let us recapitulate Mason's study (1973, 34–49). The "Two Journeys" means Whitman's and the reader's journey, and the Whitmanian catalogue is a rhetorical device to "describe" Whitman's journey of self-expansion above time and space and to "enable" the reader's journey to be followed; the catalogue helps Whitman to "record" Whitman's journey and to "involve the reader in a similar journey" through the readerly condescension and skimming. With attention to Whitman's "movement from inactive observation to active participation," Mason shows that "The catalogues do offer the poet a way of beginning the journey" and that the child's question "What is the grass?" in section six is the turning point where Whitman switches to the active state. From there to section 44—where Whitman states, "All below duly travel'd, and still I mount and mount," Whitman travels "the extremes of humanity" via the catalogues. Whitman makes it clear that "I tramp a perpetual journey" in section 46 and shifts to the theme of the reader's journey. In the same section, Whitman writes, "Not I, not any one else can travel that road for you, / You must travel it for yourself," and in the next section, Whitman writes, "They and all would resume what I have told them." Mason concludes, "The two journeys, however, are merely metaphors for processes which occur outside of time and space. The reader, through a process of skimming and condensation, forms a single image of each catalogue and finally a single image of that unnamable reward which awaits the poet and the reader."

With Mason's analysis of the *rhetorical* role of the Whitmanian catalogue in the two journeys intact, this section explores the theme of the Whitmanian journeys. First, it proposes a parallel political journey to Mason's notion of the Whitmanian (personal) journey. Whitman's "perpetual journey" takes on the aspect of Jefferson's "perpetual revolution." Then, the section proceeds to study the

energy source for the Whitmanian journey, a perpetual journey of self-expansion that certainly demands enormous energy.

Regarding the Whitmanian journeys, the critics who read Whitman with an eye on his politics assert that Whitman's journey is both personal and political. Betsy Erkkila (1989, 48) notes, "the desire to participate in the act of political (re)creation by creating a regenerated republican self" is central to "Whitman's democratic poetics." Shira Wolosky (2010, 176, 178) observes, "*Leaves of Grass* pursues a journey and process of self-construction that it conducts but never concludes [...] The poem in fact is constructing not only selves, but polities as well. [...] he emblemizes and leads towards their own republican self-realization." What helps both the critics to assert the political aspects of Whitman's journey is the nature of the journey; the helter-skelter of Whitman's journey also signifies political "turbulence" (Erkkila 1989, 103; Wolosky 2010, 184). Turbulence is the built-in feature of Whitman's journey; in one of his self-reviews, Whitman says that he "provokes him [the reader] to tread the half-invisible road where the poet, like an apparition, is striding fearlessly before."[103] Journeying through the turbulence is necessary to shake off the literary and political conventions that are the obstacle to self-expansion, the experiment of self-government. And in this sense, Erkkila (1989, 103) notes that Jefferson (1907c, 65) and Whitman (1965, 740) agree on the beneficial effect of the turbulence. What some critics call "literary anarchy" (Buell 1974, 166–179) of Whitman's poems—especially his catalogue—becomes "in order" for Jefferson and Whitman.

Whitman's "perpetual journey" corresponds to the "permanent revolution" of Jefferson; he (1907g, 464) states, "the generation which commences a revolution can rarely complete it." The spirit of the continuous experiment of self-government is what Mason calls "a single image of that unnamable reward which awaits the poet and the reader." However, to obtain the "reward," Whitman and the reader must start and continue their journey. In a rhetorical sense, Mason states, "The catalogues do offer the poet a way of beginning the journey." However, Whitman and the reader need the energy to start and continue this peculiar journey of self-expansion. The journey is a perpetual journey of absorption of the full range of human experience, and thus, it demands tremendous energy. Where is the source of the energy? Mason does not answer this question. Whitman, who

103 Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass Imprints: American and European Criticism on "Leaves of Grass"* (Boston: Thayer and Eldridge, 1860), 41.

seeks the self-expression of America, cannot borrow energy from outside. The energy needs to be self-generative within the poem.

Whitman's catalogue has been portrayed with the terms related to the energy: "exuberance," "excitement," and "energy" itself (Buell 1974, 170, 186). However, the source of the catalogue's energy—what causes the energy—has not been fully explored; it has been assumed that the interplay between the items within a given catalogue causes the energy. Here, exploring the factor that induces such an interplay by shedding light on the catalogue itself is profitable.

As shown in the former sections, Whitman's catalogue is his poetic adaptation of the political unit—Jefferson's ward republic. Let us revisit the ward republic and pay attention to its field dynamics. When he commended the ward system, Jefferson attributed the start of the American Revolution and the repeal of the embargo in 1807 to the New England townships. In a letter to John Tyler in 1810, Jefferson (1907e, 393–394) notes, "We owe to them [these little republics] the vigor given to our revolution in its commencement in the Eastern States, and by them the Eastern States were enabled to repeal the embargo." In a letter to Joseph C. Cabell in 1816, Jefferson (1907f, 422) also states, "How powerfully did we feel the energy of this organization in the case of embargo? I felt the foundations of the government shaken under my feet by the New England townships. There was not an individual in their States whose body was not thrown with all its momentum into action." Premised on this line of thought, Jefferson envisions the small-size ward republic—like the New England townships—generating the same energy as that at the onset of the American Revolution. Likewise, designing it as an essential and independent unit, Whitman expects his catalogue to have the same field dynamics as the ward republic intends. The political element internalized in the catalogue manifests itself as energy for Whitman's journey.

More than a rhetorical device, the catalogue brims with the "momentum into action." Both Whitman and Jefferson aim to energize and regenerate Americans by opening up the space for using self-agency. Locating the source of Whitman's journey helps to pin down the journey's starting point. The outset is Whitman's and the reader's embarkation on exercising their power by themselves; it is not somewhere between their direct exercise of power and their exercise of power through representation—politically, literarily, or personally. The clarification of the starting point underpins Whitman's and readers' "active participation" and the resultant self-regeneration in Whitman's journey.

Conclusion

With Jefferson's ward system as the reference point, this chapter has examined Whitman's catalogue in the context of the three overthrows—political, literary, and personal. This contextualization helps to reframe the approach to Whitman's catalogue, and in the relationship between the three overthrows, their synthesis manifests itself in Whitman's journey via the catalogue.

Following Jefferson's dictum "divide the counties into wards," Whitman "divides the poem into catalogues." These two principles signify the true overlap of the political and literary overthrows of the Old systems—*the Declaration of Independence* and *Leaves of Grass.* On another level—in the process of his poetization via catalogue, Whitman's conflation of the political and literary overthrow is also observed. More of the republican self-government than the democratic representation, Whitman's catalogue is his conflation of the different levels of self-government—the self-government in the poetization and the broader self-expression of America.

Whitman's catalogue is not an empty space but is charged with the field dynamics of the American Revolution, the spirit of the experiment of self-government. The energy for the journey is self-generative within the poem, and the catalogue itself provides it. Whitman's "perpetual journey" equals Jefferson's "permanent revolution"; Whitman's journey of self-expansion in "Song of Myself" involves poetic and personal overthrow as well as political overthrow.

The next chapter examines the synthesis of the three—political, literary, and personal—overthrows at a more minute level, a level of one word, "pride," which Whitman (1965, 571, original emphasis) calls "a *motif* of nearly all my verse." The three overthrows in this chapter are translated into the three kinds of self-government—personal self-government, self-government in poetization, and political self-government. The synthesis of the three types of self-government through "pride" helps to crystalize the implication of the term; it is an invigorating pride to continue the experiment of self-government.

Chapter 3

Whitman's Poetics with Attention to "Pride" in the Context of the American Experiment[104]

Introduction

Chapter 2 examined Whitman's catalogue in the framework of the spirit of the American experiment of self-government and found that the catalogue symbolizes the three overthrows of old politics, poetics, and personal life. This chapter investigates Whitman's poetics from another angle: what happens alongside the overthrows. It examines his poetics through a lens of Whitman's conception of "pride," "a *motif* of nearly all my verse" (Whitman 1965, 571, original emphasis).

In Whitman's poetics, "pride" and "catalogue" are supplementary; "pride" is a thematic underpinning, and "catalogue" is a structural unit. The set of "pride" and "catalogue" mirrors the two-sidedness of the revolutionary spirit: something new and the stability based on it (Arendt 1963, 222–223). While Whitman's catalogue overthrows the old systems, his "pride" underpins the spirit of the experiment of self-government. The inner continuity buttresses the outer structural change; the revolutionary structure of the catalogue is bound together by something on a thematic dimension. Whitman's formulation of "pride" is unique. In "A Backward Glance O'er Travel'd Roads," Whitman (1965, 571) states:

> Defiant of ostensible literary and other conventions, I avowedly chant "the great pride of man in himself," and permit it to be more or less a *motif* of nearly all my verse. I think this pride indispensable to an American. I think it not inconsistent with obedience, humility, deference, and self-questioning.

104 An earlier version of this chapter was published in Attila Dósa, Ágnes Maguczné Godó, Anett Schäffer, and Robin Lee Nagano, eds., *Space, Identity and Discourse in Anglophone Studies: Crossing Boundaries* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2024), 322–336.

Whitman calls "the great pride of man in himself" "a *motif* of nearly all my verse" and "indispensable to an American." Whitman's pride is self-generative; the source of the pride lies "in himself." In his poetry, Whitman tries to instill "pride" as an essential attribute of an American. "Pride" is necessary both individually and as a whole—as a commonality that unites Americans. That said, Whitman's "pride" is not self-satisfactory nor complacent. In the quote, "conventions" and "pride" constitute contrastive elements; "pride" breaks with conventions, and in its stead, something new—the experiment of self-government, the exercise of self-agency—comes in. With such "pride" as a motif, Whitman explicitly addresses the character of Americans. Decades after the Revolution, Whitman began with the development of Americans' mindset to use their self-agency. Whitman cannot force them to use their self-agency; he (1959, 80) writes, "Not I, not any one else can travel that road for you, / You must travel it for yourself." True, as shown in Chapter 2, a "catalogue" that is charged with the energy provides a space for using self-agency. However, it is one thing that space is filled with momentum into action; it is quite another that Americans actually participate in the action. Here, "pride" comes into play. Whitman's self-generative "pride" makes an exercise of self-agency possible; it plays a vital role in supplying inspiration and vigor. In Whitman's poetics, "pride" and "catalogue" work in tandem; not either, but both are necessary. While "catalogue" overthrows the old way of politics, poetics, and personal life, "pride" is a focal point of the ensuing self-government in those three realms.

So far, Whitman's "pride" has been referred to as an essential attribute of an American and a motive for action in its relationship to "catalogue." When this polyvalence of pride is incorporated into the exercise of self-agency, the developmental transformation of the valence of "pride" in Whitman's poetics is discernible. That is, there are three steps: firstly, feel pride in oneself, then become a proud man, and lastly, act out of the pride.[105] In one of his self-reviews about *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition, Whitman (1860, 41) details the workings of self-generative pride:

> [E]very sentence and every passage tells of an interior not always seen, and exudes an impalpable something which sticks to him that

105 P. M. S. Hacker, *The Passions: A Study of Human Nature* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2018), 131–151.

> reads, and pervades and provokes him to tread the half-invisible road where the poet, like an apparition, is striding fearlessly before.

Although "pride" is not expressly used in the quote, its tenet runs like this. Firstly, as the reader reassesses himself through the exposure to "an interior not always seen," he starts to accept himself anew and feel pride in himself. Then, that pride "sticks to him," contributing to his becoming a proud man. Finally, acting out of the pride thus acquired, the reader begins to "tread the half-invisible road" (though at first still with Whitman as a pathfinder). Reflecting the state of Americans—which Whitman (1928, 81–82) called "cadaverous," his poetry covers a spectrum of pride-induced exercise of self-agency.

This chapter examines Whitman's "pride" in the context of the American experiment of personal, poetic, and political self-government. First, it studies "pride" in the framework of poetic and personal self-government, focusing on the implication of Whitman's incorporation of corporeality into his notion of "pride." Then, the following section investigates Whitman's incorporation of politics into "pride" and the integration of the domains of the experiment of self-government—ordinary life and the broader background of national origin.

1. The Corporeality of Whitman's "Pride" in Personal and Poetic Self-government

This section studies Whitman's "pride" in personal self-government and self-government in poetization. It reframes Matt Miller's study of Whitman's "dilation" and its conflation with "pride" in the context of the experiment of self-government. Miller (2010, 129–160) demonstrates that Whitman's conflation shows that "dilation" and "pride" are equal in their signification of "spiritual expansion," and that "dilation" and "pride" are one of the thematical and structural essentials in Whitman's poetry.[106] Although this section focuses on Whitman's merger of spirituality and corporeality in "pride," it sheds light not on the merger per se but on its implications in the experiment of self-government. This study delves into

106 Miller emphasizes the incorporation of corporeality in his analysis of Whitman's "dilation" but ceases to do so in his later analysis of Whitman's "pride." Miller's focus shifts to Whitman's conflation of "dilation" and "pride" in the context that both interchangeably signify "spiritual expansion," and in so doing, he downplays the incorporation of corporeality into "pride," which Whitman's equation of "dilation" and "pride" indicates.

the ramifications of incorporating corporeality into "pride," especially its impact on the nature of the exercise of self-agency.

Before recontextualizing Miller's examination of Whitman's conflation of "dilation" and "pride," let us summarize his study. Drawing on various Whitman's writings, including his notebook manuscripts, Miller (2010, xiii–xviii) examines the formation of Whitman's poetics. And in this context, he investigates "dilation" and "pride" as one of the thematical and structural essentials. He first studies Whitman's "dilation." In the Preface to *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition, Whitman (1959, 9) writes:

> The greatest poet hardly knows pettiness or triviality. If he breathes into any thing that was before thought small it dilates with the grandeur and life of the universe.

Miller (2010, 129–31) points out that spiritual expansion is signified via the unconventional diction of "dilation" of physical expansion and that the double signification of spiritual and physical expansion by "dilation" means that it is the core of Whitman's poetry. Then Miller investigates Whitman's conflation of "dilation" and "pride." In section 21 of "Song of Myself," Whitman (1959, 44–45) writes:

> I chant a new chant of dilation or pride,
> We have had ducking and deprecating about enough,
> I show that size is only development.

Miller (2010, 154–157) notes that the conjunction "or" between "dilation" and "pride" signifies that "pride" is the equal of "dilation" and concludes that "dilation" and "pride" are the same in their signification of spiritual expansion.

This section reframes this study of Miller by elaborating on the corporeality of "pride" in the exercise of self-agency. By incorporating corporeality, Whitman's "pride" gains substance in the framework of the experiment of self-government; the exercise of self-agency necessitates both spiritual and physical exertion. Incorporating corporeality in "pride" expands the domain of the exercise of self-agency to cover mundane everyday life. For ordinary people, the experiment of self-government comes to pass in everyday life. The intertwining of spirituality and corporeality in the daily-life experiment is shown in a passage in the Preface to *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition (1959, 10–11):

> This is what you shall do: Love the earth and sun and the animals, [...] go freely with powerful uneducated persons and with the young and with the mothers of families, read these leaves in the open air every season of every year of your life, re-examine all you have been told at school or church or in any book, dismiss whatever insults your own soul, *and* your very flesh shall be a great poem and have the richest fluency not only in its words but in the silent lines of its lips and face and between the lashes of your eyes and in every motion and joint of your body....
>
> (emphasis mine)

The passage contains Whitman's key ideas about the exercise of self-agency. Firstly, the nature of the actions Whitman recommends in the first half is unpractical and against the socio-cultural conventions. These actions are experiments for the sake of experiments; Whitman attaches importance not to the result of the specific experiment per se but to Americans' engagement in these experiments, their exercise of self-agency. Secondly, there is a contrast between the first and the second half; the first half pertains to spirituality, and the second to corporeality. The betterment of spirituality—after following Whitman's recommendations—occasions the betterment of corporeality because the two elements go hand in hand in the exercise of self-agency. Engaging in the experiments renders "your flesh" "a great poem," with or without the intermediary of language. The intertwining of spiritual and corporeal dimensions in the exercise of self-agency is thus shown in this passage.

Here, "a great poem" in the passage deserves attention because it links the spiritual and corporeal elements and personal self-government and self-government in poetization. At the beginning of the same Preface, Whitman (1959, 5) states, "The Americans of all nations at any time upon the earth have probably the fullest poetical nature. The United States themselves are essentially the greatest poem." Richard Rorty's insight into these lines is helpful; he states, "Whitman thought that we Americans have the most poetical nature because we are the first thoroughgoing experiment in national self-creation: [...] To say that the United States themselves are essentially the greatest poem is to say that America will create the taste by which it will be judged. It is to envisage our nation-state

as both self-creating poet and self-created poem."[107] What Whitman wants to claim through his poetry is that America does not need to place itself within the old frame of reference but creates a new frame of reference (Rorty 1997, 29). Although Rorty makes these comments in the context of self-government in poetization, they also apply to personal self-government expressed in Whitman's above passage. A new framework from within is necessary for self-government in poetization and personal self-government. With "a great poem" at the center, the above passage connects not only spirituality and corporeality but also personal self-government and self-government in poetization. What is necessary for the manifestation of "a great poem" is that "We shall cease shamming and be what we really are," as Whitman (1855b) states in one of the self-reviews of *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition. Americans have a capacity for self-creation, namely, self-government, and thus, they are "a great poem."

However, this potential to be "a great poem" is impaired by Americans' self-imposed constraints based on the framework from without. Focusing on Whitman's attack on those constraints, let us re-examine the previously quoted passages. "Dilation" and "pride" spearhead the exercise of self-agency.

> The greatest poet hardly knows pettiness or triviality. If he breathes into any thing that was before thought small it dilates with the grandeur and life of the universe.
>
> I chant a new chant of dilation or pride,
> We have had ducking and deprecating about enough,
> I show that size is only development.[108]

In the first quote, what is to dilate is "any thing that was before *thought* small," not "before small." It is only the framework from without that causes the "pettiness or triviality," which America's own framework— "dilation"—erases. In other, "a new chant of dilation or pride" contrasts with "ducking and deprecating" in the past. Again, it is the framework from without that makes Americans "ducking and

107 Richard Rorty, *Achieving Our Country: Leftist Thought in Twentieth-Century America* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997), 22, 29.

108 "[N]ew" in "a new chant of dilation or pride" signifies Whitman's emphasis on the innovativeness of his chant, the emphasis which is all the more noticeable in that Whitman (1965, 49) deletes the term "new" in the later editions of *Leaves of Grass*.

deprecating," and their own framework— "a new chant of dilation or pride"— removes the need for those past actions. In this shift of frame of mind, "dilation" and "pride" play a vital role.

This dynamic, transformative aspect of "pride" is supported by Whitman's incorporation of corporeal elements into "pride." Whitman (1959, 120, 90) writes in "I Sing the Body Electric" and "A Song for Occupations" [109]:

> The fiercest largest passions .. bliss that is utmost and sorrow that is utmost become him well .... pride is for him,
> The fullspread pride of man is calming and excellent to the soul;
> I Sing the Body Electric

> The light and shade—the curious sense of body and identity—the greed that with perfect complaisance devours all things—the endless pride and outstretching of man—unspeakable joys and sorrows,
> A Song for Occupations

With the upfront physical exertion of "fullspread" and "outstretching," both poems signify the dynamic aspects of Whitman's pride to spearhead the exercise of self-agency. Adding the implication of "dilation" reinforces this dynamic aspect of "pride" because "fullspread" and "outstretching" intertwine with "dilation." "Dilation"—enlarging the self spiritually and physically—denotes enlargement of the range of experimentation,[110] and the expansion of the experimentation amounts to an expanded exercise of self-government.

This section examined personal self-governing and self-government in poetization through the lens of Whitman's "pride." Incorporating corporeal elements helps "pride" to gain substance because the exercise of self-agency requires

109 Miller (2010, 154) quotes these two poems to show that in Whitman's conflation of seemingly unrelated "dilation" and "pride," his conception of pride is not a conventional, narrow one but, like dilation, an expansive one. Miller (154–157) does so in the context that "Pride for Whitman is interchangeable with the idea of spiritual expansion," not in the context of the exercise of self-agency with the emphasis on physical exertion.

110 Henry S. Kariel, "The Applied Enlightenment?" (in Discussion) in *The Idea of America: A reassessment of the American Experiment*, ed. E.M. Adams (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Ballinger Publishing Company, 1977), 27.

both spiritual and physical exertion and because the domain of the exercise of self-agency covers mundane everyday life. The following section investigates Whitman's incorporation of political elements into "pride."

2. The Integration of the Domains of the Experiment of Self-government, with the Incorporation of the Political Element

In the Preface to *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition, Whitman writes lines that outline the synthesis of three kinds of self-government: 1) personal self-governing, 2) self-government in poetization, and 3) political self-government. Whitman (1959, 12) states:

> The greatest poet does not moralize or make applications of morals . . . he knows the soul. The soul has that measureless pride which consists in never acknowledging any lessons but its own. But it has sympathy as measureless as its pride and the one balances the other and neither can stretch too far while it stretches in company with the other. The inmost secrets of art sleep with the twain. The greatest poet has lain close betwixt both and they are vital in his style and thoughts.

The first and the second types of self-government—personal self-governing and self-government in poetization—are explicit, but the third one—political self-government—is implicit. Whitman attaches a special import to the soul's "pride," "which consists in never acknowledging any lessons but its own," that is, as seen in the previous section, he prioritizes the own framework from within. However, the "pride" goes hand in hand with "sympathy" of the same magnitude, and the two elements function harmoniously. Thus, first of all, Whitman portrays the first kind of self-governing, personal self-government. Secondly, Whitman applies this prioritization of the own framework to his poetization by touching on "his style and thoughts"—the relationship between form and content. It is readily understood that Whitman here refers to self-government in poetization, namely, his free verse devoid of literary conventions such as meter and rhyme.

To read political self-government in the quote, Betsy Erkkila's insight is helpful: in her book *Whitman the Political Poet*, Erkkila examines the passage with

her focus on *political* self-government. Erkkila explicitly states that the passage of Whitman relates to political self-government and, indeed, puts the passage at the center of her investigation of political Whitman. Employed five times, the phrase "pride and sympathy" becomes her central trope to express both "the separate person and the en masse" (Erkkila 1989, 95, 107) and "the one and the many" (94, 96, 111). Whitman's conflation of "pride and sympathy" enhances the viability of the continuation of the American experiment. Even in the face of "turbulence" (see Chapter 2), the fine-tuning between the two helps Americans to continue the experiment of self-government.

The insight of Erkkila to bring political elements into Whitman's "pride" is significant enough, but she does more to the current study by taking peculiar ways to introduce the quote of Whitman. That is, Erkkila did two things to introduce it. Firstly, Erkkila links Whitman's poetic enterprise and the revolutionary origin of the nation. Secondly, unlike this section, she opts to quote from the second line of Whitman— "The soul has that measureless pride which consists in never acknowledging any lessons but its own." When two introductory approaches of Erkkila are juxtaposed, it is indicative that Erkkila views the revolutionary origin of the nation and the first line of this section's quote, "The greatest poet [...]" as incompatible. However, this study deems these two notions compatible; they help to integrate the domains of experiment of self-government and synthesize the three types of self-government.

Firstly, Erkkila links Whitman's enterprise—especially his notion of "pride"—with the revolutionary origin of the nation. Before she quotes the above, Erkkila (94) states, "He [Whitman] celebrated the ideals of prudence and self-regulation, with the individual balanced between personal power and social love, as a kind of nineteenth-century poetic equivalent of the republican ideals of personal sacrifice and public virtue. The poet he imagines in the 1855 preface is, like his ideal republic, balanced between self and other." With this introduction, Erkkila paves the way for bringing the political elements in the interpretation of the passage of Whitman. Erkkila's association between Whitman's "pride and sympathy" and "the republican ideals of personal sacrifice and public virtue" exemplifies the relationship between Whitman's poetic enterprise and the American experiment of self-government. Secondly, most probably, to emphasize the politics of Whitman, Erkkila opts to omit the first sentence in the passage of Whitman— "The greatest poet does not moralize or make applications of morals . . . he knows the soul." It seems to Erkkila that the upfront of "the greatest poet" obscures her

point of *political* Whitman, and in its stead, she adds "the republican ideals of personal sacrifice and public virtue" as the introduction to the quote.

However, the previous section's study helps to unite the revolutionary origin of America and "the greatest poet." First of all, the tenet of the first line of the above quote corresponds to the quote in the previous section that centers around "a great poem," in which Whitman seems to reword "The greatest poet does not moralize or make applications of morals . . . he knows the soul." In the quote of the previous section, the domain of the self-government is mundane ordinary life. Regarding the experiment of self-government, linking this mundane domain with the revolutionary origin of the nation renders Whitman's notion of "pride" more comprehensive. And by extension of the examination in the previous section, the first line "The greatest poet does not moralize or make applications of morals . . . he knows the soul" can connect not only spirituality and corporeality but also personal self-government and self-government in poetization. In short, adding the first line integrates the domains of the experiment of self-government—ordinary life and the broader background of national origin—and synthesizes three types of self-government.

Furthermore, in her reference to "the republican ideals of personal sacrifice and public virtue," Erkkila (94) calls Whitman "a Jeffersonian democrat." Indeed, when juxtaposed with the writing of Jefferson, the above quote of Whitman indicates his inheritance of the Founding Father's legacy. While drawing a distinction between Tory (=Federalist) and Whig (=Republican), Jefferson (1907g, 492) states:

> The sickly, weakly, timid man, fears the people, and is a Tory by nature. The healthy, strong and bold, cherishes them, and is formed a Whig by nature.

Only "the healthy, strong and bold"—the ones with pride of invigorating disposition—cherish the people and thus can pursue the experiment of self-government. Invigorating pride is the hallmark of republican self-government. Along with a dictum of Jefferson— "It is the manners and spirit of a people which preserve a republic in vigour" (1907b, 230), it follows that invigorating pride and the experiment of self-government are inseparable. Here, Whitman's incorporation of the body into the "pride" this chapter examines gains greater relevance. Whitman's "pride" of expanding mental and physical disposition dates back to the Founding

Fathers, i.e., the dynamic aspect of Whitman's "pride" derives from the revolutionary origin of the nation. Steadfast to the revolutionary legacy, Whitman's "pride" is an invigorating pride to continue the experiment of self-government.

The 1856 letter of Whitman to Emerson—doubling as the Preface to *Leaves of Grass* 1856 edition (Whitman 1965, 731n)—demonstrates that Whitman views his poetic enterprise as a continuation of the American Revolution, with his notion of "pride" as its vital constituent. Whitman (740–741) states:

> Such character, strong, limber, just, open-mouthed, American-blooded, full of *pride*, full of ease, of passionate friendliness, is to stand compact upon that vast basis of the supremacy of Individuality—that new moral American continent without which, I see, the physical continent remained incomplete, may-be a carcass, a bloat—that newer America, answering face to face with The States, with ever-satisfying and ever-unsurveyable seas and shores.
>
> (emphasis mine)

Whitman is keenly aware of the American Revolutionary legacy and assigns himself as its heir. Whitman differentiates between "the physical continent" and the "new moral American continent," on which he would work as a revolutionary poet. The American character, featured by invigorating pride, "stands compact on vast basis of the supremacy of Individuality," which, in turn, becomes an integral part of the "new moral American continent." Against the backdrop of the American Revolutionary legacy, the relationship between such American character, individuality, and the new moral American continent is expressly delineated.

So far, this section has focused on synthesizing three types of self-government via "pride." Here, examining the interplay between those types helps to shed additional light on Whitman's "pride." Firstly, "pride" in personal self-government is vital because it is directly related to the exercise of self-agency, influencing poetic and political self-government. Whitman's incorporation of corporeality into "pride" provides a solid foundation for the exercise of self-agency in all three types of self-government. Secondly, "pride" in poetic self-government is exemplary and at the center; Whitman chose poetry as his medium, and through his poetization— "language experiment" (1904, viii), he sought to set an example for the other two types—personal and political—of self-government. Thirdly, "pride" in political self-government deserves attention. It is the source of the oth-

er two prides; without "pride" in political self-government—for instance, in the Old World, the other two prides would be different, though not impossible. In Whitman's poetics, the three prides, each essential, are the pillars supporting each other and constitute his "pride."

Through the interplay that centers around "pride," Whitman urges that Americans show the capacity for self-government. Ranging from the Preface to *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition to "A Backward Glance O'er Travel'd Roads," Whitman's writings related to "pride" show the consistency in that he seeks to remind the Americans that self-government is an unceasing experiment and that invigorating pride is indispensable in the experiment.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined Whitman's poetics, paying attention to the term "pride" in the context of the American experiment of self-government. It shows that via "pride," Whitman seeks to synthesize personal, poetic, and political self-government, with the link between the exercise of self-agency in ordinary life and the heritage of the Founding Spirit.

In this endeavor of Whitman, incorporating corporeality into "pride" is vital in that the exercise of self-agency requires both spiritual and physical exertion, and that the incorporation expands the domain of the exercise of self-agency to cover mundane everyday life. The intertwining of spirituality and corporeality in the daily-life experiment figures as a way for Americans to be "a great poem." Furthermore, this emphasis on spiritual and physical disposition dates back to the revolutionary origin of the nation. The exercise of self-agency in ordinary life is to inherit the Founding spirit of the experiment of self-government.

With the incorporation of corporeality as its solid foundation, Whitman's "pride" in the self-government in the three realms mutually reinforces each other. Through this interplay that centers around "pride," Whitman urges Americans to show capacity for self-government. He seeks to remind them that self-government is an unceasing experiment and that invigorating pride is indispensable in the experiment. Whitman's "pride" is an invigorating pride to continue the experiment of self-government.

From the next chapter, the book proceeds to Part II: Whitman's Olfactory Language, whose scope of examination shifts from the thematic and structur-

al level to the language level. However, the investigation continues under the umbrella of the transvaluative framework of vertical checks and balances; it is within this framework that the critical emphasis shifts from Whitman's theme and structure to his language. Just as Whitman's "Rules for Composition" prioritizes "Common idioms and phrases—Yankeeisms and vulgarisms" (see Chapter 2), Whitman forefronts his olfactory language—most "common" and "vulgar" in the five senses, signifying the continued application of vertical checks and balances to his poetics.

This chapter's incorporation of corporeality into "pride" also paves the way for the transition to Part II. In Whitman's poetics, at the language level, human corporeality occupies the center, and what comes into focus is the sense of smell; it embodies human corporeality most[111] and is a mediality of immediacy, i.e., without the mediation of representation (Griffero 2022, 82–83). In this chapter's scheme of "dilation" and "pride," olfaction is also a vehicle for "dilation," or permeation of "pride," spiritually and physically.

With the overarching theme of Whitman's poetic experiment of interweaving air, breath, and the sense of smell in his "autochthonic song" (see Introduction), Part II of the book examines Whitman's relationship with Transcendentalism (Chapter 4) and Phrenology (Chapter 5). With the findings in the previous chapters, Whitman's restoration of the revolutionary spirit through his olfactory language culminates in Chapter 6, the last chapter.

111 David Le Breton, "Smell as a Way of Thinking About the World: An Anthropology" in *Olfaction: An Interdisciplinary Perspective from Philosophy to Life Sciences*, eds. Nicola Di Stefano and Maria Teresa Russo (Gewerbestrasse: Springer, 2022), 10–11.

Part II:

Whitman's Olfactory Language

Chapter 4

New Decorums: The First Five Stanzas of "Song of Myself"[112]

Introduction

The relationship between Whitman and Emerson, who represents Transcendentalism,[113] has intrigued manifold critics (Loving 1982, xi). What makes its analysis knotty is Whitman's own accounts that run the gamut from the full influence of Emerson on him—master-disciple relationship (Whitman 1965, 732–741)—to almost none.[114] Whitman seems both in and out of sync with Transcendentalism; on the one hand, Emerson had faith in Whitman (Loving 1982, 142). On the other hand, the miscellaneous composition of Transcendentalists, each with various beliefs—as shown below, puts Whitman at the periphery of the group (Buell 1974, 6–7).

There are two climaxes in the relationship between Whitman and Emerson; one is Emerson's 1855 letter to Whitman (Whitman 1965, 731–732), which started the relationship, and the other is the confrontation over the "Enfans d'Adam" cluster of 1860 *Leaves of Grass*, which led to the end of the personal relationship between the two (J. Grossman 2003, 75; Loving 1982, 107). Suspecting that Emerson sought to shoehorn him into Transcendentalism, Whitman began to distance himself from Emerson.[115]

Nevertheless, the critical focus of the relationship between Whitman and Emerson is on "a long foreground" in Emerson's 1855 letter, which reads, "I greet

112 An earlier version of this chapter was published in *Ad Americam. Journal of American Studies* vol.23, (2022): 87–101.

113 Jerome Loving, *Emerson, Whitman, and the American Muse* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 9.

114 John Burroughs, *Notes on Walt Whitman as Poet and Person, 2d ed.* (New York: American News Company, 1871), 16.

115 Ed Folsom, "Transcendental Poetics: Emerson, Higginson, and the Rise of Whitman and Dickinson" in *The Oxford Handbook of Transcendentalism*, eds. Joel Myerson, Sandra Harbert Petrulionis, and Laura Dassow Walls (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 275–276.

you at the beginning of a great career, which you must have had a long foreground somewhere, for such a start." The relationship between Whitman and Emerson translates into a question: to what extent was Whitman influenced by Emerson, especially in "a long foreground"—in the gestation period of *Leaves of Grass*? (J. Grossman 2003, 94) As an inquiry into this question, this chapter examines the difference between Whitman and Emerson—and other Transcendentalists, especially each's perspective of the body through the lens of the sense of smell.

Although the overall tone of Emerson's 1855 letter to Whitman is very positive, the devil is in the detail. There is neither the term "poet" nor "poetry" in the letter (93). It is unclear what specific parts made Emerson praise *Leaves of Grass* (Loving 1982, 92–93). Thus, what critics have argued about the letter amounts to drawing a line in the sand in their evaluation of the letter, and by extension, the relationship between Whitman and Emerson. In 1856 *Leaves of Grass*, the letter of Emerson was published without his permission (Whitman 1965, 731–732n). And Emerson would add qualification if he had known his letter would be published; he (Conway 1882, 360) states:

> There are parts of the book where I hold my nose as I read. One must not be too squeamish when a chemist brings him to a mass of filth and says, 'See, the great laws are at work here also,' but it is a fine art if he can deodorise his illustration.

Emerson indicates that Whitman's olfactory language violates literary decorum. He most probably mentions section 49 of "Song of Myself": Whitman (1959, 84) writes, "As to you corpse I think you are good manure, but that does not offend me, / I smell the white roses sweetscented and growing, / I reach to the leafy lips .... I reach to the polish'd breasts of melons." What is inoffensive to Whitman is offensive to Emerson. Apart from this instance, there are various candidates— "The scent of these arm-pits is finer than prayer" (49)—which would make Emerson hold his nose. He dislikes Whitman's olfactory language because it is not suitable in "fine art." Emerson is specific about that. Emerson states that Whitman is "hurt by hard life and too animal experience,"[116] which is typified by Whitman's olfactory language. The mere presence of the sense of

116 Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson vol. IV,* ed. Ralph L. Rusk (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), 520.

smell—either having body odor or olfactory acuity—denotes animality (Kern 1974, 816). At least, Whitman needs to be more cautious in his employment of olfactory language.

The term "deodorise" in the quote of Emerson deserves attention; it is a newly coined word that got broader circulation in the 1840s and 1850s[117] with the publication of such books as James F. Johnston's *The Chemistry of Common Life*.[118] Americans started to deodorize (Kiechle 2017, xiii). Emerson's (jocular) usage of the term shows that Emerson was keen both on this phenomenon and on Whitman's (re)odorization. Emerson's reaction is legitimate; Whitman was against the trend of deodorization in American society. On both sides of the Atlantic, the more people became aware of their individual self, the more the odor of others—oblivious to their own odor—became repugnant to them.[119]

Although Emerson's use of "deodorise" is not as famous as the 1855 letter itself, his negative judgment of Whitman's olfactory language has influenced the critics of Whitman. It became a sticking point that prevented Transcendentalists from embracing Whitman openly. In his Review of *Leaves of Grass* (1860–61), Moncure Conway, who had firsthand heard Emerson's negative judgment of Whitman's olfactory language, repeated it:

> [W]e or nature are in some regards so untranslateable [sic] that in some of these pages one must hold his nose whilst he reads; the writer does not hesitate to bring the slop-bucket into the parlor to show you that therein also the chemic laws are at work;[120]

Amazingly, various Transcendentalists show coherent antipathy to Whitman's olfactory language. Conway's literal paraphrasing of Emerson's words—especially "hold his nose"—signifies that Whitman's olfactory language remained the bone of contention. Another Transcendentalist, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, is the

117 Google Ngram Viewer (deodorise, 1800–2019, American English). The chart shows that from 1845 to 1857, the frequency of the usage of the term "deodorise" increased exponentially.

118 Melanie Kiechle, A. *Smell Detectives: An Olfactory History of Nineteenth-Century Urban America* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2017), 71.

119 Alain Corbin, *The Foul and the Fragrant: Odor and the French Social Imagination* (Leamington Spa, Hamburg, and New York: Berg Publishers, 1986), 61.

120 Moncure Daniel Conway, [unsigned in original]. "[Review of *Leaves of Grass* (1860–61)]." August 1860. *The Walt Whitman Archive*. https://whitmanarchive.org/item/anc.00048

nemesis of Whitman (Folsom 2010, 276). Higginson has an olfactory sensitivity, albeit different from Whitman's,[121] and elevates the issue of Whitman's "seeming grossness of the sensual side"[122] to a generic epithet through an olfactory trope. Higginson (1900, 75) emphasizes, "all the malodorous portions of Whitman's earlier poems were avowedly omitted from the first English edition of his works; he was expurgated and fumigated [...]." Higginson's phrasing of "fumigated" is full of emotional charge; Whitman is filthy, and thus he needs to be purified.

This chapter shows that Whitman, in his own way, fumigates himself and his text at the beginning of "Song of Myself," at the outset of his career as a poet. Higginson demands counter-fumigation of Whitman's thus-fumigated text. In his self-review of *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition, Whitman (1855b) states, "For the old decorums of writing he substitutes new decorums." Whereas Whitman seeks to fumigate "the old decorums," Higginson seeks to counter-fumigate Whitman's "new decorums." In Whitman's substitution of "news decorums" for "the old decorums" —his fumigation, his endeavor to interweave air, breath, and the sense of smell (see Introduction) plays a key part. The following section examines the disagreement between the two decorums through the lens of olfaction.

1. Transcendentalism and the Sense of Smell

There is more to Whitman's odorization of text than his animality and coarseness. What is at stake relates to how to access the Over-Soul. While both Transcendentalists and Whitman sought the union of the individual soul with the Over-Soul, the former did so by decoupling the soul from the body but the latter with the body as equal with the soul.[123] The issue of whether to "deodorize" a text is funda-

121 Thomas Wentworth Higginson, "The Procession of the Flowers," *The Atlantic Monthly* vol. X, no. LXII (December 1862): 649–57; Higginson concludes by stating, "To write them (Nature in the four seasons), were it possible, would be to take rank with Nature; nor is there any other method, even by music, for human art to reach so high." He also notes, "The defect is not in language, but in men. There is no conceivable beauty of blossoms so beautiful as words— none so graceful, none so perfumed." Higginson accepts language as it is; Whitman calls it into question and explores a new way to write Nature. Higginson's (rather conventional) enumeration of "The Procession of the Flowers" reflects this essential difference between the two writers.

122 Thomas Wentworth Higginson, *Contemporaries* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1900), 80.

123 Leon Howard, "For a Critique of Whitman's Transcendentalism," *Modern Language Notes*

mental to Whitman and Transcendentalists because, among the five senses, the sense of smell most denotes human corporeality (Breton 2022, 10–11). Deodorization signifies dematerialization and odorization materialization. Without the body, Emerson is solely after the mystical experience. The rarity of it (Buell 1974, 59) made him admit that "it is remarkable that our faith in ecstasy consists with total inexperience of it."[124] Although Emerson's literary vision is founded on "the "method" of moment-by-moment inspiration as the most "natural" path for the intellect" (Buell 1974, 330), such inspirational experience is expressed by rather tradition-bound form (Folsom 2010, 266). Transcendentalism is top-heavy as if to make the power of language compensate for the scarcity of inspirational experience.

On the contrary, Whitman—with the body—seeks to incorporate the whole range of human experiences, including his seamy sides (Buell 1974, 327); he (1855b) states, "We shall cease shamming and be what we really are." Indeed, Whitman's "language experiment" (1904, viii) goes beyond Transcendentalists' language exploration (Buell 1974, 45); Whitman questions the valence of language itself. He states:

> [L]anguage itself as language I have discounted—would have rejected it altogether but that it serves the purpose of *vehicle*, is a necessity—our mode of communication (original emphasis).[125]

Unlike Transcendentalists, Whitman shuns the undue influence of language. In the Preface to *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition, Whitman (1959, 13) states, "What I experience or portray shall go from my composition without a shred of my composition. You shall stand by my side and look in the mirror with me." Whitman demands self-acceptance as it is without the intermediary of social and cultural conventions. Here, the sense of smell is a case in point. Madalina Diaconu notes, "The sense of smell is essential for self-acceptance; liking myself implies also to like my body odor, that is, to identify myself with my body."[126] It is in this context

vol. 47, no. 2 (Feb. 1932): 79–85.

124 Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson vol. VI*, *The Conduct of Life*, ed. Edward W. Emerson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1904), 213.

125 Horace Traubel, *With Walt Whitman in Camden (September 15, 1889 – July 6, 1890)*. (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1982), 386.

126 Madalina Diaconu, "Being and Making the Olfactory Self. Lessons from Contemporary

Whitman might have said, "The scent of these arm-pits is finer than prayer." For Emerson, such an indiscriminate flow of experience—as if overflowing out of his controlled mental flask— represents chaos (Buell 1974, 330). Whitman gives short shrift to such a fear; he (1855b) states, "By this writer the rules of polite circles are dismissed with scorn. Your stale modesties, he says, are filthy to such a man as I." The juxtaposition between this saying of Whitman and the above quote of Emerson demonstrates that the term "filthy" means different things to Emerson and Whitman, leading to the difference in how they perceive "purity," the opposite of filth. For Emerson, "A mass of filth" requires an appropriate "illustration" for it to be in "fine art"; purity means masking filth through elaborate abstraction, as in masking foul odor by distilled fragrance. For Whitman, such a process is "filthy"; purity means things as they are. Whitman (1959, 20) states, "No specification is necessary . . . to add or subtract or divide is in vain." It stands to reason that "fumigation"—purification—means the opposite thing to Whitman and Transcendentalists.

Put another way, without the body or the actual experience, Transcendentalist's sublimation to the Over-Soul is "universal rather than personal."[127] And the sense of smell militates against this way of sublimation. Unlike visual and audio, olfactory mediality is unsuitable for elaborate abstraction (Herz 2007, 88), on which Transcendentalist's sublimation to the Over-Soul depends. Olfaction's immediacy—no intermediaries between sign and referent (Griffero 2022, 82–83)—helps to retain uniqueness and singularity and thus presents an obstacle in Transcendentalists' process of stratification and universalization in accessing the Over-Soul.

Transcendentalists' poison, however, is Whitman's medicine, a medicine that Whitman takes to his full advantage; Whitman's poetics benefits from the uniqueness of the semantics of odor, especially its non-hierarchical nature and liminality. Let us see the uniqueness of the semantics of odor. Trygg Engen asserts that a semantic model for how odors are encoded is lexical collocation at the same level of abstraction.[128] Although Engen (1991, 84–86) admits the existence of an olfactory hierarchical semantic system of super- and subordinates, he ques-

Artistic Practices" in *Olfaction: An Interdisciplinary Perspective from Philosophy to Life Sciences*, eds. Nicola Di Stefano and Maria Teresa Russo (Gewerbestrasse: Springer, 2022), 64.

127 Lawrence Buell, "The Transcendentalist Poets" in *The Columbia History of American Poetry*, ed. Jay Parini (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 103.

128 Trygg Engen, *Odor Sensation and Memory* (New York: Praeger, 1991), 84–86.

tions its actual use. He (86) shows an example: "The smell of onion may cause one to think of spices or pizza rather than plants and vegetables." There appears to be no hierarchical semantic system in the verbal encoding of odor, as seen in sights and sounds (85). Thus, the emphasis of olfaction is not on cognition but instead on feeling, experience.[129] Without an abstract hierarchical semantic system, things retain uniqueness and singularity and are treated as they are. Whitman (1855b) said, "He (Whitman) gives to each just what belongs to it, neither more or less." In so doing, Whitman (1959, 9) "judges not as the judge judges but as the sun falling around a helpless thing." Olfactory language—with its non-hierarchical nature—is best suited to this leveling of Whitman. Although both Transcendentalists and Whitman seek a firsthand revelation without removes, the sense of smell's suspension of a hierarchical semantic system—as has been seen —is not viewed favorably by Transcendentalists.

Whereas chapter 2 of the book studied Whitman's catalogue in the context of three overthrows of the old systems, this chapter examines it in a different context. For Transcendentalists, Whitman's catalogue poses the same problem as the absence of strata in olfactory language. The lack of the strata in Whitman's catalogue is perplexing to Transcendentalists, who were confused by its "diffuseness and repetitiveness" (Folsom 2010, 274) "as if in an auctioneer's catalogue" (Conway 1882, 360). Olfaction's disruption of hierarchical semantics echoes the Whitmanian catalogue; the spontaneous association of individual entities free from hierarchical semantics helps to connect these on an equal footing. The additive structure of the technique enables signification of both what is there and not there. For Whitman, his catalogue signifies the plenitude of presence, a foil to Transcendentalists' rarefied representation. In other words, Whitman's catalogue is poles apart from Transcendentalists' goal of "the ultimate truth-statement about an image or event" (Buell 1993, 103).

The liminality of the sense of smell provides the focal point in the relationship between Whitman's catalogue and olfactory language. As regards catalogue technique, Paul Zweig points out, "The catalogues are bristling and random, and their randomness is important. [...] A random list is by definition, merely a sample of an unspoken list containing everything; and "Song of Myself," similarly, contains everything."[130] About the liminality of the sense of smell, David Howes

129 Trygg Engen, *The Perception of Odors* (New York: Academic Press, 1982), 3.

130 Paul Zweig, *Walt Whitman: The Making of the Poet* (New York: Basic Books Inc., 1984),

(1991, 131–132) states, "the sense of smell is the liminal sense par excellence, constitutive of and at the same time operative across all of the boundaries we draw between different realms and categories of experience." Zweig's "unspoken list containing everything" corresponds to Howes' "constitutive of and at the same time operative across all of the boundaries." Whitman's language is of liminality,[131] which is most evidently shown in his catalogue. And the sense of smell—a liminal sense—is essential to his works. As the following section will show, Whitman begins "Song of Myself" with his olfactory language.

This section has seen the difference between Whitman and Transcendentalists through the lens of the sense of smell and found that the key terms in each's poetics—purity and filth—have opposite meanings, and, in the first place, that the difference between each's concept of poetry centers around such terms—pure representation for Transcendentalists and pure presence for Whitman. The following section examines how Whitman—through his olfactory language, namely, his interweaving of air, breath, and the sense of smell— replaces the "old decorums" with "the new decorums" at the beginning of "Song of Myself."

2. Whitman's Fumigation: The First Five Stanzas of "Song of Myself"

At the beginning of "Song of Myself" (1855), two events unfold. On the one hand, with the first line, "I celebrate myself," unnamed "I" embarks on putting into practice what unnamed "He" —a poet—preaches in the Preface. On the other hand, by doing so, Whitman metamorphoses into a poet described in the Preface. With his "new decorums," the double break with the past —with the literary conventions and the former self—is portrayed.

In terms of olfactory language, the first five stanzas of the poem are striking in two ways. Firstly, in Whitman's works, olfactory language is most densely placed here. In fact, in the first five stanzas of "Song of Myself" (1959, 25–26), there are various olfactory-related words: a spear of summer grass, perfumes (twice), breathe, fragrance, distillation, intoxicate, atmosphere, perfume, distillation,

248–249.

131 Allen Grossman, "Whitman's "Whoever You Are Holding Me Now in Hand": Remarks on the Endlessly Repeated Rediscovery of the Incommensurability of the Person" In *Breaking Bounds: Whitman and American Cultural Studies*, eds. Betsy Erkkila and Jay Grossman (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 118.

odorless, smoke, respiration, inspiration, air, and sniff (of green leaves and dry leaves, and of the shore and darkcolored sea-rocks, and of hay in the barn). Secondly, the first five stanzas not only bear the numerous presences of olfactory language but also the relative absence of other senses (except for the fifth stanza). It is important to note that Whitman's enumeration of olfactory-related words here is the enhanced version of his experiment to interweave air, breath, and the sense of smell in his notebook (see Introduction).

This peculiar presence of olfactory language also pertains to what James E. Miller, Jr. calls the "entry into the mystical state,"[132] that is, Whitman's transition into a poet described in the Preface. And on such occasions, the sense of smell comes into play. Alfred Gell (1977, 28) asserts, "The sense of smell comes into play most when the other senses are in suspense, at moments, one could say, of *materialisation* and *dematerialisation*, the coming into being and passing away of things." The olfactory language at the beginning of "Song of Myself" is there to smooth out Whitman's materialization into a poet described in the Preface. Furthermore, there is a parallel between the metamorphoses of Whitman and the transformation of the valence of his olfactory language *itself*. As his transition progresses, the valence of olfactory language shifts from negative, neutral, and finally to positive. Whitman's replacement of the old decorums with the new decorums occasions the gradual decrease in the artificiality attached to olfactory language, which, in turn, represents the overall diminution of the literary conventionality of the poem. At the beginning of "Song of Myself," Whitman (1959, 25) writes:

> I celebrate myself,
> And what I assume you shall assume,
> For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.
> (First stanza)

> I loafe and invite my soul,
> I lean and loafe at my ease .... observing a spear of summer grass.
> (Second stanza)

132 James E. Miller Jr., *A Critical Guide to Leaves of Grass* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), 7.

The meditation over "A spear of summer grass" is a subject matter of "Song of Myself" (Erkkila 1989, 96). Whitman's emphasis on uncommon posture—"loafing"—signals his intention to engage in an experimental encounter with the world and self; taking this passive posture is his way to "invite my soul." And to "lean and loafe at my ease" also signals a posture to appreciate the sense of smell (Diaconu 2022, 59), presaging his intent to immerse himself in the olfactory sensation. In the next stanza, Whitman starts to use olfactory language. He (1959, 25) continues:

> Houses and rooms are full of perfumes . . . . the shelves are crowded
> with perfumes,
> I breathe the fragrance myself, and know it and like it,
> The distillation would intoxicate me also, but I shall not let it.
> (Third Stanza)

The third stanza abounds with olfactory language—the nouns of "perfumes," "fragrance," and "distillation," as well as the verbs of "breathe" and "intoxicate." Throughout the stanza, Whitman shows an ambivalent attitude—what Howard J. Waskow calls an "inner split."[133]—to all the olfactory language. This "inner split" highlights Whitman's struggle to interweave anew air, breath, and the sense of smell. At first, Whitman is drawn to "perfumes," he "breathe[s] the fragrance" of them, but together with "the distillation," he eventually rejects all of them. Notably, the negative valence attached to "perfumes," "the fragrance," and "the distillation" is counterintuitive. By this, with the anticipated reversal of the valence of the olfactory language, Whitman paves the way for his replacement of "the old decorums" with "the new decorums." Accompanying the resolution of his "inner split" in the following stanzas is the shift of the valence of the olfactory language from negative, neutral to positive. Let us see in detail how Whitman effects his intertwining of air, breath, and the sense of smell.

As "also" in the last line of the third stanza indicates, there are two types of odorants: "perfumes" (and "the fragrance," its olfactory perception) and "the distillation." These odorants form a two-tiered structure in terms of the level of abstrac-

133 Howard J. Waskow, *Whitman: Explorations in Form* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966), 159–161; Waskow does not pay attention to the role of olfaction here, let alone Whitman's olfactory language in general.

tion of general and more elaborate. Firstly, the meaning of "perfumes" is inferable from his later poem "Thou Mother with Thy Equal Brood" in which Whitman (1965, 456) writes, "Nor rhyme, nor the classics, nor perfume of foreign court or indoor library." The resembling wording suggests that "perfumes" in this stanza signifies the artificiality of literary convention. Besides, in his notebook, Whitman (1928, 197–198n) states, "*Leaves of Grass* [...] descend[s] below laws, social routine, creeds, literature, to celebrate the inherent, the red blood, one man in himself, or one woman in herself." "Houses and rooms full of perfumes" in this stanza correspond to "laws, social routine, creeds, literature" in the quote. At this juncture of the beginning of his first poem, he decides to drop off the artificiality of "the perfumes" and "descend below" it.

Secondly, "the distillation" poses a more potent problem than "perfumes" do. It is "intoxicating"; it befuddles mental function. There are two possible sources of "the distillation" —an elaborate abstraction. The first is "perfumes" with the resultant "distillation" of the artificiality, which is doubly removed from Nature. The other is Nature, i.e., (under the influence of "perfumes") Whitman himself feels an urge to "distill" Nature, ending up doing the same thing as "perfumes" do by attaching the artificiality to Nature. Both ways of "distillation" "intoxicate" Whitman. However, Whitman decides to take an adamant attitude to "the distillation"; for him, however enticing, it is "sickly abstractions" (1882, 200) that acquire "its own technism" (1984b, 1603), which "stands in the way of our perceiving the beauty and perfection" (1984a, 147). Whitman knows that "the distillation" has no future; in the Preface to *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition, he (1959, 23) states, "The poems distilled from other poems will probably pass away."

Whitman's rendering of the rejection of both levels of artificialities— "perfumes" and "the distillation" —looks like a bodily struggle; it is as if Whitman physiologically vanquishes psychological problems. And this struggle is fought in the arena of the most vital function of the body—breathing, expressed by his olfactory language. Although Whitman eventually toughs it through, he is still in the struggle, and at this stage, the olfactory language of "perfumes," "the fragrance," and "the distillation" has a negative valence of artificiality. From the next stanza, Whitman earnestly embarks on "descending below" the artificiality, and the valence of olfactory language shifts from negative to, at first, neutral. Whitman (25) continues:

> The atmosphere is not a perfume .... it has no taste of the distillation .... it is odorless,

It is for my mouth forever .... I am in love with it,
I will go to the bank by the wood and become undisguised and naked,
I am mad for it to be in contact with me.

(Fourth stanza)

The first line shows that by turning to "the atmosphere," Whitman breaks with "perfumes" and "the distillation." With the break, Whitman's olfactory language—"odorless"—achieves the neutral valence before it takes the positive one in the next stanza. Whitman comes to enjoy the atmosphere directly without the artificial intermediary; the terms "love" and "mad" indicate how much Whitman feels oppressed by the artificiality. In the process, the atmospheric charge emboldens him so much that he hits on the idea of reveling more by "going to the bank and becoming undisguised and naked." Invigorated, Whitman intends to appreciate "the atmosphere" more directly. Whitman's inner change caused by "contact with the atmosphere" manifests in his text; in the next stanza, he starts the first catalogue,[134] an antithesis of the artificial literary convention. So far, Whitman's diction is somewhat abstract, but it becomes more concrete from here (Whitman 1959, 25–26).

The smoke of my own breath,
Echoes, ripples, and buzzed whispers .... loveroot, silkthread, crotch and vine,
My respiration and inspiration .... the beating of my heart .... the passing of blood and air through my lungs,
The sniff of green leaves and dry leaves, and of the shore and dark-colored sea-rocks, and of hay in the barn,
The sound of the belched words of my voice .... words loosed to the eddies of the wind,
A few light kisses .... a few embraces .... a reaching around of arms,
The play of shine and shade on the trees as the supple boughs wag,
The delight alone or in the rush of the streets, or along the fields and hillsides,

134 Albert Gelpi, *The Tenth Muse: The Psyche of the American Poet* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1975), 175.

> The feeling of health .... the full-noon trill .... the song of me rising
> from bed and meeting the sun.
>
> (Fifth stanza)

Significantly, although Whitman feels invigorated by the atmospheric charge, he does not "go to the bank" or "become naked" but continues his meditative loafing. Even with his clothes on, his aroused state is sustained by the reinforced association—through the contact with the atmosphere—between inner bodily experience and the outer world stimulation. And this sensuous interplay constitutes this first catalogue—one of the salient traits of his poetry (see Chapter 2). The olfactory language of "smoke" spearheads the catalogue, indicating that the olfactory language comes to take a positive valence. Whitman gets down to replacing "the old decorums" with "the new decorums." The catalogue brims with raw, sensuous experiences without a trace of artificiality.

The unique association between "smoke" and "breath" is traced back to "Breathsmoke" in Whitman's notebook and made in the context of his intertwining of air, breath, and the sense of smell (see Introduction). Here, the smoke has a peculiar implication. It is the result of the fumigation; "in" is good spirit— "the atmosphere"—and "out" is bad spirit— "perfumes"; "the atmosphere" neutralizes "perfumes," and then "the smoke of my own breath" goes up from Whitman's mouth. "The smoke" is the materialized and sensuous evidence of his transformation. This fumigation—what has happened to Whitman so far—is the process of learning and unlearning, and as a result, Whitman enters a new phase. This fumigation is distinctive in various ways; the place and the catalyst are atypical. Over a long time, people around the world have used fumigation for physical and psychological health, and usually, a ritual of fumigation is held in a dark, hidden place.[135] However, Whitman's fumigation is held "in the open air," tallying with the tenet of his poetics; he (1959, 82) said, "I swear I never will translate myself at all, only to him or her who privately stays with me in the open air." Moreover, generally, the catalyst used in the rite of fumigation is smoke from a peculiar substance burned (Parkin 2007, S42). However, the catalyst of Whitman's fumigation is the *atmosphere*—life-giving air—whose affordability and availability are

135 David Parkin, "Wafting on the Wind: Smell and the Cycle of Spirit and Matter," *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* vol. 13, Wind, Life, Health: Anthropological and Historical Perspectives (2007): S42.

the key. Whitman (1959, 41) says, "breathe the air and leave plenty after me" in section 16 of "Song of Myself" and "This is the common air that bathes the globe" in section 17 (later deleted). The place and the catalyst for the fumigation need to be native-origin. This fumigation is a new mysticism performed not behind closed doors but in the open air. The site and the catalyst must be commonplace because this fumigation is supposed to develop into a common practice among Americans.

Whitman seems to undergo the ritual of fumigation delightfully. He shows the essence of learning and unlearning; although some inner struggle is necessary, the process must not be painful and can be repeated by everyone. After all, Whitman continues to "celebrate himself." He has already employed various olfactory language with the shifting valences to pave the way for this realization and smooth the transition. Indeed, he seems free from anxiety in his meditative loafing, and, if anything, his inner senses and outer world get increasingly in sync. The change in Whitman's inner state is expressly demonstrated in the difference between the description of olfactory physiology in the third stanza and this stanza. While in the former, Whitman's "breathing" is almost overpowered by the artificiality of "perfumes," "the fragrance," and "the distillation," in the latter, the line "My respiration and inspiration .... the beating of my heart ...." eclipses such artificiality. It is worth repeating that the fifth stanza is the first catalogue in the poem, and "the smoke," a material token of the fumigation, is the first word of it. This first catalogue—a symbol of new decorums brimming with the vigor of the five senses—is like a bulldozer that shoves the old decorums out of the way.

The term "sniff" deserves attention, too. It shows Whitman's sense of smell heightens more than usual; sniffing renders the exposure to olfactory stimuli more potent; usually, "only 5 to 10 % of the air inhaled gets to the olfactory cleft" but sniffing makes the ratio increase (Engen 1991, 24–25). Nevertheless, the term "sniff" has a negative connotation; sniffing is socially frowned upon because of its forefronting of the animalistic side of humans.[136] Sniffing at foods—nose approaching close to food—is like physically putting a feeler for it. Whitman (1959, 125) shows an example of this in his poem "Faces"— "a dog's snout sniffing for garbage." However, with this sniff, Whitman found a new delight; he can differentiate between "the sniff of green leaves and dry leaves, and of the shore

136 Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations,* trans. Edmund Jephcott (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 170–71.

and darkcolored sea-rocks, and of hay in the barn." (The difference between co-existing various smells is rarely heeded.) This increased appreciation of the sense of smell is a *quid pro quo* for Whitman's breaking free of socio-cultural taboo through sniffing. These delights of senses are what is all about this catalogue.

"The sound of the belched words of my voice .... words loosed to the eddies of the wind" (25) signifies the first actual deliverance of "barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world" (85). This is Whitman's first utterance of the term "words." The structure of the phrase "The sound of the belched words of my voice" is idiosyncratic; just as "The smoke of my own breath" is made of a two-tiered structure (smoke, breath), so is this phrase (sound, words, (and voice)). It is not "words" but "sound" that are "loosed to the eddies of the wind." After the rite of fumigation, Whitman becomes pure, and thus, his "*sound* of belched words" becomes devoid of artificiality and "untranslatable" (85). This feature of the sound enables it to be "loosed to the eddies of the wind" and deliver his "barbaric yawp."

More specifically, "the eddies of the wind" signify the presence of a spirit (Parkin 2007, S40, S49). Wind consists of air, which in turn is the medium of the sense of smell. The smell is elusive, like a spirit (S40). Lyall Watson states, "The ideas of life and breath and spirit and smell are intertwined in many cultures."[137] "Song of Myself," especially its first five stanzas, is full of this cosmology. At the end of the poem, Whitman (1959, 86) "depart[s] as air" and "effuse[s] flesh in eddies." Whitman consigns "The sound of the belched words of my voice" to "a spirit" so that his "barbaric yawp" can travel "over the roofs of the world." The cosmology of life, breath, spirit, and smell runs through "Song of Myself."

In sum, Whitman's olfactory language plays two key roles at the beginning of "Song of Myself." The first is to help him to transition into a poet, as described in the Preface. The other is—through his new interweaving of air, breath, and the sense of smell—to demonstrate his replacement of "the old decorums" with his "new decorums." The unfolding of his replacement of "the old decorums" with "the new decorums" occasions the changes in the valence—from negative, neutral, and to positive—of his olfactory language. Whitman's exploration of new poetic diction and the semantics of Whitman's materialization into a poet— both are interrelated—necessitate frequent usages of his olfactory language.

Whitman (26) asks four questions in the sixth stanza:

137 Lyall Watson, *Jacobson's Organ and the Remarkable Nature of Smell* (New York: Plume, 2001), 5.

> Have you reckoned a thousand acres much? Have you reckoned
> the earth much?
> Have you practiced so long to learn to read?
> Have you felt so proud to get at the meaning of poems?
> (Sixth stanza)

By demonstrating how "the old decorums" are replaced with "the new decorums," the first five stanzas suggest hints to these questions. Underneath Whitman's replacement of "the old decorums" with "the new decorums" is the shift of the valence of the poetry, the process expressed by olfactory language. It is a process of learning and unlearning, but all the reader needs to do is to be "in" the poem. Peter J. Bellis (1999, 82) states, "The poem is to exist as a natural object does, in and for itself, prior to any system of exchange or representation [...] The reader is not asked to read but simply to remain "in" the poem, [...]" Without the intermediary of the artificial conventions, the sense of smell is also the sense to be "in" par excellence. Whitman shows that his language is "a natural object" through his experimental molding of the olfactory language.

Conclusion

This chapter has started by investigating the relationship between Emerson and Whitman. In the process, it found that Whitman's employment of olfactory language signifies the salient difference between the two. Transcendentalists view Whitman's use of olfactory language as a breach of literary decorum, but Whitman employs it as a case for his "new decorums."

Emerson's negative judgment of Whitman's olfactory language— "deodorize" —sets a precedent; it is carried over to Conway and culminates in Higginson's "fumigation" of Whitman's text. Indeed, Whitman's olfactory language is the core of the difference between him and Transcendentalists. First, olfaction's corporeality conflicts with Transcendentalist aesthetics, and second, its unsuitability for elaborate abstraction—like Whitman's catalogue—throws a wrench in the way Transcendentalists access the Over-Soul. The "deodorization" of a text encompasses the fundamental issue of purity and filth, extending to the difference in the underlying concept of poetry—pure representation or pure presence—between Transcendentalists and Whitman.

In the first five stanzas of "Song of Myself," Whitman forefronts the intertwining of air, breath, and the sense of smell. And his olfactory language portrays his transformation into a poet, as described in the Preface, and smooths out this transition. There is a parallel between Whitman's metamorphoses and the transformation of the valence of his olfactory language. As his transition progresses, the valence of olfactory language shifts from negative to neutral, and finally to positive. Through these, Whitman effects his intertwining of air, breath, and the sense of smell. Whitman's replacement of "the old decorums" with "the new decorums" occasions the gradual decrease in the artificiality attached to olfactory language, which in turn represents the overall diminution of the literary conventionality of the poem. Whitman sloughs off the artificiality so that he can communicate with "a spirit," which spreads his "barbaric yawp." Whitman entrusted his career as a poet to olfactory language. "The smoke" is the first word of his first catalogue—a symbol of "the new decorums" brimming with the vigor of the five senses—which shoves "the old decorums" out of its way in the poem.

Chapter 5

Whitman's Olfactory Immediacy

Introduction

In Chapter 4, the difference between Whitman and Transcendentalists was examined in light of their attitude toward the sense of smell, which embodies human corporeality most. The negative attitude of Transcendentalists toward the sense of smell shows that their ideas are incompatible with human corporeality. What helps Whitman to merge Transcendentalism and human corporeality in his poetry is Phrenology— "the true science of mind"[138] through examining the skull. The pseudoscience offers Whitman "a scientific confirmation of the merely intuitive truths offered by the Transcendentalists" (Wrobel 1974, 22).

That said, the focus of this chapter is not Whitman's via-phrenology synthesis of body and soul. Instead, it delves into the linguistic implication of Phrenology with the help of Mark Bauerlein's view of Whitman's espousal of physiognomy—kin of Phrenology, i.e., the study of mind through the examination of the face—as his effort to find a language without an intermediary between signifier and signified (Bauerlein 1991, 13–14, 46–49, 50, 58, 61–62, 77, 86–89). In this linguistic system of "bodily signs" (46, 47), human body becomes both the emitter and the receiver. This way of linguistic view leads to the presence of not only *visual* bodily signs but also *olfactory* bodily signs because the emission and reception of breath and odor are essential human functions. Here, what merits attention is William Fishbough's article "Spheres" (1853, 8–10), to which Floyd Stovall refers as a possible influence on Whitman.[139] In the article written for *The American Phrenological Journal*, Fishbough (1853, 9) states, "man [...] is surrounded by an [...] aromal sphere [...] sphere is a most exact counterpart of all the essences, qualities, and principles of his intellectual, moral, and physical being."

138 O. S. Fowler, "Phrenology: Its Scientific Claims; Its Investigation." *The American Phrenological Journal and Miscellany* vol. VIII, no. 1 (Jan. 1846): 7, 8.

139 Floyd Stovall, *The Foreground of Leaves of Grass* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1974), 155–56.

In a nutshell, as in phrenology (physiognomy), in the "aromal sphere," the inside is perceived from the outside.

This chapter investigates Whitman's olfactory "bodily signs" vis-à-vis his endeavor to intertwine air, breath, and the sense of smell (see Introduction). Thus, although neither Fishbough nor Stovall touches on the olfactory implication of the "aromal sphere," the olfactory perspectives are incorporated in its examination. Indeed, it is plain that the feature of the sense of smell is the undercurrent of the doctrine; the olfaction—through human physiology of breathing —breaks down the barrier between the inner and outer, between signifier and signified (Griffero 2022, 82–83). Also, for Whitman who seeks the bodily presence in his poems, the sense of smell—a sense that embodies human corporeality most—best suits its signification.

Whitman's olfactory bodily sign serves two purposes; it gives basis not only for the immediacy of his language but also for the immediacy of his poetry. This division of immediacy into the two categories is based on the two types of bodily presence—Whitman's and other characters' —because the bodily presence of Whitman himself has a more considerable significance in his poetry. Firstly, this chapter examines the "aromal sphere" in Whitman's poems with an eye on the immediacy of Whitman's language. Then, Whitman's poetry of "breath" and "odor" in Section 39 of "Song of Myself" and "Had I the Choice" will be investigated. In Section 39 of "Song of Myself," based on the immediacy of his language, Whitman demonstrates the immediacy of his poetry, with the resultant synthesis of the two types of immediacy.

1. Poetic Bodily Presence and "Aromal Sphere"

In the mid-19th century in America, phrenology was all the rage.[140] As a social reform program, American phrenology was filled with "nationalist feelings and millenarian hopes" (Mackey 1997, 238); American phrenologists—including Whitman—believed that, with their stress on the correlation between physiological and mental health, phrenology goes a long way toward the betterment of society (238–39). That is, putting human nature on what American phrenolo-

140 Nathaniel Mackey, "Phrenological Whitman," *Conjunctions* no. 29, TRIBUTES: American Writers on American Writers (1997): 231.

gists view as a "scientific" basis—phrenology—and thereby elucidating the link between the body and the soul would help Americans to understand themselves and each other better. These progressive aspects of phrenology come naturally to Whitman.

Whitman's interest in phrenology grew ever more after he had his head examined in 1849 with the result that he had "a remarkable phrenology," to the extent that the pseudoscience occupied the center of his later career as a poet.[141] The broad and profound impact of phrenology on Whitman is outlined by Edward Hungerford (1931, 370) who states, "Through the fertile years of Whitman's productive life he clung firmly to three ideas related to phrenology. The poet who represents and interprets American life should be well-developed in all the phrenological organs of his head. He himself was so developed, and his poetry corroborated that phrenology. The structure of poetry itself should have a solid basis in the science of phrenology." Phrenology reveals what a poet and poetry should be and helps to assure that Whitman has an innate quality to be "an American bard" (Whitman 1855b).

The influence of phrenology on Whitman's metaphysics and literary expression has been well investigated. On the one hand, robust health, physiological endowment, and keen senses are highlighted as a necessity to gain an intuitive understanding of the union with the universe, helping Whitman to synthesize body and soul as well as material and spiritual (Wrobel 1974, 17–23). On the other hand, in his poetry, besides the expressions related to such body-soul, material-spiritual harmony, there are numerous phrenological jargons. Among those, "Amativeness"—affection between men and women—and "Adhesiveness"—affection between men and men—are conspicuous (Mackey 1997, 231); for instance, Whitman (1965, 345, 504) writes, "The prevailing ardor and enterprise, the large amativeness, / The perfect equality of the female with the male, the fluid movement of the population" ("By Blue Ontario's Shore") and "I announce adhesiveness, I say it shall be limitless, unloosen'd, / I say you shall yet find the friend you were looking for" ("So long!"). Indeed, Whitman (1959, 14) explicitly states that phrenology is one of the understructures of his poetry.

The textuality of the body in phrenology plays a key role in the unfolding of Whitman's poetics (Mackey 1997, 241–242). As critics have noted, Whitman

141 Edward Hungerford, "Walt Whitman and his Chart of Bumps," *American Literature*, vol.2, no. 4 (Jan. 1931): 350–84.

views body and language as convertible; the body is language, and language is the body. About the textuality of the body, Whitman (1959, 11; 1965, 219) says, "your very flesh shall be a great poem and have the richest fluency not only in its words but in [its physiology]," and "Human bodies are words, myriads of words." And on the corporeality of language, Whitman (1959, 8; 1964, 577) states, "he (the great poet) can make every word he speaks draw blood" and "perhaps Language is more like some vast living body, or perennial body of bodies." However, few critics have studied this notion of language of Whitman from the perspective of its linguistic implication.

Mark Bauerlein's *Whitman and the American Idiom* is an exception. Besides phrenology, Whitman was interested in physiognomy—a study of the hard parts of the body—and pathognomy—a study of the other mobile parts (Aspiz 1980, 109–141).[142] In his extensive coverage of physiognomy and pathognomy, Bauerlein (1991, 13–14, 46–49, 50, 58, 61–62, 77, 86–89) views Whitman's embrace of the immediacy of language as a part of his efforts to find a language different from the conventional one, that is, to find a medium without an intermediary between signifier and signified. Bauerlein (13) notes that through daily "physiognomic" interaction, "Whitman believed [...] that two souls had harmonized in a self-effacing medium transcending language." Bauerlein continues to juxtapose conventional language and physiognomy; he (49) states, "physiognomic semiosis happens spontaneously and unconsciously, the sign itself emanates rather than represents the truth within." Bauerlein (46, 47) calls pathognomy non-literary "bodily signs" in the footstep of Whitman who writes, "Pathognomy—the expression of the passions—the science of the signs by which the state of the passions is indicated—the natural language or operation of the mind, as indicated by the soft and mobile parts of the body."[143]

Bauerlein's notion of Whitman's language related to physiology as "bodily signs" puts the human body and senses in a different light. In the investigation of Whitman's metaphysics related to physiology, the human body and sense are emphasized mainly as a medium of *receiver*. However, once they become "bodily

142 J. G. Spurzheim, *The Physiognomical System of Drs. Gall and Spurzheim; Founded on an Anatomical and Physiological Examination of the Nervous System in general, and of the Brain in particular; and Indicating the Dispositions and Manifestations of the Mind* (London: Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, 1815), 251.

143 Walt Whitman, *Daybooks and Notebooks vol. III: Diary in Canada, Notebooks, Index*, ed. William White (New York: New York University Press, 1978), 815.

signs," another aspect—the body and sense as a medium of the *emitter*—gains equal importance. The attention to the body and sense as a medium of the *emitter* is essential for better appreciating Whitman's poetic enterprise since being the emitter translates into the self-emanation of the people. This pertains to the aforementioned enhancement of mutual understanding between Americans and the core of Whitman's poetics—the auto-poeticness of America. In the Preface to *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition, Whitman (1959, 5, 8) states, "The Americans of all nations at any time upon the earth have probably the fullest poetical nature. The United States themselves are essentially the greatest poem" and "Of all nations the United States with veins full of poetical stuff most need poets and will doubtless have the greatest and use them the greatest."

Phrenology, physiognomy, and pathognomy are related to the sense of sight; they *emit* both outer—visual—and inner—human character—information. Can other senses become "bodily signs," a medium of *emitter*, in the phrenology-related realm? Human bodily functions involve the emission and reception of breath and odor. With its association with corporeality, the sense of smell fell within the scope of physiology,[144] and in this context, olfaction had ties with phrenology. In *The American Phrenological Journal* to which Whitman subscribed (Stovall 1974, 157), there is an article about olfactory "bodily sign": William Fishbough's "Spheres" (1853, 8–10). The article concerns what Fishbough (9) terms "aromal sphere"; he explains, "The sphere of each body [...] is the exact aromal counterpart of the body, and may be said to be its identical self spiritualized," and "man [...] is surrounded by an [...] aromal sphere [...] sphere is a most exact counterpart of all the essences, qualities, and principles of his intellectual, moral, and physical being." The "aromal sphere" is the olfactory rendition of phrenology (physiognomy) in that the inside is perceived from the outside. Although Fishbough does not touch on the olfactory implication of the "aromal sphere," adding it helps to appreciate the fuller incorporation of the body in Whitman's poetry. At the level of the sense, it is plain that the feature of the sense of smell is the undercurrent of the doctrine of the "aromal sphere." The sense of smell best embodies human corporeality among the five senses with its function as an interface between the inner and outer of the human body (Breton 2022, 10–11). Indeed, while visual bodily signs still require a sign system (Bauerlein 1991, 49), olfactory

144 Erica Fretwell, *Sensory Experiments: Psychophysics, Race, and the Aesthetics of Feeling* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2020), 137.

bodily signs—through human physiology of breathing—break down the barrier between the inner and outer, between signifier and signified (Griffero 2022, 82–83). Thus, the anthropology of olfaction has it that the olfactory emanation of the inner is the outer "aromal sphere."[145]

Although out of the context of the "aromal sphere" per se, there is another feature of olfaction that meets Whitman's poetic demand; as mentioned above, he seeks a self-effacing medium without a trace of composition (see also Chapter 2). Olfaction is evanescent, i.e., it is self-effacing. When converted into a "bodily sign" in his poetry, it becomes a transparent, self-effacing medium. With the immediacy and self-effacingness (evanescence) of olfaction, the "olfactory" bodily signs—the "aromal sphere"—have advantages over "visual" bodily signs—phrenology, physiognomy, and pathognomy. In short, olfactory bodily signs are more suitable to bodily signs than visual bodily signs are. The following section will examine Whitman's poems associated with Fishbough's "aromal sphere," with attention to their olfactory aspects.

2. The Immediacy of Whitman's Language

Although Fishbough's "aromal sphere" does not appear verbatim in Whitman's poems and prose, Floyd Stovall (1974, 156) notes various instances of its impact on them.

> In Section 2 of "Song of Myself," where he says that houses and rooms are "full of perfumes," he must refer to the "aroma" that belonged to the persons living in the houses and writing the books on the shelves. The sphere may also be the "fluid and attaching character" of individuals described in the same poem [sic]. It is the "necessary film" which envelops the individual soul, as stated in Section 9 of "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry." Many other parallels might be cited.[146]

145 Chantal Jaquet, "Smell as a Carrier of Values" in *Olfaction: An Interdisciplinary Perspective from Philosophy to Life Sciences*, eds. Nicola Di Stefano and Maria Teresa Russo (Gewerbestrasse: Springer, 2022), 98.

146 The phrase "fluid and attaching character" does not appear in "Song of Myself" but in "Song of the Open Road."

This section expands on Stovall's brief review of the influence of the "aromal sphere" on Whitman's poems. Firstly, let us see the three poems Stovall picks up as "aromal sphere"-influenced poems— "Song of Myself," "Song of the Open Road," and "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry." Then, the investigation extends to what Stovall calls "many other parallels." In all the poems, the characters' bodily presence is delineated via the "aromal sphere." The "aromal spheres" conjure up the olfactory corporeality, in which the immediacy of Whitman's language is achieved.

Although Fishbough's "aromal sphere"—a medium of the outward emitter of inward self—is value-neutral, it usually plays a positive role in Whitman's poems. In this respect, its negative overtone in Section 2 of "Song of Myself" is an exception. Whitman (1959, 25) writes:

> Houses and rooms are full of perfumes . . . . the shelves are crowded
> with perfumes,
> I breathe the fragrance myself, and know it and like it,
> The distillation would intoxicate me also, but I shall not let it.

Stovall (1974, 156) states that Whitman "must refer to the "aroma" that belonged to the persons living in the houses and writing the books on the shelves." The imaginary "perfumes"—"aromal sphere"—are attributed to the literati of the Old World. The specificity of the poem occasions this negative connotation. This utterance of Whitman is made at the very beginning (Section 2) of "Song of Myself" in which he shows an ambivalent attitude—what Howard J. Waskow (1966, 159–161) calls an "inner split"—to the literary convention (see Chapter 4).

The second "aromal sphere"-influenced poem Stovall picks up is "Song of the Open Road"; he (1974, 156) states that the phrase "fluid and attaching character" shows the influence of "aromal spheres." Whitman (1965, 154) repeats the phrase thrice in the section of the poem.

> Here rises the fluid and attaching character,
> The fluid and attaching character is the freshness and sweetness of
> man and woman,
> (The herbs of the morning sprout no fresher and sweeter every day
> out of the roots of themselves, than it sprouts fresh and sweet
> continually out of itself.)

Toward the fluid and attaching character exudes the sweat of the
love of young and old,
From it falls distill'd the charm that mocks beauty and attainments,
Toward it heaves the shuddering longing ache of contact.

"The fluid and attaching character" seems to be attributed to "man and woman" in "the Open Road." "The fluid and attaching character" merges with "the sweat of the love of young and old," which in turn sublimates into "the charm that mocks beauty and attainments." In the process, the terms "sweat" and "distill'd" indicate olfaction's involvement in the signification of the "aromal sphere." "The herbs of the morning" in the parenthetical aside adds the olfactory aspects to this section of the poem.

As regards Section 9 of "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry," Stovall (1974, 156) notes that the phrase "necessary film" shows the influence of the "aromal sphere." Adding the preceding and following lines helps to appreciate this part of the poem fully. The overlapping relationship of the soul and body is well formulated; the soul corresponds to "necessary film" and the body to "divinest aromas," with the eventual merger of all (Whitman 1965, 165).

Appearances, now or henceforth, indicate what you are,
You necessary film, continue to envelop the soul,
About my body for me, and your body for you, be hung out divin-
est aromas,

This part of the poem neatly exemplifies the Whitmanian "aromal sphere." The relationship of the components of the "aromal sphere"— "aromas" and "spheres"— is explicated in the juxtaposition of the body— "divinest aromas" —and the soul— "necessary film."

What Stovall calls "many other parallels" also testify to the impact of the "aromal sphere" in Whitman's poetry. Among those "parallels," to be examined in this section are two exemplary poems: "There Was a Child Went Forth" (1959, 139) and "Scented Herbage of My Breast" (1965, 113–114).

The mother with mild words .... clean her cap and gown .... a whole-
some odor falling off her person and clothes as she walks by:
There Was a Child Went Forth

SCENTED herbage of my breast,
[...]
O I do not know whether many, passing by, will discover you, or
inhale your faint odor but I believe a few will;
Scented Herbage of My Breast

The influence of the "aromal sphere" manifests as "A wholesome odor" in "There Was a Child Went Forth" and as "your faint odor" in "Scented Herbage of My Breast." In "There Was a Child Went Forth," "a wholesome odor" is attributed to "The mother," and in "Scented Herbage of My Breast," "your faint odor" to "you." In both of the poems, the attached adjectives—"wholesome" and "faint"—render the "aromal sphere" more definite. In "There Was a Child Went Forth," the detailed description of "The mother" makes the "aromal sphere" almost palpable. This part of "Scented Herbage of My Breast" is remarkable in its signification of the doctrine of the "aromal sphere." The conjunction of "or" between "discover you" and "inhale your faint odor" indicates that the significance of the former is the same as the latter; "you" is "your faint odor," that is, an "aromal sphere."

So far, the focus is on the impact of the "aromal sphere" on several of Whitman's poems. However, how about the specific odor attribution in the "aromal sphere"-influenced poems? Stovall's choice— "perfumes" in Section 2 of Song of Myself, "fluid and attaching character" in "Song of the Open Road," and "necessary film" in "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry"—shows that he gives short shrift to the possible odorants, let alone the olfactory involvement. But, this section's choices— "a wholesome odor" in "There Was a Child Went Forth" and "your faint odor" in "Scented Herbage of My Breast"—contain the odorants and, as shown above, are olfaction-oriented. (Additionally, the expansion of the three poems Stovall picks up shows olfactory involvement.) In light of the conventionally negative association of "odor" with bodily odor, Whitman's choice of "odor" in "There Was a Child Went Forth" and "Scented Herbage of My Breast" indicates his firm intention to emphasize individual corporeality and uniqueness. Thus, the body comes to be fully incorporated into his poetry.

In "Spheres," Fishbough (1853, 9) states, "It is by the contact of the spheres of different beings, organic and inorganic, that those beings communicate spiritually or ethereally with each other, even as they communicate physically with each other by contact of their grosser elements." Whitman makes it clear that he aims to embrace both the "spiritual" and the "grosser," or "physical," communication. On

the one hand, in the Preface to *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition, Whitman (1959, 10) states, "The rhyme and uniformity of perfect poems [...] shed the perfume impalpable to form." In the Preface to the same book, 1876 edition, he (1965, 755) continues to say, "Poetic style [...] may be [...] the impalpable odor." The phrases "the perfume impalpable to form" and "the impalpable odor" indicate the possible influence of the doctrine of "aromal sphere" that helps to "communicate spiritually or ethereally with each other." On the other hand, in his notebook, Whitman (1928, 197–198n) states, "*Leaves of Grass* [...] descend[s] below laws, social routine, creeds, literature, to celebrate the inherent, the red blood, one man in himself, or one woman in herself." Whitman (1984b, 1603) also writes, "The tendency permitted to Literature, has always been & now is to magnify & intensify its own technism, to isolate itself from general & vulgar life, & to make a caste or order." Whitman's use of the actual odorant corresponds to "communicat[ing] physically with each other by contact of their grosser elements." It signifies his "descending below" the socio-cultural conventions and thereby entering into "general & vulgar life." When the sense of smell—as the sense of human corporeality and animality—is upfronted, Whitman verbalizes what is too close to utter (Herz 2007, 16).

Whitman's odor attribution to the "aromal sphere" is what Waskow (1966, 16–17) calls Whitman's "bipolar unity" at work. Waskow views "bipolar unity" as Whitman's way of uniting various oppositional elements such as body and soul, material and spiritual.[147] Here, at the level of the sense, the bifurcating tendency in the verbal encoding of olfaction comes into play. Olfaction is inherently incompatible with language (Jaquet 2022, 99–100); in other words, olfactory language per se helps Whitman to circumvent the literary conventions, ending up being either the "spiritual" communication or the "grosser" "physical" communication. These two channels are not mutually exclusive but supplementary in achieving the immediacy of Whitman's language.

This section's investigation is limited to Whitman's poems in which the "aromal sphere" is attributed to characters other than Whitman; when it is attributed to Whitman himself, it takes a greater significance of *the immediacy of his poetry*. The following section will examine such cases, namely, Whitman's poetics of "breath" and "odor" in Section 39 of "Song of Myself" and "Had I the Choice."

147 Waskow's book consists of two parts: Part 1 (Chapters 1 to 3), "Whitman's Habit of Mind," and Part 2 (Chapters 4 to 7), "Whitman at Work." Whitman's bipolar unity is the overarching theme of the book; Chapter 2 is titled "Bipolar Unity" in Idea and Image," and Chapter 3 is "Bipolar Unity" in Poetic Theory."

3. The Immediacy of Whitman's Poetry

The previous sections have introduced the doctrine of the "aromal sphere" as an olfactory bodily sign with its olfactory elements emphasized. This section demonstrates that the olfactory bodily sign gives basis not only for the immediacy of Whitman's language but for the immediacy of his poetry. The two poems to be investigated—Section 39 of "Song of Myself" and "Had I the Choice"—directly refer to Whitman's odorization of his poetry. In Section 39 of "Song of Myself," Whitman (1959, 70) states that his poetry— "in new forms"—is "wafted with the odor of his body or breath." In "Had I the Choice," Whitman (1965, 514) asks the sea muse to "breathe one breath of yours upon my verse, / And leave its odor there" in exchange for the artistry of the greatest poets.

Firstly, let us see section 39 of "Song of Myself" (1959, 69–70).

> The friendly and flowing savage, who is he?
> Is he waiting for civilization, or past it and mastering it?
> [...]
> Wherever he goes men and women accept and desire him,
> They desire he should like them, touch them, speak to them, stay with them.
>
> Behavior lawless as snow-flakes, words simple as grass, uncomb'd head, laughter, and naivetè,
> Slow-stepping feet, common features, common modes and emanations,
> They descend in new forms from the tips of his fingers,
> They are wafted with the odor of his body or breath, they fly out of the glance of his eyes.

Believing that he has "that charm" (Bauerlein 1991, 49),[148] Whitman (1978, 777) writes in his notebook:

> [...] that charm, we don't know what it is, which goes with the mere

148 In quoting the following lines of Whitman, Bauerlein does not refer to Section 39 of "Song of Myself."

> face and body magnetism of some men and women and makes every body love them, wherever they go. — Even the movements of one's limbs, and the gestures of the hands [...] can fascinate. —

The juxtaposition of this quote, section 39 of "Song of Myself," and the doctrine of Fishbough's "aromal sphere"— "a most exact counterpart of all the essences, qualities, and principles of his intellectual, moral, and physical being and indeed *himself* in a spiritual degree" (1853, 9, original emphasis)—is revealing. The tenets of all three concur neatly; Whitman's full immediacy is poured into the section of the poem.

Indeed, the section of the poem portrays three different phases in Whitman's poetization that involve not only the immediacy of the language but also the immediacy of his poetry. Firstly, Whitman's inner—mental—and outer—physiological—traits are catalogued. Secondly, in the line "[T]hey descend in new forms from the tips of his fingers," Whitman depicts *the process of distilling* those traits into his essence. Lastly, *what happens to his essence* is shown in "[T]hey are wafted with the odor of his body or breath, they fly out of the glance of his eyes." The transition from the first to the second phase concerns the immediacy of the language, and the transition from the second to the third phase involves the immediacy of his poetry. The olfactory immediacy of "the odor of his body or breath" brings off a double signification; it signifies both the body issuing from language—in the transition from the first to the second phase—and Whitman springing out of his poetry—in the transition from the second to the third phase.

Whitman's two types of olfactory immediacy and their synthesis—his poetry of "the odor of his body or breath" — evolve from his endeavor to intertwine air, breath, and the sense of smell. His breath is "A breath to American air," "American air I have breathed, breathe henceforth also of me." (see Introduction). Elsewhere, Whitman repeatedly employs a similar delineation of his poetry through the olfactory trope. Besides the aforementioned "the perfume impalpable to form" and "the impalpable odor," Whitman (1965, 565) states in "A Backward Glance O'er Travel'd Roads":

> My Book and I—what a period we have presumed to span! those thirty years from 1850 to '80—and America in them! Proud, proud indeed may we be, if we have cull'd enough of that period in its own spirit to worthily waft a few live breaths of it to the future!

Whitman's poetry is to "waft a few live breaths of it to the future." With this quote, the meaning of the line from section 39 of "Song of Myself"— "They are wafted with the odor of his body or breath, they fly out of the glance of his eyes"—becomes more apparent. Whitman's "breath" and "odor" —Whitman's poetry—do not stay on site but "fly out of the glance of his eyes"; here, Whitman (1959, 85) "sound[s] my barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world" or in other words, "waft a few live breaths of it to the future." Based on the immediacy of his language, Whitman demonstrates the immediacy of his poetry, resulting in the synthesis of the two types of immediacy. It is the immediacy of "the odor of his body or breath"—the olfactory immediacy without the intermediary between the inner and outer, between signifier and signified—that enables all of this poetic feat.

"Had I the Choice" (1885)—another poem of "breath" and "odor"—has received little critical attention. The poem written in his later career (1965, 514) reads:

> Had I the choice to tally greatest bards,
> To limn their portraits, stately, beautiful, and emulate at will,
> [...]
> Metre or wit the best, or choice conceit to wield in perfect rhyme,
> delight of singers;
> These, these, O sea, all these I'd gladly barter,
> Would you the undulation of one wave, its trick to me transfer,
> Or breathe one breath of yours upon my verse,
> And leave its odor there.

The few critics who studied this poem have paid critical attention to the term "sea," ignoring or assigning the secondary role to "breath" and "odor." For instance, George Yatchisin states, "It's a bitterly sad lament from a poet who knows he has had no choice—he's stuck in the tradition and can never truly capture the sea's song."[149] Betsy Erkkila notes that "It was in the sea that Whitman found an image of the natural motion, the inward and outward "breath" of the universe, that he wanted to repeat in the language and rhythm of his poetry."[150]

149 George Yatchisin, "A Listening to Walt Whitman and James Wright," *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* vol. 9, no. 4 (1992): 178.

150 Betsy Erkkila, *Walt Whitman Among the French: Poet and Myth* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 124.

However, when attention is paid to the conjunction "Or" between the line "Would you the undulation of one wave, its trick to me transfer" and the lines "breathe one breath of yours upon my verse, / And leave its odor there," it becomes clear that the significance of the former line is as much as the latter ones. Also, "breath" and "odor" deserve prominence in light of their place in the poem, the last lines. Indeed, the "breath" and "odor" signify the "aromal sphere" of the "sea," and "the undulation of one wave" is one element of it. It is through a medium of the sea's "aromal sphere" of "breath" and "odor" that Whitman would receive "the undulating of one wave" that takes precedence over the works and the literary devices of "great bards."

As shown in the examination of Section 39 of "Song of Myself," Whitman's poetics *already* consists of "breath" and "odor," the poetics which in "Had I the Choice" interacts with the sea's "aromal sphere" of "breath" and "odor." To show this, Whitman anthropomorphizes "the sea" and, as the foil to the poetics of "breath" and "odor," brings in "great bards." Although Whitman may miss "the undulation of one wave," his poetry of "breath" and "odor" stays put. "Had I the Choice" is a poem that reaffirms Whitman's poetry of "breath" and "odor."

Conclusion

This chapter has started with Whitman's incorporation of the body into his poetry through phrenology and addressed its linguistic implications. The phrenological textuality of the body helps Whitman to seek a medium of "bodily signs" without the intermediary between sign and signified. By extension, this chapter examined Whitman's olfactory "bodily signs" with William Fishbough's doctrine of the "aromal sphere"—"a most exact counterpart of all the essences, qualities, and principles of his intellectual, moral, and physical being"—as the reference point. The feature of the sense of smell is the undercurrent of the "aromal sphere"; the olfaction—through human physiology of breathing—breaks down the barrier between the inner and outer, between signifier and signified. For Whitman, who seeks bodily presence in his poems, the sense of smell—a sense that embodies human corporeality most—best suits its signification.

The examination of Whitman's poems through the "aromal sphere" —his olfactory bodily sign—finds that it serves two purposes; it gives basis not only for the immediacy of his language but also for the immediacy of his poetry. Section

39 of "Song of Myself" exemplifies Whitman's poetry of "breath" and "odor." In the three stages of poetization, firstly, Whitman's inner—mental—and outer—physiological—traits are catalogued. Secondly, Whitman depicts the process of distilling those traits into his essence. Lastly, what happens to his essence is shown. The transition from the first to the second stage concerns the immediacy of the language, and the transition from the second to the third stage witnesses the immediacy of his poetry. The olfactory immediacy of "the odor of his body or breath" brings off a double signification; it signifies both the body issuing from language and Whitman springing out of his poetry. With his breath being "A breath to American air," Whitman's endeavor to intertwine air, breath, and the sense of smell ripens into his poetry of "the odor of his body or breath," into his "autochthonic song."

Lastly, the bifurcating tendency in the verbal encoding of olfaction—ending up in either ethereal or corporeal—helps Whitman to circumvent the literary conventions and achieve the "bipolar unity" of the spiritual and material. The self-effacingness (evanescence) of olfaction also gives the "olfactory" bodily signs an advantage over "visual" bodily signs; it is just a vehicle that disappears after its role is over. As a bodily sign, Whitman's olfactory language is essential to Whitman's poetry.

The next chapter, the last one, examines a poem in which Whitman markedly unites his restoration of the revolutionary spirit and his olfactory language. The poem is "Prairie-Grass Dividing," which begins with the lines "The prairie-grass dividing, its special odor breathing, / I demand of it the spiritual corresponding" (Whitman 1965, 129). The theme of correspondence in the poem is in focus, i.e., the thematic correspondence between the material and the spiritual and the temporal correspondence between the past and the future are to be studied. With the incorporation of the olfactory perspective, the chapter examines the inner mechanism of the two correspondences, first the thematic correspondence by an olfactory notion of "odor-emotional conditioning" and second the temporal correspondence by the Whitmanian "olfactory-temporal" merging of the past, present and future. "The Prairie-Grass Dividing" is his covenant with the affective binding force through the medium of the sense of smell.

Chapter 6

"The Prairie-Grass Dividing": Whitman's Odorization of His Covenant

Introduction

This chapter integrates what this book has studied so far, unifying the form—Whitman's olfactory language—and the content—the spirit of self-government. In "The Prairie-Grass Dividing," Whitman appeals to the indigenous "prairie-grass's special odor" as a medium for America's regeneration amid its degeneration. The poem offers a prime opportunity for a case study of Whitman's interweaving of air, breath, and the sense of smell in his "autochthonic song" (see Introduction).

The poem centers on the correspondence between "the physical conscience" and "the moral and spiritual conscience" (Whitman 1882, 250), specifically the correspondence between the prairie-grass and the catalogued characters of "Those of inland America." The poem represents Whitman's "autochthonic song [...] coming from its own soil and soul." The prairie grass's special odor is native to the U.S.; it is a soul, an emanation from the soil.[151] The last version of the poem (1965, 129) reads:

> The prairie-grass dividing, its special odor breathing,
> I demand of it the spiritual corresponding,
> Demand the most copious and close companionship of men,
> Demand the blades to rise of words, acts, beings,
> Those of the open atmosphere, coarse, sunlit, fresh, nutritious,
> Those that go their own gait, erect, stepping with freedom and command, leading not following,

151 Ed Folsom, "Walt Whitman's Prairie Paradise" in *Recovering the Prairie*, ed. Robert F. Sayre (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1999), 50.

> Those with a never-quell'd audacity, those with sweet and lusty flesh clear of taint,
> Those that look carelessly in the faces of Presidents and governors, as to say *Who are you*?
> Those of earth-born passion, simple, never constrain'd, never obedient,
> Those of inland America.

The "dividing" in the first line has a double meaning: geographically "dividing" the Prairie area from the other regions and spiritually "dividing"—extracting—the essence of America. Also, the upfront of the olfaction— "its special odor breathing"—serves as a thematic undercurrent since the sense of smell plays a central role in "materialization" or "coming into being" (Gell 1977, 28). The contextualization leads to the third and fourth lines where Whitman "demands" new emanations from within: "the most copious and close companionship of men" and "the blades to rise of words, acts, beings." The lines after the fifth to the end refer to the innately endowed characters of this newly issued "Those of inland America."

The scholarly tradition holds that these catalogued characters of "Those of inland America" are future-oriented. It is known that Whitman repeatedly states that the future of the U.S. lies in the Prairie area; "the prairie States, will be the theater of our great future"[152]; not only "the capacity and sure future destiny of that plain and prairie area" are unlimited but also these areas are "North America's characteristic landscape" (1882, 150), and the area is "the home both of what I would call America's distinctive ideas and distinctive realities" (142). In light of those utterances of Whitman, the critics tend to view *all* "the spiritual corresponding" with "the prairie-grass" *solely* as future-oriented (Folsom 1999, 49).[153] However, in cataloguing the characteristics of "Those of inland America," Whitman draws on what has been on his mind; these catalogued attributes are not new but were already expressed in the Preface to *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition (1959, 5–6):

> [T]he genius of the United States is [...] always most in the common people. Their manners speech dress friendships—the fresh-

152 Walt Whitman, *Prose Works 1892 vol. I, Specimen Days*, ed. Floyd Stovall (New York: New York University Press, 1963), 224n.

153 Folsom calls the catalogued "the spiritual corresponding" "a new democratic speech, a new democratic way of behaving, a new democratic way of *being*" (original emphasis).

> ness and candor of their physiognomy—the picturesque looseness of their carriage . . . their deathless attachment to freedom [...] the sure symptom of manly tenderness and native elegance of soul . . . [...] —the President's taking off his hat to them not they to him—these too are unrhymed poetry.

The contents of the two writings of Whitman overlap; especially the phrase "their deathless attachment to freedom" in the Preface epitomizes the attributes of "Those of inland America." Furthermore, Whitman's emphasis on the vigor of the inhabitants can be traced back to Jefferson's dictum: "It is the manners and spirit of a people which preserve a republic in vigour" (1907b, 230). Indeed, the catalogued characters manifest Whitman's *motif* of his poetry: "an invigorating pride to continue the experiment of self-government" (see Chapter 3). Thus, although "Those of inland America" are new pedigree, their attributes are not uniquely new, i.e., they are endowed with the spirit of self-government that dates back to the revolutionary origin of the nation. How can newly emanated "Those of inland America" innately have the characters of the older generation? Or, in the first place, how does Whitman envision a vigorous self-government community on the empty prairie-grass land?

One possible explanation is that "The Prairie-Grass Dividing" is modeled after the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, with which Whitman was conversant through his involvement in the Wilmot Proviso controversy (see Chapter 1).[154] The Ordinance is an act that stipulates how to develop the Northwest Territory, and it is the Founding generation's expression of "political community rooted in the soil."[155] With the ensuing prosperity of the region, the Ordinance becomes the region's symbol of the continuity with the Founding generation and of the soil-soul correspondence (Onuf 1987, 151). With the focus at the level of the individual, Whitman recasts these aspects of the Ordinance into "The Prairie-Grass Dividing," his Prairie covenant for "Those of inland America."[156]

154 As editor of *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, Whitman (2003, 153–389) fervently wrote the articles for the Wilmot Proviso. The clause excluding slavery in the Northwest Ordinance was the mainstay for those who supported the Wilmot Proviso (222–223, 348–349).

155 Peter S. Onuf, *Statehood and Union: A History of the Northwest Ordinance* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987), xiii, 138.

156 Another difference between "The Prairie-Grass Dividing" and the Northwest Ordinance is the areas the documents cover; the Prairie area consists of both part of the Ordinance area and part

Indeed, there are two correspondences in "The Prairie-Grass Dividing": besides the thematic correspondence between the material and the spiritual—between the soil and the soul, there is another correspondence, the temporal correspondence between the past and the future. In the correspondence between the soil and the soul, the temporal element, especially the national origin, is indispensable. The specialness of "the prairie-grass odor" and its "spiritual corresponding" pertain to the thematic and temporal aspects. This dual approach to correspondence is the key to the appreciation of the poem.

These two thematic and temporal correspondences center around the event of breathing the prairie-grass's special odor, through which the catalogued attributes of the inhabitants emerge. Whitman's choice of olfaction as the medium indicates that Whitman perceives the two correspondences not by reason but affectively; the sense of smell is the sense of emotion (Engen 1982, 3) and the sense of memory (Herz 2007, 63). Here, the application of some of the theoretical apparatus of the olfactory study helps to expound the inner mechanism of the two correspondences, first, the thematic correspondence by an olfactory notion of "odor-emotional conditioning" (11–12) and second, the temporal correspondence by the Whitmanian "olfactory-temporal" merging of time. The "odor-emotional conditioning" specifies that odors can change into emotion, which in turn controls our behavior (11–12), helping Whitman to attribute the characteristics of the Founding generation to "Those of inland America." The Whitmanian "olfactory-temporal" merging of time refers to his dynamic pursuit of time in tandem with the sense of smell, helping Whitman to have "future memory" and envision a thriving self-government community on the empty prairie-grass land. With these olfactory involvements, the event of breathing the prairie-grass's special odor has an affectively binding and enduring effect.

The first section investigates the implication of "divide" in both "The Prairie-Grass Dividing" and Whitman's larger poetic enterprise. The following sections take the interdisciplinarity between the study of literature and olfaction. The second section examines the thematic correspondence in the poem under the olfactory framework of "odor-emotional conditioning." The third section

of the area of the Louisiana Purchase of 1803. In section 3 of "Starting from Paumanok," Whitman (1965, 17) writes, "Chants of the prairies, / Chants of the long-running Mississippi, and down to the Mexican sea. / Chants of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin and Minnesota, / Chants going forth from the centre from Kansas, and thence equidistant. / Shooting in pulses of fire ceaseless to vivify all." Iowa and Kansas belong to the area of the Louisiana Purchase.

investigates the temporal dimension of correspondence with attention to the relationship between Whitman's sense of time and the sense of smell. Whitman merges the past, present, and future with his two senses working together. These thematic and temporal correspondences are Whitman's interweaving of air, breath, and the sense of smell at work. Through these two correspondences, "its special odor" —the medium through which "The prairie grass," "Those of inland America," and the Founding Generation tally—becomes the fabric of Whitman's imagined community.

1. Whitman's Safeguarding of The Prairie Area through "Dividing"

"The Prairie-Grass Dividing" celebrates the Prairie areas. However, "Dividing" sounds cacophonous. Whitman's optimism is guarded; "Dividing" makes the poem somber. Why cannot Whitman be optimistic about the Prairie areas without caution? The answer to this question lies in the implications of "dividing."

The poetization process of "The Prairie-Grass Dividing" discloses the meaning of "Dividing." During the poetization, Whitman made more and more distinctions between the prairie-grass area and other areas. There are three stages in the development of the poem, namely, (1) the manuscript is without the first line of the final version; (2) the first appearance version has the first line, but the phrasing is different; the term "own" is used instead of "special," and (3) the final version has the first line with the term "special."

At the onset, the manuscript refers exclusively to the prairie-grass area. The title of the manuscript is "Prairie-Grass"—*without the term "Dividing."* The manuscript starts with the second line of the final version of the poem; it begins with the lines "I demand the spiritual / that corresponds with it."[157] In the manuscript, Whitman celebrates the prairie-grass area without "dividing," i.e., without making a distinction between the prairie-grass area and other areas. However, in his manuscript refinement, Whitman had second thoughts about the poem.

The addition of the first line—"The prairie-grass dividing—its own odor breathing" in the first appearance version (1860)[158]—heralds Whitman's dis-

157 Walt Whitman, *Whitman's Manuscripts: Leaves of Grass (1860); A Parallel Text*, ed. Fredson Bowers (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1955), 106.

158 Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (Boston: Thayer and Eldridge, 1860–61), 368.

tinction-making between the two types of areas, and the tendency to differentiate is strengthened in the revision from the 1860 version to the final version (1867) in which the term "own" is rephrased as "special." While "own" indicates that the emphasis is on the Prairie itself, "special" emphasizes the distinction between the Prairie and other areas. Whitman's rephrasing of "own" as "special" demonstrates that Whitman seeks to compare the prairie-grass area and other areas explicitly.

Whitman "divide[s]" the prairie-grass area and other areas because the Prairie and its poetry need to be free of the corruption of the other areas of America, tainted by the influence of the Old World. In "THE PRAIRIES AND GREAT PLAINS IN POETRY," Whitman (1882, 149) states, "I could not help thinking it would be grander still to see all those inimitable American areas fused in the alembic of a perfect poem, or other esthetic work, entirely western, fresh and limitless—altogether our own, without a trace or taste of Europe's soil, reminiscence, technical letter or spirit." In carrying out his enterprise of writing an "autochthonic song," amid what he perceives as the degradation of the U.S., Whitman first needs to "divide" the Prairie area to solidify the link between the soil and soul of America, i.e., establish the correspondence between the odor of the prairie grass and "its spiritual corresponding." "Dividing" in "The Prairie-Grass Dividing" is a temporary downsizing of Whitman's original poetic enterprise of 1855—the poetry that seeks to cover all of America in one sweep[159]—to extract the soil and soul of America. Whitman's "dividing" is his tactical retreat in the process of completing his "autochthonic song."

The prairie grass's special odor protects "Those of inland America" from corruption in two ways. The first safeguarding is external; the special odor geographically shelters the Prairie area. The other works internally; the intake of the special air renders "Those of inland America" immune to corruption by giving them countervailing vitality. Whitman (1882, 283n) states that the American character "shall again directly be vitalized by [...] the strong air of prairie." On the relationship between the prairie odor and the spirit of the community, Whitman (1965, 393) wrote another short poem titled "Others may praise what they like":

159 In the Preface to *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition, Whitman (1959, 7) states, "His spirit responds to his country's spirit .... he incarnates its geography and natural life and rivers and lakes. [...] He spans between them also from east to west and reflects what is between them."

Others may praise what they like;
But I, from the banks of the running Missouri, praise nothing in art or aught else,
Till it has well inhaled the atmosphere of this river, also the western prairie-scent,
And exudes it all again.

Whitman is crying, "A voice is in the wilderness" (Hartmann 1901, 192–193). "Others may praise what they like," based on the conventional taste of the Old World. However, Whitman asserts that "[A]rt or aught else"—cultural and sociopolitical fabric—needs to be founded on the breathing of "the western prairie-scent. The poem is a demonstration of this contention; Whitman expresses the unity of the soil and soul through the odorization of the poem with the native scent. Besides, the centrality of the Prairie in Whitman's poetry is such that Whitman went so far as to say that his Western experiences are the core to all his life work (Folsom 1999, 47–48).

Although "odor" and "scent" are in the category of olfaction, the vital task remains, the task of explicating why Whitman opts to choose the sense of smell as the medium between soil and soul—between "its special odor" and "its spiritual corresponding." By cataloguing the character of "Those of inland America" as "its spiritual corresponding," Whitman codifies his Prairie covenant with the help of an olfactory binding force, "odor-emotional conditioning," in the language of the olfaction study. In contrast to a textualized covenant—for instance, the Northwest Ordinance—Whitman's odorized covenant has a different binding force—a poetic binding force from within—and thus can be more potent on a personal level. With the olfactory study, the following section delves into how Whitman's odorization of his covenant works.

2. Whitman's Odorization of His Covenant: Its Affective Binding Force

Just as the catalogued attributes of "Those of inland America" can be traced back to Whitman's early works, the theme of air, breath, and the sense of smell is not new to Whitman's poetics (see Introduction). Indeed, his endeavor to interweave those three elements spearheads his poetic enterprise (see Chapter 4).

At the initial stage, Whitman's main task was to bring the ordinary Americans into the open by poetizing them; Whitman (1899, 67) states, "We have had man indoors and under artificial relations—man in war, in love [...] —man in courts [...] but never before have we had man in the open air [...]. However, in "The Prairie-Grass Dividing," "Those of inland America" are *already* "in the open air"; they are "Those of the open atmosphere, coarse, sunlit, fresh, nutritious." This newly-gained advantage of "Those of inland America" occasions Whitman's upfront of the olfaction— "The prairie-grass dividing, its special odor breathing." What is the relationship between Whitman's odorization of the poem and the material/spiritual specialness of the Prairie area?

Whitman's odorization of the poem makes sense in the scholarly field of the sense of smell. In the field, Whitman's odorization of the poem would be called "odor-emotional conditioning"; in *The Scent of Desire*, Rachel Herz (2007, 11–12) explains, "odors can literally be transformed into emotions through association and then act as proxies for emotions themselves, influencing how we feel, how we think, and how we act." Odors can change into emotions, which in turn control behaviors. Herz (12) continues, "Positive associations to odors can also lead to positive emotional conditioning," which has "many potential applications and benefits to society." With his remarkable olfactory acuity (see Introduction), Whitman might have had deep knowledge of the functions of the sense of smell and applied it in his poetization.

However, there is a preceding process for "odor-emotional conditioning": a previous exposure to the odorant. Herz (37) calls this process "odor-associative learning," which can be done via personal experience or "social transmission and cultural norms" (37, 46). The mechanism of "odor-associative learning" is that "before you have experienced an odor it is inherently meaningless [...]; however, once you experience it, the context [...] in which you perceive it and, most important, the emotional value of that context become attached to that aroma, and henceforth the odor takes on that emotional significance and meaning [...]" (37). The initial association to odor is paramount; once the association between an odor and the context is made, it is hard to undo it (38–39).

In "The Prairie-Grass Dividing," Whitman exploits these olfactory features and benefits. When the "odor-emotional conditioning" and the "odor-associative learning" are applied to the reading of the poem, Whitman's *positive* association between the odor of the prairie-grass and the spirit of self-government amounts to "positive emotional conditioning" in which "its special odor" be-

comes a cue to the mindset and behavior catalogued in the poem. In other words, with their breathing of the special odor, "Those of inland America" behave as if they embody the spirit of self-government as shown in the catalogue. Emphatically, Whitman opts for the sense of smell—the sense ordinarily viewed as the lowest—as the medium of the affective binding force for his prairie covenant. Here are the two climaxes in Whitman's intertwining of air, breath, and the sense of smell, and his conflation of poetics and politics.

The odorization of the covenant provides additional security. Once "its special odor" and the spirit of self-government are olfactorily—and *positively*—linked, the association helps "Those of inland America" to be on the right track in their self-government. With the daily dose of "the special odor," the cue to the spirit of self-government is always available for "Those of inland America." Whitman's odorization of his Prairie covenant is a powerful antidote to the present and future corruption of the spirit of self-government that has ravaged other areas of the U.S.

Biographically speaking, Whitman's experience of the Prairie was scant at the time of the poetization of the poem (1860); all his exposure to the Prairie was during his way to and from New Orleans in 1848 (Folsom 1999, 47). However, as mentioned above and in other chapters of the book, the themes of the olfaction and the experiment of self-government have prevailed in Whitman's poetics. And on the poet's exposure of the components specifically related to "The Prairie-Grass Dividing," "prairie" already appears in the *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition (1959, 7, 59, 69). "Grass" occupies the center of his poetry; the title of his book is *Leaves of* "*Grass*" and the meditation over "A spear of summer grass" is the subject matter of "Song of Myself" (Erkkila 1989, 96). "The spiritual corresponding" concerns "dilation"—"I dilate you with tremendous breath .... I buoy you up" (Whitman 1959, 71)—the essential theme of his poetry (see Chapter 3). All of these coalesce into Whitman's "odor-associative learning" that helps to link the prairie-grass's special odor" and "the spiritual corresponding" in a positive way.

What complements (or already influenced) Whitman's "learning" in the poetization is the broader social and cultural Prairie-specific contexts, especially the association of the Prairie with the lung of the continent[160] and the Prairie

160 Joni L. Kinsey, Rebecca Roberts, and Robert F. Sayre, "Prairie Prospects: The Aesthetics Plainness," in *Recovering the Prairie*, ed. Robert F. Sayre (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1999), 28.

as the symbol of the "Great Leveler."[161] Firstly, the Prairie is the best fit for the Whitmanian "dilation." Kinsey, Roberts, and Sayre (1999, 28) state, "The prairies of the West are the lungs of the continent, and upon reaching them men take a long breath, which makes them more largely human than they ever were before. Prairie-as-lung saves the writer from describing prairie-as-prairie, while also promoting the connection between prairie and person. Prairie-as-lung becomes enlarged human lung; enlarged lung becomes expanded, "more largely human" person; and person embodies prairie." To "take a long breath, which makes them more largely human than they ever were before" is the same process of the Whitmanian "dilation." The "tremendous breath" of the Prairie, not Whitman himself, "dilates you" and "buoys you up" to the necessary vigor in the attainment of self-government.

Secondly, the geographical feature of the prairie matches Whitman's political vision. Jane E. Simonsen (1999, 63) states, "The prairie's level plane became the "Great Leveler," a region where American citizens would stand on equal footing with one another, united in their purpose and struggle to create fertile farmland out of the ocean of prairie grass. Natural features reinforced this democratic vision [...]." Without the taint of feudalism, the Prairie's expansive levelness rooted in the soil is the ideal space for the experiment of self-government. The Prairie as the lung of the continent and the symbol of the Great Leveler merge into the positive association between "the prairie grass's special odor" and the characters of "Those of inland America."

To conclude, the interplay between Whitman's "learning" in the poetization and "social transmission and cultural norms" concurs to help Whitman to have his "odor-associative learning" between "the prairie grass's special odor" and the spirit of self-government. This learning develops into "positive emotional conditioning" between the two. With Whitman's safeguarding of the prairie area, "Those of inland America" can create a community on the affective link between the soil and the soul of America.

The following section investigates the temporal dimension of Whitman's olfactory prairie covenant. Its affective binding power is also efficacious in the temporal correspondence between the past, the present, and the future.

161 Jane E. Simonsen, "On Level Ground: Alexander Gardner's Photographs of the Kansas Prairies" in *Recovering the Prairie*, ed. Robert F. Sayre (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1999), 63.

3. The Relationship between Whitman's Sense of Time and Sense of Smell

Whitman's unique sense of time is revealed in his lines in the Preface to *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition (1959, 12): "Past and present and future are not disjoined but joined. The greatest poet forms the consistence of what is to be from what has been and is. [...] He learns the lesson . . . he places himself where the future becomes present." Whitman asserts that he has free reign over temporality. Georges Poulet studies Whitman's sense of time illuminatingly:

> In receiving all times, the present becomes the meeting place of times. [...] But it would be wrong to imagine that this present is purely receptive and static. [...] Whitman is not content to await passively the gifts of duration. The Whitmanian present easily unites all temporal movements because it is itself intensely dynamic. [...] It is not satisfied to await their [the past and future] arrival, but, like a host impatient to see his invited guests, it goes out to meet them: "Locations and times, what is it in me that meets them all, whenever and wherever, and makes me at home?" [...].[162]

Poulet's line— "The Whitmanian present easily unites all temporal movements because it is itself intensely dynamic"—encapsulates Whitman's sense of time. However, Poulet does more to this study; as an example of Whitman's dynamic merging of the past, present, and future, he chooses "Locations and Times," the poem which helps to explain the relationship between Whitman's sense of time and sense of smell. The poem (Whitman 1965, 277–278) reads:

> Locations and times—what is it in me that meets them all, whenever and wherever, and makes me at home?
> Forms, colors, densities, odors—what is it in me that corresponds with them?

162 Georges Poulet, *Studies in Human Time*, trans. Elliott Coleman (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1956), 342–343.

The line Poulet quotes—the poem's first line—is followed by the second line containing the olfactory language of "odors." Here, Whitman's addition of "odors" in a property of a thing is unique because, conventionally speaking, the sense of smell is not a good indicator of "Locations and Times."[163] In short, "odors" are not in the same league as "Forms, colors, densities." The singularity of this addition of "odors" is also highlighted when the poem is compared with another poem written in the same period; in "Of the Terrible Doubt of Appearance," Whitman (1965, 120) lists "colors, densities, forms" without "odors." There must be a unique role to be played by "odors" in "Locations and Times." Whitman entrusts "odors" to the role of the dynamic pursuit of time—over the past, the present, and the future. Whitman's sense of time and sense of smell go hand in hand in attaining "the Whitmanian present."

This unique role of "odors" can be explained in another way. The deathbed edition of *Leaves of Grass* has only three poems that explicitly contain the term "correspond" (including its variants); the first one is "The Prairie-Grass Dividing" —the central poem of this chapter, the next one is "Locations and Times," and the last one "By Blue Ontario's Shore," the poem that was transformed from the lines in the Preface to *Leaves of Grass* 1855 edition. Indeed, there are only two poems with the term "correspond," which were written as poetry at the onset. Given the significance of the Whitmanian correspondence between "the physical conscience" and "the moral and spiritual conscience," the scarcity of the term "correspond" in his poems is surprising. And more interestingly, both "The Prairie-Grass Dividing" and "Locations and Times" —the two poems about temporal correspondence—have the olfactory language of "odor(s)." These concurrences also testify to a close correlation between Whitman's dynamic sense of time and sense of smell. Both senses join the force in enabling Whitman's temporal expansion.

Generally, the smell is known as a sense of memory, famously represented as "Proustian memory" (Herz 2007, 63). However, Whitman's "olfactory-temporal" merging of the past, present, and future enables him to have "future memory," a memory not of the past but of the future. This "future memory" helps Whitman to envision a self-government community on the empty prairie-grass land.

Here, looking at Whitman's "olfactory-temporal" fusion vis-à-vis the

163 Clare Batty, "A Representational Account of Olfactory Experience," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 40, no. 4 (December 2010): 531, 533.

"odor-emotional conditioning" is intriguing since the latter also has a temporal dimension, that is, it is a kind of memory that can be extended to the future (60). Indeed, in Whitman's dynamic pursuit of time, perceiving the attributes of the Founding generation in the new pedigree is indistinguishable from envisioning a vigorous community on the empty land. The overlap of the Whitmanian temporal fusions ensures a solid flow of time from the past to the present to the future.

In this way, Whitman's thematic and temporal correspondences join; through breathing "its special odor," the material meets the spiritual and the old meets the new, that is, newly emanated "Those of inland America" innately have the characters of the Founding generation and establish a thriving self-government community. To breathe prairie grass's special odor is an event of "odor associative learning" and "odor-emotional conditioning" for the members of Whitman's prairie community. Whitman demands that this event be repeated every day and everlastingly. Whitman's "future memory" —covering the past, present, and future—will be inherited this way.

Conclusion

"The Prairie-Grass Dividing" epitomizes the conflation of Whitman's poetics and politics, more specifically, Whitman's form—olfactory language—and contents—the spirit of self-government. There are two "correspondences" in the investigation of the poem: the thematic correspondence of the material and the spiritual, and the temporal correspondence of the old and the new. And these correspondences center around the prairie grass's special odor. These two correspondences enable the newly emerged "Those of inland America" to innately possess the characteristics of the Founding Generation and embody a thriving self-governing community. Here, Whitman's poetic endeavor to intertwine air, breath, and the sense of smell bears splendid fruit.

Although Whitman is optimistic about the future of the Prairie area, he "divides" the Prairie area to safeguard it from the corruption of the other regions and simultaneously to extract the essence of the soil and soul of America. With "The Prairie-Grass Dividing" as an "autochthonic song," the inhabitants live a life of the original Founding ideal. Here, Whitman's odorization of the poem provides the motive force; in the study of the sense of smell, Whitman's odorization amounts to "odor emotional conditioning"—the prairie grass's special odor

becomes the cue to the spirit of the experiment of self-government. Once the association between the two is made, it lasts long. The covenant for the inhabitants— "The Prairie-Grass Dividing"—comes to have an affective binding force that helps them to remain faithful to the original Founding spirit of self-government.

On the relationship between Whitman's sense of time and the sense of smell, Whitman's sense of time and sense of smell go hand in hand in attaining "the Whitmanian present" —his dynamic merging of the past, present, and future. In the process, also examined is "Locations and Times," another poem that showcases Whitman's dynamic temporal quest with his sense of smell. The examination shows a solid relationship between Whitman's sense of time and sense of smell. Whitman's "olfactory-temporal" merging of the past, present, and future enables him to have "future memory," a memory not on the past but on the future, and envisage a self-government community on the empty prairie-grass land. With Whitman's attribution of the characteristics of the Founding generation to "Those of inland America," the time flows vigorously—and interactively—between the past, the present, and the future.

Whitman expects future generations to experience the thematic and temporal correspondences as he does now. He hopes that, following in his footsteps, the succeeding generations will form their beliefs, attitudes, and behavior with both their ancestors and descendants in mind. With a daily dose of the special odor of prairie grass, Whitman's olfactory covenant is to be inherited everlastingly.

Conclusion

This book examined the familiar topics in Whitman's criticism at thematic, structural, and language levels: the nature of his poetic enterprise, his catalogue, his poetic motif, his relationship with Transcendentalists, the influence of phrenology, and his perception of time. However, in covering these topics, this book focused on Whitman's figural mirroring between his poetics and politics within the scope of how to self-govern without the mediation of representation, with the overarching themes of Whitman's restoration of the revolutionary spirit of self-government and his poetic experiment of intertwining air, breath, and the sense of smell in his "autochthonic song."

Part I of the book reconceptualized Whitman's poetics as his republican experiment of self-government; the critical standpoint of his figural mirroring between political and literary representation is shifted from the democracy-oriented horizontal standpoint to the republicanism-oriented vertical standpoint. What spearheaded this shift was the introduction of Jefferson's ward republic— a county subdivision into smaller units—into the criticism of Whitman. Jefferson's ward republic aimed to restore the revolutionary spirit of self-government in a new form of governance that prioritizes vertical checks and balances over horizontal ones—governance that removes the mediation of representation. The parallel between the form and goal of Jefferson's ward republic and those of Whitman's poetic enterprise helped to view *Leaves of Grass* as "the dawn of the salvation of the republic" or "interior American republic."

The critical reconfiguration of Whitman with the vertical standpoint as its foundation paved the way for a new reading of Whitman's catalogue; it addressed the thematic and structural demand—a demand for self-government without the mediation of representation. Following Jefferson's dictum "divide the counties into wards," Whitman "divided the poems into catalogues." Its inverted hierarchy and prevalence in the overall structure of his poems signified the field dynamics for the restoration of the spirit of self-government.

Whitman's "*motif* of nearly all my verse" — "the great pride of man in himself" — took on a peculiar significance in the context of the continuation of the Amer-

ican experiment of self-government. With Whitman's catalogue as a structural unit that provides a space for self-agency, his notion of pride served as a thematic underpinning that aids actual involvement in the space. The pair of catalogue and pride provided an analytical framework for Whitman's synthesis of personal, poetic, and political self-government; through the interplay between them, it was urged that Americans continue to show their capacity for self-government in unceasing experiments. In this framework, Whitman's pride is an invigorating pride to continue the American experiment of self-government.

Part II of the book continued to view Whitman's poetics as his republican experiment of self-government with the addition of a new element: Whitman's olfactory language. The examination of it continued under the umbrella of the transvaluative framework of vertical checks and balances; it is within this framework that the critical emphasis shifted from Whitman's theme and structure to his language. Whitman's forefront of olfactory language—most "common" and "vulgar" in the five senses— signified the continued application of vertical checks and balances to his poetics. In this reconfigured Whitman's poetics, the significance of Whitman's olfactory language came to the fore; there is a profound intertwining between Whitman's poetic enterprise to self-govern without the mediation of representation and the sense of smell—*a mediality of immediacy, i.e., without the mediation of representation par excellence*.

The overarching theme of Part II of the book was Whitman's interweaving of air, breath, and the sense of smell. In this framework, the book examined the examples of his olfactory language at the three critical junctures—the beginning of his poetic enterprise, his explicit reference to the odorization of his poetry, and his olfactory restoration of the spirit of self-government. With the interdisciplinarity between the study of literature and olfaction, part II of the book demonstrated why and how Whitman incorporates his olfactory language in his poetry.

Firstly, at the beginning of "Song of Myself," Whitman's densely placed olfactory language plays a key role in the demonstration of the replacement of "the old decorums" with "the new decorums" —a poetics of immediacy. The first five stanzas of "Song of Myself" show how central air, breath, and the sense of smell are to his poetics. The gradual decrease in the artificiality attached to olfactory language signifies the overall diminution of the literary conventionality of the poem. Simultaneously, thematically, Whitman's olfactory language smooths out his transformation into a poet, as described in the Preface at the beginning of his poetic enterprise.

Secondly, Whitman's poetics is "wafted with the odor of his body or breath," as he wrote in section 39 of "Song of Myself." For Whitman, like the visual "bodily sign" related to phrenology, his olfactory language is also a "bodily sign," which not only abounds in his poems but also forms his concept of poetry. Whitman's poetry of "the odor of his body or breath" achieved two kinds of immediacies: the immediacy of the language— the body issuing from language—and the immediacy of his poetry—Whitman springing out of his poetry. With his breath being "A breath to American air," Whitman's endeavor to intertwine air, breath, and the sense of smell evolved into his poetry of "the odor of his body or breath," into his "autochthonic song."

As the direct case for the profound linkage between Whitman's politics and olfactory language, "The Prairie-Grass Dividing" was shown to be the poem of Whitman's *olfactory* restoration of the spirit of self-government; it was via the sense of smell that the revolutionary spirit became the fabric of the community of "Those of inland America." Whitman's olfactory language enabled correspondences in themes—material and spiritual—and temporality—past, present, and future. Breathing the prairie-grass's special odor—an immediate sensuous experience—united "Those of inland America"—including the spiritual union with their ancestors and descendants—in the original spirit of the American experiment of self-government. "The Prairie-Grass Dividing" is the superb fruition of both Whitman's poetic endeavor to intertwine air, breath, and the sense of smell, and of Whitman's conflation of his restoration of the revolutionary spirit and his olfactory language. Whitman's experimental transvaluations in his poetics—from representation to immediacy or presence, from the old decorums to the new decorums, and olfaction's shift from the periphery to the center—concurred to enable this olfactory restoration of the spirit of self-government. Whitman's olfactory language is the medium for revitalizing the revolutionary spirit.

This book came full circle discussing Whitman's restoration of the revolutionary spirit and his olfactory language. In "A National American Art," Sadakichi Hartmann stated, "The sooner Walt Whitman becomes a household book in every artistic family, the better for our American art."[164] While Hartmann's wish comes true—Whitman has become a household name, his vexation—the underappreciation of Whitman's olfactory language—has persisted.[165] Hopeful-

164 Sadakichi Hartmann, "A National American Art," *The Art Critic* vol. 1, no. 3 (March 1894): 48.

165 Some heirs of Whitman have inherited his use of olfactory language in their literary works.

ly, this book did justice to Whitman's olfactory language. Although the conflation of Whitman's politics and olfactory language might be against Hartmann's grain, the multifaceted approach vis-à-vis the familiar topics in the criticism of Whitman, rather than exclusively aesthetic focus, is better to draw attention to his olfactory language and pave the way for its reevaluation. Whitman's olfactory language should be taken more seriously because it provides a new model for appreciating the interplay between his poetics and politics. Whitman's olfactory language enables the immediacy of his language and poetry and thus serves as the poetic core for his political ideal of the experiment of self-government.

For instance, William Carlos Williams wrote a poem, "Smell!" (William Carlos Williams, *The Collected Poems of William Carlos Williams vol. I. 1909–1939*, eds. A. Walton Litz and Christopher MacGowan (New York: New Directions, 1986), 92). In a Whitmanian way, Helen Keller calls for the reevaluation of the sense of smell; she states, "one who has a pungent odor often possesses great vitality, energy, and vigor of mind" (Helen Keller, *The World I Live In* (New York: The Century Co., 1910), 75).

Bibliography

Primary sources

Jefferson, Thomas. *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson vol. I*, edited by Albert Ellery Bergh. Washington, D.C: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1907a.

_____ . *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson vol. II*, edited by Albert Ellery Bergh. Washington, D.C: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1907b.

_____ . *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson vol. VI*, edited by Albert Ellery Bergh. Washington, D.C: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1907c.

_____ . *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson vol. VII*, edited by Albert Ellery Bergh. Washington, D.C: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1907d.

_____ . *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson vol. XII*, edited by Albert Ellery Bergh. Washington, D.C: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1907e.

_____ . *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson vol. XIV*, edited by Albert Ellery Bergh. Washington, D.C: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1907f.

_____ . *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson vol. XV*, edited by Albert Ellery Bergh. Washington, D.C: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1907g.

_____ . *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson vol. XVI*, edited by Albert Ellery Bergh. Washington, D.C: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1907h.

Traubel, Horace. *With Walt Whitman in Camden* (January 21 – April 7, 1889), edited by Sculley Bradley. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1953.

_____ . *With Walt Whitman in Camden* (September 15, 1889 – July 6, 1890). Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1982.

Whitman, Walt. Review of *Leaves of Grass* (1855), *Life Illustrated* (July 1855 (a)). https://whitmanarchive.org/item/anc.00175 Access: 8 June 2024.

_____ . "Walt Whitman and His Poems." *The United States Review* vol. 5 (September 1855 (b)): 205–212. https://whitmanarchive.org/criticism/reviews/lg1855/anc.00176.html.
Access: 8 December 2024.
_____ . *Leaves of Grass Imprints: American and European Criticism on "Leaves of Grass."* Boston: Thayer and Eldridge, 1860.
_____ . *Leaves of Grass*. Boston: Thayer and Eldridge, 1860–61.
_____ . *Specimen Days & Collect*. Philadelphia: Rees Welsh & Co., 1882.
_____ . *Notes and Fragments: Left by Walt Whitman*, edited by Richard Maurice Bucke. London: Talbot, 1899.
_____ . *An American Primer by Walt Whitman with Facsimiles of the Original Manuscript*, edited by Horace Traubel. Boston: Small, Maynard and Company, 1904.
_____ . *The Gathering of the Forces vol. I.*, edited by Cleveland Rogers and John Black. New York: Putnam, 1920.
_____ . *Walt Whitman's Workshop: A Collection of Unpublished Manuscripts*, edited by Clifton Joseph Furness. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1928.
_____ . *Whitman's Manuscripts: Leaves of Grass (1860); A Parallel Text*, edited by Fredson Bowers. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1955.
_____ . *Leaves of Grass: The First (1855) Edition*, edited by Malcolm Cowley. New York: Viking, 1959.
_____ . *Prose Works 1892 vol. I, Specimen Days*, edited by Floyd Stovall. New York: New York University Press, 1963.
_____ . *Prose Works 1892 vol. II, Collect and Other Prose*, edited by Floyd Stovall. New York: New York University Press, 1964.
_____ . *Leaves of Grass: Authoritative Texts Prefaces Whitman on His Art Criticism*, edited by Sculley Bradley and Harold W. Blodgett. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1965.
_____ . *Daybooks and Notebooks vol. III: Diary in Canada, Notebooks, Index*, edited by William White. New York: New York University Press, 1978.
_____ . *Notebooks and Unpublished Prose Manuscripts vol. I*, edited by Edward F. Grier. New York: New York University Press, 1984a.
_____ . *Notebooks and Unpublished Prose Manuscripts vol. IV*, edited by Edward F. Grier. New York: New York University Press, 1984b.
_____ . *The Collected Writings of Walt Whitman: The Journalism I: 1838–*

1846, edited by Herbert Bergman. New York: Peter Lang, 1998.

_____ . *The Collected Writings of Walt Whitman: The Journalism II: 1846–1848*, edited by Herbert Bergman. New York: Peter Lang, 2003.

_____ . "Talbot Wilson notebook" in *The Walt Whitman Archive*: https://whitmanarchive.org/manuscripts/notebooks/transcriptions/loc.00141.html Access: 1 May 2024.

Secondary sources

Adams, John. *The Adams-Jefferson Letters: The Complete Correspondence between Thomas Jefferson and Abigail and John Adams*, edited by Lester J. Cappon. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988.

Arendt, Hannah. *On Revolution*. New York: Penguin Books, 1963.

Aspiz, Harold. *Walt Whitman and the Body Beautiful*. Urbana, Chicago, London: University of Illinois Press, 1980.

Asselineau, Roger. *The Evolution of Walt Whitman: The Creation of a Book*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1962.

Babilon, Daniela. *The Power of Smell in American Literature: Odor, Affect, and Social Inequality*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang GmbH, 2017.

Bailey, John. *Walt Whitman*. London: Macmillan and Co, 1926.

Batty, Clare. "A Representational Account of Olfactory Experience." *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* vol. 40, no. 4 (December 2010): 511–538.

Bauerlein, Mark. *Whitman and the American Idiom*. Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1991.

Beaver, Joseph. *Walt Whitman—Poet of Science*. New York: King's Crown Press, 1951.

Bellis, Peter J. "Against Representation: The 1855 Edition of *Leaves of Grass*." *The Centennial Review* vol. 43, no. 1 (Winter 1999): 71–94.

Breton, David Le. "Smell as a Way of Thinking About the World: An Anthropology." In *Olfaction: An Interdisciplinary Perspective from Philosophy to Life Sciences*, edited by Nicola Di Stefano and Maria Teresa Russo, 3–19. Gewerbestrasse: Springer, 2022.

Bucke, Richard Maurice. *Walt Whitman*. Glasgow, Wilson & McCormick, 1884.

Buell, Lawrence. *Literary Transcendentalism: Style and Vision in the American Renaissance*. New York: Cornell University Press, 1974.

_____. "The Transcendentalist Poets." In *The Columbia History of American Poetry*, edited by Jay Parini, 97–120. New York: Columbia University Press, 1993.

Burke, Kenneth. "Policy Made Personal: Whitman's Verse and Prose-Salient Traits." In *Bloom's Modern Critical Views: Walt Whitman, Updated Edition*, edited by Harold Bloom, 27–60. New York: Chelsea House, 2006.

Burroughs, John. *Notes on Walt Whitman as Poet and Person, 2d ed.* New York: American News Company, 1871.

Carlos, William Williams. *The Collected Poems of William Carlos Williams vol. I. 1909–1939*, edited by A. Walton Litz and Christopher MacGowan. New York: New Directions, 1986.

Cheung, Floyd. "Sadakichi Hartmann, a "Missing Link" of American Poetry," *THE MARGINS*. https://aaww.org/sadakichi-hartmann-missing-link/ Access: 3 December 2024.

Conway, Moncure Daniel. *Emerson at Home and Abroad.* Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1882.

_____. "[Review of Leaves of Grass (1860–61)]." August 1860. *The Walt Whitman Archive*. https://whitmanarchive.org/item/anc.00048 Access: 1 April 2024.

Corbin, Alain. *The Foul and the Fragrant: Odor and the French Social Imagination*. Leamington Spa, Hamburg, and New York: Berg Publishers, 1986.

Dewey, John. "Thomas Jefferson and The Democratic Faith." In *Jefferson Reader: A Treasury of Writings About Thomas Jefferson*, edited by Francis Coleman Rosenberger, 208–218. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, INC., 1953.

Diaconu, Madalina. "Being and Making the Olfactory Self. Lessons from Contemporary Artistic Practices." In *Olfaction: An Interdisciplinary Perspective from Philosophy to Life Sciences*, edited by Nicola Di Stefano and Maria Teresa Russo, 55–73. Gewerbestrasse: Springer, 2022.

Dickinson, Emily. *The Poems of Emily Dickinson: Reading Edition*, edited by R. W. Franklin. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999.

Elias, Norbert. *The Civilizing Process: Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations*, translated by Edmund Jephcott. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson vol. VI, The Conduct of Life*, edited by Edward W. Emerson. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1904.

_____ . *The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson vol. IV*, edited by Ralph L. Rusk. New York: Columbia University Press, 1939.

_____ . *The Selected Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, edited by Joel Myerson. New York: Columbia University Press, 1997.

Engen, Trygg. *The Perception of Odors.* New York: Academic Press, 1982.

_____. *Odor Sensation and Memory.* New York: Praeger, 1991.

Erkkila, Betsy. *Walt Whitman Among the French: Poet and Myth.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980.

_____. *Whitman the Political Poet.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Ferguson, Robert A. *The American Enlightenment 1750–1820.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997.

Fishbough, William. "Spheres." *The American Phrenological Journal. And Repository of Science, Literature, and General Intelligence* vol. XVII, no. 1 (Jan. 1853): 8–10.

Folsom, Ed. "Walt Whitman's Prairie Paradise." In *Recovering the Prairie*, edited by Robert F. Sayre, 47–60. Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1999.

_____ . "Transcendental Poetics: Emerson, Higginson, and the Rise of Whitman and Dickinson." In *The Oxford Handbook of Transcendentalism*, edited by Joel Myerson, Sandra Harbert Petrulionis, and Laura Dassow Walls, 263–290. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Foner, Eric. *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War.* Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Fowler, O. S. "Phrenology: Its Scientific Claims; Its Investigation." *The American Phrenological Journal and Miscellany* vol. VIII, no. 1 (Jan. 1846): 7–10.

Fretwell, Erica. *Sensory Experiments: Psychophysics, Race, and the Aesthetics of Feeling*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2020.

Gell, Alfred. "Magic, Perfume, Dream." In *Symbols and Sentiments: Cross-cultural Studies in Symbolism*, edited by Ioan Lewis, 25–38. London: Academic Press, 1977.

Gelpi, Albert. *The Tenth Muse: The Psyche of the American Poet.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1975.

Grant, Susan-Mary. *North over South: Northern Nationalism and American Identity in the Antebellum Era*. Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2000.

Griffero, Tonino. "Sniffing Atmospheres. Observations on Olfactory Being-In-The-World." In *Olfaction: An Interdisciplinary Perspective from Philosophy to Life Sciences*, edited by Nicola Di Stefano and Maria Teresa Russo, 75–90. Gewerbestrasse: Springer, 2022.

Grossman, Allen. "Whitman's "Whoever You Are Holding Me Now in Hand": Remarks on the Endlessly Repeated Rediscovery of the Incommensurability of the Person." In *Breaking Bounds: Whitman and American Cultural Studies*, edited by Betsy Erkkila and Jay Grossman, 112–122. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Grossman, Jay. *Reconstituting the American Renaissance: Emerson, Whitman, and the Politics of Representation*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003.

Hacker, P. M. S. *The Passions: A Study of Human Nature*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2018.

Harris, Kirsten. *Walt Whitman and British Socialism: "The Love of Comrades."* New York: Routledge, 2016.

Hartmann, Sadakichi. "A National American Art." *The Art Critic* vol. 1, no. 3 (March 1894):45–49.

_____ . *Conversations with Walt Whitman*. New York: E. P. Coby & Co., 1895.

_____ . *A History of American Art vol.1*. Boston: L. C. Page & Company: 1901.

_____ . "IN PERFUME LAND," *The Forum* (For August 1913): 217–28.

_____ . *Sadakichi Hartmann: Collected Poems, 1886–1944 (Memento)*, edited by Floyd Cheung. Stroud: Little Island Press, 2016.

Hattem, Michael D. "Citizenship and the Memory of the American Revolution in Nineteenth-Century Political Culture." *New York History* vol. 101, no. 1 (Summer 2020): 30–53.

Herz, Rachel. *The Scent of Desire: Discovering Our Enigmatic Sense of Smell*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2007.

Higginson, Thomas Wentworth. "The Procession of the Flowers." *The Atlantic Monthly* vol. X, no. LXII (December 1862): 649–57.

_____ . *Contemporaries*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1900.

Hollis, C. Carroll. *Language and Style in Leaves of Grass.* Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1983.

Howard, Leon. "For a Critique of Whitman's Transcendentalism." *Modern Language Notes* vol. 47, no. 2 (Feb. 1932): 79–85.

Howes, David. "Olfaction and Transition." In *The Varieties of Sensory Experience: A Sourcebook in the Anthropology of the Senses*, edited by David Howes, 128–147. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991.

Hungerford, Edward. "Walt Whitman and his Chart of Bumps," *American Literature* vol.2, no. 4 (Jan. 1931): 350–384.

Ingersoll, Robert G. *Walt Whitman: An Address.* New York: The Truth Seeker Company, 1890.

Jaquet, Chantal. "Smell as a Carrier of Values." In *Olfaction: An Interdisciplinary Perspective from Philosophy to Life Sciences*, edited by Nicola Di Stefano and Maria Teresa Russo, 91–106. Gewerbestrasse: Springer, 2022.

Jarrell, Randall. *Poetry and the Age*. New York: The Ecco Press, 1980.

Kariel, Henry S. "The Applied Enlightenment?" (in Discussion). In *The Idea of America: A Reassessment of the American Experiment*, edited by E.M. Adams, 23–37. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Ballinger Publishing Company, 1977.

Keller, Helen. *The World I Live In*. New York: The Century Co., 1910.

Kern, Stephen. "Olfactory Ontology and Scented Harmonies: on the History of Smell." *The Journal of Popular Culture* vol. 7, no. 4 (1974): 816–824.

Kiechle, Melanie. A. *Smell Detectives: An Olfactory History of Nineteenth-Century Urban America.* Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2017.

Kinsey, Joni L., Roberts, Rebecca, and Sayre, Robert F. "Prairie Prospects: The Aesthetics Plainness." In *Recovering the Prairie*, edited by Robert F. Sayre, 14–46. Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1999.

Kiyotaka, Sueyoshi. "Walt Whitman's Common Sense." In *Distinguished Szeged Student Papers 2020*, edited by Attila Kiss, 33–60. Szeged: JATE Press Kiadó, 2020.

Klammer, Martin. *Whitman, Slavery, and the Emergence of Leaves of Grass*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995.

Looby, Christopher. "The Roots of the Orchis, the Iuli of Chesnuts": The Odor of Male Solitude." In *Solitary Pleasures: The Historical, Literary, and Artistic Discourses of Autoeroticism*, edited by Paula Bennett and Vernon A. Rosario, 163–187. New York: Routledge, 1995.

Loving, Jerome. *Emerson, Whitman, and the American Muse.* Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1982.

_____ . "Biographies." In *Walt Whitman: An Encyclopedia*, edited by J.R. LeMaster and Donald D. Kummings, 60–62. New York: Garland Publishing, 1998.

Mackey, Nathaniel. "Phrenological Whitman." *Conjunctions* no. 29, TRIBUTES: American Writers on American Writers (1997): 231–251.

Marki, Ivan. *The Trial of the Poet: An Interpretation of the First Edition of Leaves of Grass*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1976.

Mason, John B. "Walt Whitman's Catalogues: Rhetorical Means for Two Journeys in "Song of Myself." *American Literature* vol. 45, no. 1 (March 1973): 34–49.

_____ . "Catalogues." In *Walt Whitman: An Encyclopedia*, edited by J.R. LeMaster and Donald D. Kummings, 107–8. New York: Garland Publishing, 1998.

Matthews, Richard K. *The Radical Politics of Thomas Jefferson*. Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1984.

McSweeney, Kerry. *The Language of the Senses: Sensory-Perceptual Dynamics in Wordsworth, Coleridge, Thoreau, Whitman, and Dickinson.* Quebec: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998.

Meyers, Marvin. *The Jacksonian Persuasion: Politics & Belief.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960.

Miller, Edwin Haviland. *Walt Whitman's "Song of Myself": A Mosaic of Interpretations*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1989.

Miller, Jr., James E. *A Critical Guide to Leaves of Grass.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957.

Miller, Matt. *Collage of Myself: Walt Whitman and the Making of Leaves of Grass.* Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2010.

Montesquieu, Baron De. *The Spirit of Laws vol. I*. London: George Bell and Sons, 1897.

Morrison, Chaplain W. *Democratic Politics and Sectionalism: the Wilmot Proviso Controversy.* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1967.

Nelson, William E. *The Roots of American Bureaucracy, 1830–1900.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1982.

Nester, William. *The Age of Jackson and The Art of American Power, 1815–1848.* Washington, D.C: Potomac Books, 2013.

Onuf, Peter S. *Statehood and Union: A History of the Northwest Ordinance.* Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987.

_____ . *Jefferson's Empire: The Language of American Nationhood.* Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000.

Paine, Thomas. *Rights of Man, Common Sense and Other Political Writings*, edited by Mark Philp. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Parkin, David. "Wafting on the Wind: Smell and the Cycle of Spirit and Matter." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* vol. 13, Wind, Life, Health: Anthropological and Historical Perspectives (2007): S39–S53.

Poulet, Georges. *Studies in Human Time*, translated by Elliott Coleman. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1956.

Railton, Stephen. "Whitman the Political Poet by Betsy Erkkila [review]." *Nineteenth-Century Literature* vol. 45, no. 1 (June 1990): 103–105.

Reynolds, David S. *Walt Whitman's America: A Cultural Biography.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995.

Rorty, Richard. *Achieving Our Country: Leftist Thought in Twentieth-Century America.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997.

Seery, John E. "Introduction: Democratic Vistas Today." In *A Political Companion to Walt Whitman*, edited by John E. Seery, 1–15. Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 2011.

Shalhope, Robert E. "Thomas Jefferson's Republicanism and Antebellum Southern Thought." *The Journal of Southern History* vol. 42, no. 4 (November 1976): 529–556.

Simonsen, Jane E. "On Level Ground: Alexander Gardner's Photographs of the Kansas Prairies." In *Recovering the Prairie*, edited by Robert F. Sayre, 61–85. Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1999.

Spurzheim, J. G. *The Physiognomical System of Drs. Gall and Spurzheim: Founded on an Anatomical and Physiological Examination of the Nervous System in general, and of the Brain in particular; and Indicating the Dispositions and Manifestations of the Mind.* London: Baldwin, Cradock, & Joy, 1815.

Stovall, Floyd. *The Foreground of Leaves of Grass*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1974.

Tang, Edward. "The Civil War as Revolutionary Reenactment: Walt Whitman's "The Centenarian's Story." *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* vol. 21, no. 3 (2004): 131–154.

Taylor, Alan. *Thomas Jefferson's Education*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2019. Kindle.

Thomas, M. Wynn. *The Lunar Light of Whitman's Poetry*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1987.

_____ . "Erkkila, Betsy. Whitman the Political Poet [review]." *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* vol. 7, no. 1 (1989): 28–32.

Waskow, Howard J. *Whitman: Explorations in Form.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966.

Watson, Lyall. *Jacobson's Organ and the Remarkable Nature of Smell.* New York: Plume, 2001.

Wolosky, Shira. "Preface: The Claims of Rhetoric." In *The Cambridge History of American Literature, vol.4 Nineteenth-Century Poetry 1800–1910*, edited by Sacvan Bercovitch, 147–154. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

_____ . *Poetry and Public Discourse in Nineteenth-Century America.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

Wood, Gordon S. *The Idea of America: Reflections on the Birth of the United States*. New York: The Penguin Press, 2011.

Wrobel, Arthur. "Whitman and the Phrenologists: The Divine Body and the Sensuous Soul." *PMLA* vol. 89, no. 1 (Jan. 1974): 17–23.

Yarbrough, Jean M. *American Virtues: Thomas Jefferson on the Character of a Free People.* Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1998.

Yatchisin, George. "A Listening to Walt Whitman and James Wright." *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* vol. 9, no. 4 (1992): 175–195.

Zuckert, Michael P. "Founder of the Natural Rights Republic." In *Thomas Jefferson and the Politics of Nature*, edited by Thomas S. Engeman, 11–58. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2000.

Zweig, Paul. *Walt Whitman: The Making of the Poet.* New York: Basic Books Inc., 1984.