Sentimental Ambiguities and the American Founding: The Double Origins of Political Sympathy in *The Federalist* Papers

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In the Fourteenth *Federalist*, attempting to contribute to the project of winning political support for the proposed constitution of 1787, James Madison made a bold statement about "the people of America," who, according to him, were "… knit together … by so many cords of affection."[1] In his reasoning, the document would sanction a national community already based on existing affective ties. Nevertheless, as revealed in other pieces of the *Federalist* Papers, the would-be federal system was, at the same time, in lack of such bonds, and the authors of the collection, in part, offered the document to create other such ties, ones that had not been present before. Thus in *The Federalist* the constitution appears, in a sense, as an ambiguous framework which was for both legitimizing a national community, federal in scope, and was legitimized by it. This ambiguity was, at the same time, intimately linked with a contemporary set of ideas derived from the culture of sensibility and concerned the origins of national bonds circumscribing two different conceptions of those affective ties.

In this essay, I propose to address one particular aspect of the notions of sympathy and affection as they emerged in *The Federalist*. My interest lies in the ways that Publius identified the origins of affectionate social ties in the Union with special regard to the tension between the local and national spheres of power. More particularly, my aim is to

[1] James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay, *The Federalist Papers,* ed. Isaac Kramnick (Harmondsworth, 1987) (henceforth cited as *Federalist),* 144.

explore the modes in which, in the Papers, national ties of affection originating in various factors served to bridge the distance between members of the federal political community. How many sources of those "cords of affection" would exist in the federal Union?—one might respond to Madison's claim above. As far as their origins are concerned, I argue, John Jay, Alexander Hamilton, and James Madison, the three authors of *The Federalist*, utilized two kinds of discourse in the sentimental mode. They, in fact, employed a double discourse of political affection and sympathy suggesting two, diametrically opposed sources of origin for sentimental bonds in the federal republic. The first of these posited the nation-to-be under the new constitution, in part, as a result of development, chiefly related to the Revolution, with emphasis on affectionate bonds connecting members of the nation. Thus it also exploited the power of natural proximity and local affectionate sentiments in an effort to make the federal-national government appeal to the people of the states. Different from, yet closely linked with this, the second discourse posited the same (federal) nation as an already existing one, a sentimental community by nature with bonds of affection naturally derived either from kinship ties or from others already connecting various political actors of the federal system. The first discourse, as will be seen, had its force at the federal level only, whereas the second had the state as well as the federal levels for its scope thereby contributing to an intricate network of bonds of political affection and sympathy in the *Federalist* Papers.

In the past two decades a growing scholarly interest has developed in the philosophy and culture of sensibility and sentimentalism in relation to the political discourse of mid-and late-eighteenth-century America. Groundbreaking research has highlighted the extent to which major political concerns of the era were intertwined with the "culture of feeling." As a result of this work we now have a better sense of the relevance of concepts such as "sympathy," "affection," "benevolence," "consanguinity," or "brotherhood," in a political context each related to the capacity of the individual of sharing the sentiments of fellow human beings. Derived from contemporary western moral philosophy they became stock elements of the American colonists' assessment of their relations to Britain and came to inform their vision of social ties holding

their community together following independence.[2] However, none of the pertaining works pay attention to the origins of political sympathy in the *Federalist*, failing to identify the different stances of Publius on these two discourses.

Examining how affection comes to be in *The Federalist* can also qualify claims about the differences among its contributors. In a recent article, Todd Estes has argued how, in response to anti-Federalist arguments, writers of the Papers framed the issues of debate in different ways, opting for different rhetorical "strategies" and "voices" ranging from an avid support for ratification (Hamilton), through the assertion of "national greatness" (Jay) to a more deliberative, meditating voice (Madison), weighing pros and cons in view of ratification.[3] However, my analysis will hopefully show that because of their use of the ambiguous discourse of political sentimentalism, the three authors of the Papers also had a great deal in common.

Literature on ratification including discussions of the place of the *Federalist* Papers is voluminous and is predominantly concerned with the political ideas, the narrative history or the rhetorical strategies presented in the debate. Recent works have tended to concentrate on the process of framing and ratification in the states, yet with no interest in the influence of the contemporary culture of sensibility. Of works with less narrative and more analytical orientation, Max Edling's treatment of the making of

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[2] For works of broader scope discussing the major features of sensibility and sentimentalism with focus on the English speaking world see Janet Todd, *Sensibility: An Introduction* (London, 1986); John Mullan, *Sentiment and Sociability: The Language of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1990); and June Howard, "What is Sentimentality?" *American Literary History* 11 (1999), 63–81. For the American political scene see Garry Wills, *Inventing America: Jefferson's Declaration of Independence* (New York, 1979, first ed. 1978); Jay Fliegelman, *Prodigals and Pilgrims: The American Revolution against Patriarchal Authority, 1750–1800* (Cambridge, 1982); Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York, 1991); David Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776–1820* (Chapel Hill, 1997); Andrew Burstein, *Sentimental Democracy: The Evolution of America's Romantic Self-Image* (New York, 1999); Andrew Burstein, "The Political Character of Sympathy," *Journal of the Early Republic,* 21 (2001), 601–32; and Sarah Knott, *Sensibility and the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, 2009). "Sensibility" and "sentimentalism" were by and large used in the same sense in the contemporary terminology. On this see Todd, *Sensibility*, 6.

[3] Todd Estes, "The Voices of Publius and the Strategies of Persuasion in *The Federalist*", *Journal of the Early Republic*, 28 (2008), 526–7.

the constitution as an attempt to create a nation state, European style, also ignores the culture of sensibility. Similarly, in his widely acclaimed analysis of the drafting, making, and implementing the constitution, Jack Rakove, concerned with the changing meanings and interpretation of the document, also addresses issues with some relevance to sentimentalism yet with no awareness of its influence on the debate.[4]

[4] For studies on the making of the constitution and the ratification debate see Robert L. Utley, Jr., ed., *Principles of the Constitutional Order: The Ratification Debates* (Lanham, 1989); Herman Belz, Ronald Hoffman, and Peter J. Albert, eds., *To Form a More Perfect Union: The Critical Ideas of the Constitution* (Charlottesville, 1992); Leonard W. Levy and Dennis J. Mahoney, eds., *The Framing and Ratification of the Constitution* (London, 1987); Michael Lienesch, *New Order of the Ages: Time, the Constitution, and the Making of Modern American Political Thought* (Princeton, 1988); Terence Ball and J. G. A. Pocock, eds., *Conceptual Change and the Constitution* (Lawrence, 1988); Jack N. Rakove, *Original Meanings: Politics and Ideas in the Making of the Constitution* (New York, 1997); Richard Beeman, Stephen Botein, and Edward C. Carter II, eds., *Beyond Confederation: Origins of the Constitution and American National Identity* (Chapel Hill, 1987); Ellen Frankel Paul and Howard Dickman, eds., *Liberty, Property, and the Foundations of the American Constitution* (Albany, 1989); Of two recent works, for instance, Richard Beeman's is primarily a detailed and meticulously constructed narrative account of the Constitutional Convention with a brief gesturing to the ratification process and a survey of the issues discussed by the delegates. Labeling the *Federalist Papers* as "political propaganda," serving the actual political goals of people like Madison, who had previously held different views of the provisions of the document, Beeman, nonetheless, makes no attempt to examine the role of contemporary ideas of sensibility in the debate. Also in a recent narrative history, Pauline Maier provides a magisterial study of the ratification process in the various states, emphasizing how in one state it was influenced by events in another and discusses major political issues as they shaped the debate. Yet, although she does refer to the problem of sympathy between representatives and the people as an issue in the New York ratification debate, the role of sentimental culture in the parties' arguments falls outside her scope. Richard Beeman, *Plain, Honest Men: The Making of the American Constitution* (New York, 2009), 207 (quotation), 207–8; Pauline Maier, *Ratification: The People Debate the Constitution, 1787–1788* (New York, 2010), 354. Max M. Edling, *A Revolution in Favor of Government: Origins of the U.S. Constitution and the Making of the American State* (Oxford, 2003); Rakove treats, among others, the issue of representation, pointing out how anti-Federalists employed the argument about the need for sympathy between federal representatives and the people as a guarantee "against the abuse of power." Yet he connects this stance simply to an older political model of representation without addressing the issue in a sentimental context, and like the other cited scholars offers no analysis of either how Publius thought of its philosophical foundations, its nature or the mechanism of its attainment. Rakove, *Original Meanings*, 205 (quotation), 236–7.

Works that have paid some scholarly attention to the *Federalist* Papers from the point of view of sentimentalism nonetheless treat political affection as one homogeneous discourse failing to note its different origins as articulated by Publius.[5] In what is the most comprehensive study to date of the links between the ratification debate and sentimentalism historian Sarah Knott has shown how issues of the controversy were, to a great extent, embedded in the culture of sensibility and, more particularly, how Federalists imagined the American political community as one bound together by ties of sympathy. As part of her argument, she also claims that similarly to their political opponents, yet unrecognized by historians, Federalist writers, including Publius, amply drew upon the language of sensibility the project of the Federalists in order to move beyond localism represented by the anti-Federalists and to identify ties of sympathy within the Union denied by the latter.[6]

Knott's analysis, however, also fails to explore the different origins of political sympathy and affection in the *Federalist* Papers and suggests their homogeneous nature in the documents, whereas it was, as I aim to

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[5] Of these, Gary Wills's brief analysis which discusses political sympathy within the context of assessing David Hume's influence on Madison's thought, remains cursory, only treating Madison's adoption of the notion of affection in politics from Hume's writings on parties, simply highlighting the former's concern with the danger of the people's attachments to legislators as an impediment to control over the latter. Garry Wills, *Explaining America: The Federalist* (New York, 1981), 34–7. Similar is the case with historian David Waldstreicher's sweeping analysis of celebratory political practices in the early national period. Briefly addressing the problem of sensibility when examining the sphere of political celebrations as a platform for acting out national feelings, his treatment of textual representation of the boundaries of the federal national community includes no systematic study of *The Federalist* from a sentimental perspective. Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes,* chapter 2. In another relevant analysis, political scientist Leonard Sorenson has dealt with the document with focus on sentimental issues in discussing Madison's theory of virtue and ambition as well as their role in making a precondition for the existence of a republic like the federal Union. Offering an analysis of sympathy between the people and their representatives as well as addressing the problem of similarity between people and federal magistrates through fear of oppression, or "temporary affection" between them Sorenson nonetheless fails to probe into the origins of such sentiments from the perspective of the culture of sentimentalism. See Leonard R. Sorenson, "Madison on Sympathy, Virtue, and Ambition in the 'Federalist Papers'," *Polity* 27 (1995), 435–7, 437–8, 441 (quotation).

[6] Knott, *Sensibility and the American Revolution*, 241, 244, 255, 242, 254, 250, 260, 257–8.

show here, more diverse, at least as far as its origins are concerned. Her argument treats fellow-feeling in *The Federalist* as a homogeneous concept, ignoring differences in its use and hence cannot account for the strategy of Publius, who suggested the presence of proximity in various segments of the proposed political system offering a more complex system of affection than it seems at first sight.[7]

The eighteenth-century conception of affection was part of a broader intellectual and cultural framework usually described as the "cult of feeling" or the culture of sensibility. Although originating in Lockean perceptional psychology as well as in scientific interest in sense experience, by the mid-eighteenth century it became associated with the concept of sympathy, denoting the capacity of humans to respond to the feelings of fellow human beings and to communicate their own sentiments. Although with significant differences as for the mechanism of sympathy along with other related moral virtues such as benevolence or affection, British moral philosophers from Anthony Ashley Cooper, the Third Earl of Shaftesbury through Frances Hutcheson, Lord Kames (Henry Home), David Hume, and Adam Smith nonetheless unanimously emphasized the primacy of these concepts in establishing and maintaining human society through their function to bridge the gap between individuals, moving them beyond the basic drive of self-interest. This was in sharp contrast to conceptual models such as the ones professed by Thomas Hobbes and Bernard Mandeville which posited self-interest as the exclusive motive of individual conduct.[8]

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[7] Understanding the significance of the ambiguous origins of sympathy in *The Federalist*, at the same time, also allows for a reconsideration of the sharp dividing line that Knott posits between the anti-Federalists and the Federalists as far as sentimental politics are concerned. She argues that while the anti-Federalists advocated a "mimetic" mode of sympathy, which, based on the principle of "resemblance," stressed the possibility of affection between similar, homogeneous entities such as the ones constituting the individual states of the Union, the Federalists promoted a "superlative" version of sympathy asserting affinity beyond localism encompassing the entire federal Union (ibid, 244). The former fit the idea of localism and the ideal of the small republic with a homogeneous population, whereas the latter assumed affection across boundaries of heterogeneity, thereby supporting the idea of the large republic and the federal Union. (ibid, 243–4) Nevertheless, as will be seen below, in fact, Publius also made use of the claim about the power of localism when identifying natural ties of sympathy at the federal level.

[8] See Todd, *Sensibiliy*, esp. 24–7, Mullan, *Sentiment and Sociability*, esp. 18–56; Michael Bell, *Sentimentalism, Ethics and the Culture of Feeling* (Houndmills, 2000),

In the North-American colonies of Britain the notion that a political community was to be cemented by bonds of affection developed from a special conception of the family. A fundamental social unit, family was originally seen as being based on patriarchal bonds of mutual affections required from children and parents: while their offspring were expected to show obedient affection to parents, the latter were obliged to reciprocate by showing appropriate parental love. This conception of family relations, however, as historian Jay Fliegelman has shown, underwent a decisive transformation: from the mid-eighteenth century on the parent-child relationship became more and more grounded in the sentimental ethos of affection. Patriarchal authority as a principle governing that relationship came to be replaced by the expectation for parents to guide the moral and intellectual development of their children, leading them toward independent adulthood. As a result, ideological emphasis was shifting from "nature" to "nurture" in the period, meaning that bonds developing as a result of education as nurture could be of the same strength as bonds of consanguinity, that is, the outcome of birth. Therefore, for instance, it became culturally acceptable for surrogate fathers to replace those of nature as long as their sentiments for family members were grounded in affection. Likewise, familial ties by birth, in general, were increasingly seen as accidental and replaceable by ones based on affectionate nurturing. All this, however, also implied that such bonds could be developed as a result of habit through "habituation," that affection could be generated through development, instead of being seen as automatically derived from consanguinal ties.[9]

Ubiquitous as they may have been, moral sentiments including affection, as members of the American political elite could learn from

16–17. For the Scottish thinkers' general influence in the early Republic, see Richard B. Sher, "Introduction: Scottish-American Cultural Studies, Past and Present," in Richard B. Sher and Jeffrey R. Smitten, eds., *Scotland and America in the Age of the Enlightenment* (Edinburgh, 1990), 1–2, 8–10; Samuel Fleischacker, "Adam Smith's Reception among the American Founders, 1776–1790," *William and Mary Quarterly* 59 (2002), 897–924; Samuel Fleischacker, "The Impact on America: Scottish Philosophy and the American Founding", in Alexander Broadie, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Scottish Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 2003), 324–8; Mark G. Spencer, *David Hume and Eighteenth-Century America* (Rochester, 2005).

[9] Melvin Yazawa, *From Colonies to Commonwealth: Familial Ideology and the Beginnings of the American Republic* (Baltimore, 1985), 2, 19–22; Fliegelman, *Prodigals and Pilgrims*, 29, 51, 194, 229, 181–2; the phrase "habituation" occurs on 51.

Scottish moral philosophers, were also limited in scope and power. The power of affection and benevolence was commonly understood to be inversely proportional to the distance between humans; in other words, the shorter the distance, the stronger the ties of affection among them. Thus the strongest sentiments of affection were claimed to exist within the family but weakened with growing distance from that center. Adam Smith, for instance, in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), argued that love for the self was followed in strength by affection involving family members. More distant kinship relations, however, would result in less affection, since "affection gradually diminishes as the relation grows more and more remote."[10]

Americans also shared the notion about the power of affection as being naturally related to distance. Thomas Jefferson, for instance, articulated the gravitational nature of human affection by describing the affectionate ties connecting members of Indian communities in his *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1781). He argued that these bonds weakened with growing distance between individuals, being the strongest among members of the family. In an effort to debate the claim about the inferiority of the New World to Europe, he argued that the Native American male showed no difference from his white counterpart in terms of affection, including its decreasing power with growing distance: "he is affectionate to his children," Jefferson claims, "his other connections weakening, as with us, from circle to circle, as they recede from the center."[11]

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[10] Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) (Indianapolis, 1982; reprint of the Oxford University Press edition of 1976), 219, 220, 223–4. As Fonna Forman-Barzilai has shown, rewriting the Stoic tradition Smith denied the possibility of developing sympathy in a "cosmopolitan" manner refuting the gravitational model by practicing "apathy," i.e. the refusal to feel greater sympathy for others within the innermost circles of one's world. Fonna Forman-Barzilai, *Adam Smith and the Circles of Sympathy: Cosmopolitanism and Moral Theory* (Cambridge, 2010), 5, 8, 19–20, 120–34. Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* 223–4. For Smith's conception of the limitations on sympathy see also Fleischacker, "Adam Smith's Reception," 918.

[11] In *The Portable Thomas Jefferson,* ed. Merrill D. Peterson (Harmondsworth, 1975), 96. Contemporary thinking about sentimental power was also restrictive in a different way. In the public sphere, the adaptation and production of the ideas of sentimentalism as well as their dissemination was confined to those having the power of articulating them. While the power of sensibility was acknowledged in the case of disadvantaged social groups such as women, they were excluded from political sentimentalism. Blacks or native Americans could be felt compassion for, but their sentimental powers were deemed inferior to those of whites. Waldstreicher, *In the*

Nevertheless, the limits of affection were not regarded as absolute. The power of sensibility was seen ideally to extend from the individual through ever expanding social circles, morality becoming associated with a "singular humanity." For eighteenth-century Americans, limiting affection to the local sphere was the subject of disapproval. Instead, they argued, one should be able to have affections reaching over beyond the boundaries of narrow locality. Failure to do so equaled presenting oneself uneducated, lacking refinement and civilized affection. Americans even went so far as to consider themselves cosmopolitans, able to cross boundaries of locality and in Sarah Knott's words, "enter into the hearts of even those who were different." Ultimately, they found themselves being capable of feeling sympathy for all mankind.[12] The understanding that compassion was a fundamental human trait served as a ground for connecting the reform of the political framework of the nation with the burgeoning culture of sensibility.

Hence it is understandable that the debate over the ratification of the constitution in general, as Sarah Knott has argued, could lie "in part on sentimental foundations," with the problem of affection informing both sides of the debate. Sentimentalism represented a significant line of argumentation in the national discussion helping to address issues mainly related to the problem of representation. Anti-Federalists developed their argument centering upon affection in relation to their claim about the viability of the republican order in small republics, i.e. individual states. They posited a difference between people's attitude toward the local governments represented by the states and the federal one having an impact on their understanding of political sympathy. Arguing that local authority had a stronger command for people's loyalty than distant ones they questioned the success of the proposed federal government in winning the support of the people. They also regarded distance as undermining the good relationship between the people and their representatives by making it possible for men unworthy to rise into power ultimately subverting the liberty of the people. "Small republics," such as states, by contrast, in Saul Cornell's words, would secure the representatives' "ties to local communities." Thus Anti-Federalists were

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Midst of Perpetual Fetes, 55, 82; Knott, *Sensibility and the American Revolution*, 228, 232–3, 237–8.

[12] Knott, *Sensibility and the American Revolution,* 201, 208 (first quotation); Wood, *Radicalism of the American Revolution*, 221, 222 (second quotation), 223.

aware of the "gravitational model of human relations" (in John Saillant's phrase) and accepted that its force was inversely proportional to the distance between persons, and hence strongest within the domestic sphere, weakening with distance.[13]

Consequently, Anti-Federalists argued that physical proximity between the people and their representatives was an essential condition for confidence and affection to develop within the former. It was only through proximity, they believed, that the people could know their representatives and would accept the laws made by them. Thus their preference for the small republic model translated into sentimental discourse. It was only through proximity, they believed, that the people could take cognizance of their representatives and would accept the laws made by them. Hence it was an essential condition for confidence and affection to develop within the former. According to anti-Federalists, in Cornell's words, the states provided a better chance for "politicians … to demonstrate a capacity for sympathy with those they represented".[14] Anti-

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[13] Knott, *Sensibility and the American Revolution*, 238–9, 39 (first quotation); Saul Cornell, *The Other Founders: Anti-Federalism and the Dissenting Tradition in America, 1788–1828* (Chapel Hill and Williamsburg, 1999), 62–64, 72, 73 (second quotation). John Saillant, "Black, White, and 'The Charitable Blessed': Race and Philanthropy in the American Early Republic," in *Essays on Philanthropy*, no. 8. (Indianapolis, 1993), 5, footnote 6 (third quotation). One of the anti-Federalists, publishing under the pseudonym "Cato" of New York, for instance, argued, "The strongest principle of union resides within our domestic walls. … as we depart from home, the next general principle of union is amongst citizens of the same state, whose acquaintance, habits, and fortunes, nourish affection, and attachment…" *The Complete Anti-Federalist*, ed. Herbert Storing (Chicago and London, 1981), 2: 112.

[14] "Brutus" in *The Complete Anti-Federalist*, 2: 369 and "Pennsylvania Farmer" in ibid, 2: 232–3. Cornell, *The Other Founders*, 80 (third quotation). See also Knott, *Sensibility and the American Revolution*, 243. Perhaps the most sophisticated and articulate of all New York anti-Federalists, businessman Melancton Smith made extensive use of the sentimental argument in discussing the problem of representation. As he explored in his speech of 21 June 1788 in the New York convention, the greater number of federal representatives was preferable because in that way people could elect magistrates similar to themselves, otherwise the latter would have no idea of the sentiments that they were also supposed to share with their constituents. "Representatives," Smith claimed are to "resemble those they represent: they should be a true picture of the people; possess the knowledge of their circumstances and wants; *sympathize* in all their distresses, and be disposed to seek their true interests." This was a clear formulation of sentimental proximity as an indispensable basis of compassion that formed the foundations of true representation for Smith, believing knowledge and sympathy being intertwined with each other. This was also why Smith

Federalists thus identified one kind of affection and sympathy as for their origins: the natural one existing at the local level only, between state governments and the people and denied its existence at the federal level, where they perceived magistrates too distant from the people to have their affection and sympathy. Yet, their argument concerning political sympathy was one that Publius had to reckon with and responded to their apprehension also using the same language of sensibility, as will be seen, at the same time managing to integrate it into his own persuasion.

Publius also understood the general role of affection in political affairs as vital, and although being advocates of the new constitution and the large republic as against the small one Hamilton, Jay, and Madison, in fact, counted with the concept of the gravitational model. Such scheme appeared in their application of the discourse of affection by nature in view of the states and the people. Due to the force of proximity, in their argument, state governments would stand a better chance of winning the affection and loyalty of the people than the federal government being at a greater distance from them. As Hamilton explains in the Seventeenth *Federalist* reverberating the teachings of the Scottish school: "Upon the same principle that a man is more attached to his family than to his neighborhood, to his neighborhood than to the community at large, the people of each state would be apt to feel a stronger bias towards their local governments than towards the government of the Union."[15] The force of affection between the people and state governments can be such because of its natural source derived from the gravitational model.

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argued that "the great" or the upper class could not be good representatives of the people. They "do not *feel for* the poor and middling class." They can have no way of sharing feelings of the latter, their material conditions being basically different. In Smith's words, "They feel not the inconveniences arising from the payment of small sums." *The Complete Anti-Federalist*, 6: 157 (first quotation, emphasis added), ibid, 158 (second, third and fourth quotation, emphasis added). In his eyes, this lack of compassion was a basic impediment to their fitness for representing the people at the federal level.

[15] *Federalist*, 157. Jack Rakove makes the claim that in their method of argumentation anti-Federalists tended to be "Newtonians" in the sense that they applied axiomatic claims about government, also being prone to making "generalizations," whereas Federalists were more into "experimenting" with the new system. The gravitational model as accepted and used by Publius, itself based on axioms, however, seems to have been an exception to Rakove's claim and very close to, in fact, mimetic of Newtonian tenets. Rakove, *Original Meanings*, 152 (first quotation), 153 (second quotation), 152 (third quotation).

At the same time, it is not only with regard to the people within the context of the state that Publius asserts the power of affectionate ties rooted in natural circumstances, since for him, the natural force of proximity affects not only the relationship between people and state governments but also the way in which federal representatives relate to local issues. As Madison points out in the Forty-Sixth *Federalist*, given their personal attachment to particular interests within their states the "legislatures of the particular States" will, in fact, be inclined to promote local interests. As he complains, "a great proportion of the errors committed by the State legislatures proceeds from the disposition of the members to sacrifice the comprehensive and permanent interest of the State to the particular and separate views of the counties or districts in which they reside." This natural bias for the local, in turn, makes state legislatures in Madison's eyes incapable of promoting national interests. By the same logic, "the members of the federal legislature will be likely to attach themselves too much to local objects." Policies made on the national level, therefore, will lean toward local concerns, "the prejudices, interests, and pursuits of the governments and people of the individual states."[16] This situation is to be changed for the better by the proposed constitution.

The natural source of affection also takes on a positive tone in the argument of Madison when it comes to the issue of defense through the militia. It is also the loyalty and affection of the people connecting them to their state governments that will prevent the federal one from going tyrannical by relying on military force according to Madison. As he argues in the Forty-Sixth *Federalist*, state militias with "citizens" in "arms" would be ready to protect state governments from such an assault, because these militias would be "fighting for their common liberties and united and conducted by governments possessing their affections and confidence."[17] In this way, the sympathy of citizens for their state governments rooted in the power of natural physical proximity would function as a guarantee against the potential abuse of power by the federal government.

While accepting the power of local sentiments, Publius had to deal with the problem of the tension between the gravitational model and his advocacy of the large republic, also manifest in the issue of affection at the national or federal level: how can loyalty to the Union work if the power of local attachments stemming from the gravitational model exists

[16] *Federalist,* 299.
[17] Ibid, 301.

by nature? He strove to solve this problem by employing the double discourse of the origins of affection to argue that affective ties exist not only at the local but also at the federal level and moreover, not only of artificial but also of natural sources thereby ensuring coherence within the Union. Therefore, despite admitting the natural origins of sympathy at the state level, Publius also distinguished sympathy and affection in relation to the federal government developing an argument that emphasized the artificial origins of the relationship between the people and the federal government.[18]

According to the authors of *The Federalist*, ties of affection are possible and necessary to develop at the federal level by means of the proposed constitution to serve cohesion within the union. Although natural bonds of sympathy and affection constitute an important ground for affection in political units, Publius questions the durability of such ties. Hamilton, for instance, in the Twenty-Fourth *Federalist*, points out that even international relations based on kinship ties are susceptible to deterioration. His example is the great powers of Spain and France in the context of North America, where the "common interest" of Spain and Britain in the West may bring these two rivals together against the American States. This can happen, without disturbance by the French-Spanish alliance, since, although being based on blood ties, it is bound to deteriorate. The reason is the perishable nature of kinship ties: "The increasing remoteness of consanguinity," Hamilton claims, "is every day diminishing the force of the family compact between France and Spain." This for him is in accordance with the view that "the ties of blood" are "feeble and precarious links of political connection."[19] Thus, the gravitational model also works in view of time for Hamilton: with growing temporal distance, even kinship ties may weaken and wear away thereby leading to the end of political alliances.

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[18] In doing so he also hoped to make the latter more visible to the former. Historian Max Edling has argued that the framing was grounded in the American political cultural tradition in the sense that the empowerment of the central government was to happen without jeopardizing citizens' liberties keeping it "*inconspicuous*" to them, having "limited … actual physical presence." Nonetheless, being aware of the sentimental features of the argument of Publius, as will be seen below, it becomes clear that for him the issue was to bring the federal government closer to citizens in several ways, in fact, making it "conspicuous" to them. Edling, *A Revolution in Favor of Government* 9, 10 (first quotation, original emphasis).

[19] *Federalist*, 191.

The perishable feature of natural ties of affection prepares the ground for Publius to argue the possibility of their generation by human effort in an artificial manner. Consequently, for him, the nation is in part held together by bonds of affection that develop through time, largely generated by habit as if they were the result of historical processes, of habitual development affecting the sphere of the whole Union. As for ties connecting citizens of the nation, in the Second *Federalist*, Jay makes the point that Americans are connected by cultural ties such as language or religion, "the same principles of government," "very similar manners, and customs," but more interestingly, the revolutionary experience. In a similar vein, in the Fourteenth *Federalist*, Madison also posits ties among members of the Union other than the ones based on blood, i.e. rooted in nature. For him, the shared revolutionary experience of Americans established strong bonds among them, resting on "the mingled blood which they have shed in defense of their sacred rights…."[20] Thus, for Jay and Madison, the American nation is also connected by bonds of affection that are the result of custom and habit, stemming from cultural ties that have developed through time. In their reasoning, the (federal) nation, in part, becomes the outcome of historical processes: the development of affection is the result of common experience and habit.

Another artificial source of political affection and sympathy for Publius is the federal legal system expected to create bonds of sympathy between representatives and the people. In the first place, these get generated through the system of laws. Since the same laws would apply to the former as much as to the latter, legislators would refuse to make laws that would harm themselves, consequently, such laws would not harm the people, the electorate. As Hamilton claims in the Thirty-Sixth *Federalist*, "dependence, and the necessity of being bound, himself and his posterity, by the laws to which he gives his assent are the true and they are the strong cords of sympathy between the representative and the constituent." Hence physical distance on the scale of the federal Union otherwise serving as a natural barrier between federal representatives and their electorate can be compensated for by laws as artificial means of generating sympathy, since they will equally affect law-makers and other citizens. The laws that federal representatives will make, as Hamilton confirms in the Fifty-Seventh *Federalist*, will be effective for them like for the people. As a result, a "communion of interests and sympathy of

[20] Ibid, 91, 144.

sentiments" will develop between them forming a strong basis for political stability.[21] Thus the sympathy that is to bind "rulers" and "people" into one federal political "communion" can in part be created by artificial means, by the principle of equality before law.

According to Publius, a similar kind of political mechanism bound to create artificial bonds of sympathy within the federal union lies in the system of elections. As Madison explains in the Fifty-Second *Federalist*, federal representatives are required to "have an immediate dependence on and intimate sympathy with, the people"—a condition to be ensured by regularly sending the representatives back to the electorate: "Frequent elections are unquestionably the only policy by which this dependence and sympathy can be effectually secured," Madison claims. He confirms this role of the election adding that the process is also bound to generate apprehension in federal magistrates. In the Fifty-Seventh *Federalist* he details the psychological mechanism that representatives are exposed to as a result of elections. According to him, the latter would trigger a process of cognition through which magistrates will remember that they are only temporarily raised from among the people and with the next election will "descend" back unless being re-elected.[22]

In the Fifty-Seventh *Federalist* Madison further explores the discourse of affection between federal representatives and the electorate as a result of gratitude through the artificial means of election in their relationship. He claims that the former are attached to the latter because of gratitude derived from the fact of their being elected, having received the favors of the people. In this way, representatives "will enter into the public service under circumstances which cannot fail to produce a temporary affection at least to their constituents." It is the ubiquitous "sensibility" of humans that, also being an attribute of federal representatives, is the condition of the working of such an emotional transaction that will result in their "affection" felt toward the electorate: "There is in every breast a sensibility to marks of honor, of favor, of esteem, and of confidence," Madison points out, "which, apart from all considerations of interests, is some pledge for grateful and benevolent returns."[23]

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[21] Ibid, 235 (first quotation), 345 (second quotation).
[22] Ibid, 323–4 (first quotation), 324 (second quotation), 344–5 (third quotation)
[23] Ibid, 344.

The dependence of representatives on the electorate through the process of elections, at the same time, promotes the generation of sympathy in another sense. As Hamilton argues in the Thirty-Sixth *Federalist*, magistrates are to be well informed about the sentiments of the people in order to be able to win their votes. "Is it not natural," he asks, "that a man who is a candidate for the favor of the people, and who is dependent on the suffrages of his fellow-citizens for the continuance of his public honors, should take care to inform himself of their dispositions and inclinations and should be willing to allow them their proper degree of influence upon his conduct?"[24] In other words, Hamilton here strives to refute the anti-Federalist argument about the ignorance of federal representatives attributed to their distance from constituents. Through increasing their knowledge of distant voters magistrates can, in fact, bridge the gap. Such an urge to acquire intimate knowledge of the sentiment of the people, according to Hamilton, can in turn develop in representatives as a result of the system of election, a further mechanical way of establishing proximity at the federal level.

Federal representatives, then, by the institutional means of the legal system and elections will have the tendency under the proposed constitution to develop affective ties with the people, temporary or permanent. These will supposedly come into being under the proposed constitution despite the physical distance that separates magistrates from their constituencies.

Finally, the most complex means of achieving the generation of sympathy and affection in the people felt for their representatives is through "better administration" by the federal government as both Hamilton and Madison claim. This is an argument that Hamilton first offers in the Sixteenth *Federalist*, where he claims that the federal government, as opposed to the contrary desire of the Anti-Federalists, "must carry its agency to the persons of the citizens." In that way, it can reach the innermost sentiments of the people, derived from the human heart. In fact, it is to compete with state governments to be able to control those passions. In Hamilton's words, "The government of the Union, like that of each State, must be able to address itself immediately to the hopes and fears of individuals; and to attract to its support those passions which have the strongest influence upon the human heart." According to him, this can be best done by the presence of the federal government through

[24] Ibid, 235.

the "courts of justice."[25] He provides a detailed exploration of the mechanism of achieving this development of positive sentiments for the federal government in the people in the Twenty-Seventh *Federalist*. He argues on the basis of the principle of proximity and frequency that the more directly and frequently the people are affected by direct sense impressions the deeper and more lasting effect those will leave on the former. "A thing that rarely strikes [man's] senses will generally have but a transient influence on his mind," Hamilton claims. "A government continually at a distance and out of sight can hardly be expected to interest the sensations of the people." By the frequent and proximate presence of the government, in turn, people can be made to develop affection for it because of their increasing familiarity with it within their own local spheres. As he argues, "the more the citizens are accustomed to meet with it in the common occurrences of their political life, the more it is familiarized to their sight and to their feelings, the further it enters into those objects which touch the most sensible chords and put in motion the most active springs of the human heart, the greater will be the probability that it will conciliate the respect and attachment of the community." Furthermore, all this can best be done if, in order to reduce distance between the people and the federal government, the latter is given more power to regulate "matters of internal concern," achieving more familiarity with the people and win their affection.[26]

The observation that affection for the federal government can thus be generated on the basis of its more frequent presence in the local sphere of citizens rests on Hamilton's premise that "Man is very much a creature of habit." Consequently, people can be made to get accustomed to the presence of the federal government in their political lives, moreover, they can also develop affection for it because of its frequent effect on their sensations. Affection hence can develop in the people without their having to move beyond their local spheres. In this way, the federal government will gain greater legitimacy among them ultimately grounding its force in the natural bases of human sentiments and can

[25] Ibid, 298, 157 (first quotation, respectively), 154 (second and third quotation).

[26] Ibid, 203 (first quotation), 202 (second quotation), 203 (third and fourth quotation). Hamilton provides no definition of "matters of internal concern," a fact to be explained by his claim about the uncertainty of "distinction between internal and external." (ibid, 202) Nonetheless, it seems viable to suppose that for him the areas designated as "internal" would include ones where he advocated a stronger presence of the national government (taxation, commerce or defense).

avoid the use of force in its interaction with the people: "The more it [i.e. the federal government] circulates through those channels and currents in which the passions of mankind naturally flow," Hamilton argues, "the less it will require the aid of the violent and perilous expedients of compulsion."[27] Affection, then, according to him, can develop between the people and the federal government in a way that builds on natural propensities of the former. Thus, although being at a greater distance from the people than the state governments are, by building a habitual presence among them, by regulating their affairs, the federal government would have the power to evoke their confidence and affection.

That Publius employed the argument about the artificial origins of affection and sympathy at the federal level was a logical consequence of his accepting its natural ones at the local one, based on the gravitational model. Even so, peculiarly, the three authors of the Papers, in fact, did detect bonds of sympathy and affection among the people of the Union that they considered natural in origin.

A crucial point made by Publius about the natural sources of affection at the federal level is that there is already a federal nation of affection the boundaries of which would merely be sanctioned by the proposed constitution. According to this argument, the union is not yet a political but already an affective community whose bonds of affection are derived from natural proximity rooted in kinship relations: the nation under the new constitution appears to be a natural entity of affectionate relationships. Hence the federal system would offer an adequate political framework for securing already existing affectionate ties among members of the Union as a nation.

This is a claim in the Papers first made by Jay, who, in the Fifth *Federalist* refers to the American nation as one held together by bonds of "confidence" and "affection." He, in part, grounds this statement in the natural argument maintaining that Americans are "one united people … descended from the same ancestors," as he points out in the Second *Federalist*. In the Fourteenth *Federalist*, Madison develops a similar argument about sentimental affection among members of the Union, at the same time being more definite about the roots of such sentiments in blood ties, more precisely, the expansion of natural family ties. Americans, he contends, are connected through bonds of kinship: they are "members of the same family … [and] the kindred blood which flows in

[27] Ibid, 203.

the veins of American citizens" ensures their belonging together. This is also the reason why Madison can maintain, as we saw above, that "the people of America" are "knit together as they are by so many cords of affection."[28] These bonds are, then, in part rooted in natural proximity based on consanguinity derived from the kinship ties that constitute the nation. Consequently, the Americans' refusal to support the union under the proposed constitution, therefore, would equal the denial of the existence and effects of such natural bonds as well as the existence of the federal nation. Opposition to the latter would imply the rejection of not something new but, on the contrary, the destruction of something that has already been in existence.

The natural arguments about political sympathy at the federal level, at the same time, go beyond the assertion of kinship ties cementing the people into a nation. If one considers relations at the federal level other than those among individual citizens, in *The Federalist* a strong line of argument about affection by nature concerns the relationship between federal political leaders and the people. For instance, according to Jay, the force of affection rooted in natural blood ties also applies to federal politicians of the nation once their loyalty to nation is tested against the destructive power of external forces: their sentiments tie them to family and nation first and foremost, excluding loyalty to foreign interests. As he argues in the Sixty-Fourth *Federalist*, familial ties and national sentiments, among others, will prevent any disloyalty on the part of the president and senators. "Every consideration that can influence the human mind," he points out, "such as honor, oaths … the love of country, and family affections and attachments, afford security for their fidelity."[29] This, for instance, is the guarantee for treaties serving the national interest. The federal executive as well as senators, that is, figures of the federal system feared by anti-Federalists to be too far from the people and hence disloyal to them are thus defended by Jay through the natural argument. For him, local as well as national affective sentiments have the tendency to reinforce loyalty to nation as against foreign interests.

The discourse of affection by nature connecting federal representatives to their constitutencies also informs the claim that Madison makes in connection with the balance among the various branches of the federal government in the Forty-Ninth *Federalist*, where

[28] Ibid, 101 (first quotation), 91 (second quotation), 144 (third and fourth quotation).
[29] Ibid, 380.

he points out that of them it is the legislative one that is closest to the people of the states. Within the federal government it is this branch that has more influence on the people, largely because of the natural attachment of the latter to their representatives. The reason is that legislators' immediate contact with them ensures the existence of affective ties between them. In addition, representatives have political weight on account of such ties connecting them to the people. In Madison's words, "Their connections of blood, of friendship, and of acquaintance embrace a great proportion of the most influential part of the society." Also, they are considered "more immediately the confidential guardians of the rights and liberties of the people."[30] In Madison's argument, then, it is the natural proximity to the people that provides the legislative branch with a powerful position within the federal government.

Another important discussion of this natural conception of sympathy and affection pertaining to the people and their magistrates in the *Federalist* Papers is offered by Hamilton. He, in the Thirty-Fifth *Federalist*, strives to refute the anti-Federalists' charge that the proposed federal system of representation will be restrictive, excluding several interests; in other words, that will not meet the desirable criterion of "an actual representation of all classes of the people by persons of each class."[31] In his reasoning, although being true, this should not be seen as a problem. The various classes that do not have actual representation in Congress will be represented by others under the proposed constitution. The key to this, at the same time, is the natural affinity that he assumes to exist between the various classes that are to be represented and the ones that are to represent them.

"Mechanics" and "manufacturers," for instance, in Hamilton's argument, are classes that can best be represented by "merchants." Common interests serve as a ground for such an alliance, forming the basis of natural sympathy and affection between them. The former "know that the merchant is their *natural* patron and friend; and they are aware that however great the confidence they may justly feel in their own good sense, their interests can be more effectively promoted by the merchant than by themselves." Furthermore, according to Hamilton, mechanics and manufacturers lack the skills that would qualify them to defend their own

[30] Ibid, 315.
[31] Ibid, 233.

interests in Congress, thus they are happy to leave the duty with merchants who are competent enough to argue for them. No wonder, then, that he calls the latter the "natural representatives" of the former. Sympathy by nature also informs Hamilton's discussion of people of "the learned profession," who are by nature capable of representing the interests of any other classes, having no equivalent interest among the people. Such a peculiar feature of this class qualifies it to represent any interest as long as it fits in with the good of the whole.[32] Representatives of the learned profession, then, are by nature capable of promoting the public good and any interest of the people. Their sympathy is, in fact, rooted in their natural condition of not being part of any particular class and thus are naturally fit to represent the whole.

Like the classes mentioned so far, the landed one also represents sympathy based on natural affinity and is perhaps the most homogeneous one in Hamilton's assessment. It is to encompass each member of society connected to land, ranging from "landlord to the poorest tenant." The basis of the commonality of their interests is that taxes connected to land will affect these people equally, according to Hamilton. As he argues, "Every landholder will therefore have a common interest to keep the taxes on land as low as possible; and common interest may always be reckoned upon the surest bond of sympathy."[33] Hamilton, then, posits the landed interest as one homogeneous class, held together by affective ties rooted in sympathy in a natural manner. Once a man becomes a landholder, he also becomes a member of a class of similar men, thus connected to them by natural bonds of affection. Hamilton, in fact, naturalizes, that is, homogenizes social classes into groups of fellow-feeling that have common interests by nature and thus affection promoting federal representation.

Madison also appeals to affinity naturally derived from proximity in relation to representation when, in the Fifty-Sixth *Federalist*, he argues in connection with the same matter of taxation that federal representatives also gain knowledge of local matters because of their connection with state legislatures. They "will probably in all cases have been members, and may even at the very time be members, of the State legislature, where all the local information and interests of the State are assembled."[34] In other words, Madison assigns two identities to representatives here: while

[32] Ibid, 233 (first quotation, emphasis added), 234–5, 234 (second quotation).
[33] Ibid, 234.
[34] Ibid, 341.

being part of the federal structure of government, they also have knowledge of local affairs on account of their ties with state legislatures. This, however, is also to suggest that through this second identity they have natural bonds with their own state districts. This argument was obviously in response to anti-Federalist charges concerning the distance between federal legislators and the people.

Finally, when deliberating on the question of regulating the militia Publius also employs the discourse of sentimental affection by nature with regard to the federal level of affection. As Hamilton explores in the Twenty-Ninth *Federalist*, the militia under the control of the federal government would be a perfect substitute for a standing army without jeopardizing the people's liberty. The reason is that members of such a citizens' army would have close ties of affection with the rest of the nation. These bonds are, on the other hand, rooted in natural kinship ties. In Hamilton's words, "Where in the name of common sense are our fears to end if we may not trust our sons, our brothers, our neighbors, our fellow-citizens?"[35] Such natural ties of affection, then, are to ensure the natural proximity between the militia under federal control and the people, whose liberty it is to protect.

Having examined the state as well as federal levels of government in the sentimental mode offered by Publius one can conclude that the persuasion of *The Federalist* Papers was thus far from being homogeneous as far as the origins of political sympathy and affection were concerned and was, to a great extent, based on the simultaneous presence of the two discourses of affection facilitating a vision of the federal nation rooted in both natural ties of affection and in ones that were the result of human effort. The natural and artificial sources of affection at the federal level became viable and not excluding options in *The Federalist*, offered to deal with the "weight" of the gravitational model of affection accepted by anti-Federalists and Federalists alike. As far as the state governments were concerned, they equivocally argued for the

[35] Ibid, 210. For anti-Federalist concerns about standing armies see Cato in *The Complete Anti-Federalist*, 2: 118. On the contemporary concept of standing armies as a threat to the people's liberty and republican order in general see J. G. A. Pocock, *Politics, Language, and Time: Essays on Political Thought and History* (Chicago, 1989 (1960), 104–146; idem, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, 1975), 426–7, and passim; Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, 1992 (1967)), 61–2.

natural affection that citizens, state legislators or others were bound to feel for their own state governments. By contrast, when referring to the same problem in connection with the federal legislature Publius argued for the artificial origins of affection between the people and the federal government claiming the need to develop such ties. He regarded artificial bonds of affection as ones to be created by the constitution, which thus functioned to him as a means to exploit the gravitational model and the sentimental power of proximity to be created in artificial ways. Furthermore, the natural affective ties that anti-Federalists identified at the state level only Hamilton, Jay, and Madison also claimed to detect in the federal union as far as relations among the people themselves and between the people and federal representatives were concerned: the citizens of the country, a citizens' army or even federal office-holders were to be connected to the people of the states by natural bonds of affection.[36]

The natural and cultural ways of defining affection in the federal republic hence also indicated varieties of its meaning through its origin in relation to nationhood in an ambiguous way. For Publius, the federal nation was to be regarded not only as a result of artificial, man-made ties of affection but also, in several ways, as a natural community based on ties already in place.[37] In other words, the notion of associating the state

[36] The two discourses of sympathy and affection as employed in the *Federalist Papers* should be seen as part of a larger project aimed at constructing a national community within the framework of the federal constitution. As historian Trish Loughran has shown, a homogeneous national print culture with a unified audience as a material prerequisite for nation formation did not exist in America at the time of ratification. Pluralism, fragmentation, disconnectedness in print culture, inadequate means of communication among disparate localities were impediments to the development of a unified national community at the federal level. Nonetheless, by means of various rhetorical strategies, Publius suggested the existence of a national community, thereby proposing coherence and unity at the textual level before the material world of a federal community took shape. This community, however, is to be seen as "fantasy," or desire at the time of the ratification debate. Through his strategies Publius managed to position his anti-Federalist adversaries as representatives of particular locality and confusion, promoting "chaos" and disconnectedness undermining national coherence represented by the newly proposed system of government, which offered, by contrast, ideological and "geographical coherence" through union. Trish Loughran, *The Republic in Print: Print Culture in the Age of U.S. Nation-Building 1770–1870* (New York, 2007), 322, 323, 141, 3–4, 111, 139, 26, 120, 121 (first quoted phrase), 124–5, 125 (second quoted phrase), 126 (third quoted phrase).

[37] The simultaneous presence of the natural and the artificial in the argumentation of *The Federalist* can be accounted for by a peculiar feature of the contemporary culture of

with a community given by nature survived and hence the application of the ambiguous discourses of political sentimentalism by Publius fit in with this general tendency of political thought despite, as has been seen above, the general shift that had occured in sentimental culture.

The two discourses together thus served for the authors of the Papers to define a national community that was, in fact, yet to be constructed. Either imagined as being held together by already given bonds such as natural kinship ties and others derived from proximity, or affectionate bonds possible to generate through institutional means under the new constitution, the three authors of the *Federalist* Papers identified a political community that was also a national one based on sentimental affection. The complex web of affective ties as they already existed or were yet to be formed by the new constitution were offered, ambiguously, to show coherence in the would-be federal nation. In this way, despite their obvious differences identifed by scholars like Todd Estes, Madison, Hamilton, and Jay also shared significant ideas about the sentimental origins of the Constitution. In the first place, as has been seen, Madison and Hamilton emphasized both the natural and artificial origins of political affection and sympathy within the Union. In the second place, Madison, with his emphasis on the natural origins of a federal nation was far closer to Jay's rhetorical strategy hinting at "national greatness" than one may assume on the basis of Estes's analysis.

By employing the two discourses, presuming affection within the union either as a result of natural links or artificial ones, Publius thus, in the final analysis, glossed over the nature-culture dichotomy, implying the power of the constitution to both sanction and create ties of sentimental affection.

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the constitution. As historian Eric Slauter points out, a conceptual shift from an organic to an architectural understanding of statehood had taken place in America by the 1780s. This dichotomy expressed the fundamental tension between the state as a natural entity and as a "state of art," the result of human design and construction. Nevertheless, as Slauter suggests, the natural or organic conception of the state and the "body metaphor had not been abandoned" with the making of the constitution. Eric Slauter, *The State as a Work of Art: The Cultural Origins of the Constitution* (Chicago, 2009), chapter 1, 85.