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Reading Places: Local Landscapes and Transnational Culture in Romantic Britain

By

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Abstract

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Reading Places: Local Landscapes and Imperial Culture in Romantic Britain examines a literary topos in which a subject reads a rural British place as a material record encoding a long and complex history. It asks how and why Romantic landscape descriptions register the influence of the burgeoning British Empire. I challenge longstanding critical tendencies to see European literatures circa 1800 as suffused by emerging national consciousness and to understand nineteenth-century British cultural theory as predominantly idealist, preoccupied with establishing an authentic, autochthonous national identity. Instead, I contribute to recent critical movements that understand "national" literary traditions through post-nationalist frameworks by recovering a materialist and internationally minded approach to theorizing culture that took shape in Britain over the course of the long nineteenth century.

Reading Places opens by reconsidering the familiar argument that eighteenth-century locodescriptive poetry, featuring a picturesque aesthetic undergirded by emerging liberal ideology, nourished Romantic-era preoccupations with natural supernaturalism and the personalization of the universal. I trace a different development, anticipated in key respects by writers such as Alexander Pope, James Thomson, and Oliver Goldsmith: the discovery of local microhistories that become legible in the physical features of specific topographical sites. Responding to contemporary antiquarian historiography and growing anxiety about the dissolution of local differences under the pressure of what we now call globalization, the Romantic tradition of reading places developed and expanded upon Enlightenment universalism not so much by retreating to localism as by tracing the manifestations of international historical processes within discrete domestic locations.

My first chapter, "The Other Within," demonstrates the integral role that England's oldest and most economically developed colony, Wales, played in establishing hegemonic ways of interpreting landscape and history throughout the long nineteenth century. I begin by showing how William Gilpin's practice of picturesque view-making, first conceptualized in south Wales, incorporates colonial logics of extraction and improvement that were emerging throughout the industrializing Welsh countryside. Turning to two native responses to the new British obsession with Welsh history and culture, I demonstrate that at the same time as the Welsh landscape enabled English writers to fantasize about the productive and profitable manipulation of subjugated places, it also generated discourses of resistance to imperial power. Iolo Morganwg's "philosophy of history" articulates a dialectical engagement with the history of English

oppression that promises to open onto a new, Welsh world order. Richard Llwyd's long topographical poem *Beaumaris Bay* (1800) uses antiquarian place reading to unsettle Whig historiographical accounts of the English domination of Wales. The chapter argues that, despite critical neglect over the last two centuries, Romantic Wales was a crucial testing-ground in the development both of techniques of colonial control and of practices of anti-imperial resistance.

My second chapter, "A Tale of Two Skulls," focuses on Irish Gothic, a genre that makes Ireland's history of colonial violence horrifyingly legible. Beginning with a consideration of Edmund Burke's emphatic but little-studied contempt for antiquarian history, I show that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century antiquarians portrayed Irish landscapes as saturated with traces of exploitation and dominance – a legible public record of colonial violence that kept threatening to erupt into the Romantic present. In *The Wild Irish Girl* (1806), Sydney Owenson compares the Irish landscape to a dizzying array of British overseas colonies and strategic holdings, so that Ireland functions as a dark mirror of insatiable colonial ambition. I then read James Hardiman's narrative of the destruction of the skull of the eighteenth-century Irish bard Carolan at the hands of "a northern Orangeman" in 1796 as an instance of colonial erasure of native archives. Finally, the chapter turns to Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu's novel *The House by the Churchyard* (1863), which also recovers a history of colonial violence from a disinterred Irish skull. The novel uses the emblem of a crushed and trepanned – but crucially still legible – skull to figure colonial violence as seeping from Irish history through the Irish soil and into vengeful Irish bodies.

Moving from the anticolonial critique manifest in Irish place reading to explore how the topos was used in the service of a British nationalist project, Chapter Three, "Walter Scott's Nationalist Internationalism," argues that Scott's immensely successful but now neglected verse romances articulate a collectivism that accounts both for their unprecedented wartime popularity and for their sudden fall from favor in the postwar period. By casting rural British landscapes as virtual storehouses whose physical features register evidence of a common heroic past that belongs equally to all Britons, the verse romances both defuse intranational difference and reassure their readers that the nation could withstand Napoleonic invasion. Although their rousing collectivism struck a chord across class lines in the uncertain days of the Napoleonic Wars, intensified class warfare in the postwar moment provoked deep skepticism of their morality and social utility. As the threat of invasion subsided, the poems' nationalistic promises became less urgently appealing even as their economic implications became newly uncomfortable. Against critical claims that Scott outgrew writing poetry, I argue that his shift from verse to prose romance owed as much to changing geopolitical conditions as it did to his artistic development. While Scott is often cast as an inventor of national tradition and of cultural Scottishness more generally, I show that much of his international appeal was due to his unparalleled ability to reveal Scottish culture as a contingent product of global and hyperlocal forces (military invasions, small-time smuggling, climate change, and traditional agricultural practices, for instance), and to make the retrieval of these occluded histories pleasurable to diverse and far-flung audiences.

My last chapter, "The Global Parish: Anglicanism, Localism, Empire," examines nineteenth-century debates over the imperial function of the Anglican Church at home and abroad. I begin by showing how William Wordsworth's *The Excursion* makes a Church-guided program of monitorial pedagogy invented by a Scotsman and applied in India (Andrew Bell's "Madras System") integral to the construction of an English national culture. For Wordsworth, unifying the nation entails teaching the populace to read, both literally and figuratively, for it is

only once *The Excursion*'s local places become historically legible that domestic community and national harmony can take root. Turning to Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *On the Constitution of Church and State Government*, I show that Coleridge recognized and rejected the simultaneously local and international materialism implicit in the place reading tradition from antiquarianism through Scott to *The Excursion*. Coleridge and his Victorian heir John Ruskin try to transcend the materialist and historicist impulses latent in Scott and Wordsworth by pivoting to an idealist medieval socialism that positions materialism as an unreliable – and dangerously foreign – foundation upon which to construct a national culture.

A coda on Karl Marx's *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* and the opening chapters of *Capital* casts Marx's understanding of commodities as "congealing" human labor as a different kind of departure from the Romantic place reading tradition. Marx revives Enlightenment universalist projects that find in all sites the same didactic message and the same universal history. Such international historical materialism rebuffs the idealist loco-socialisms of Coleridge and Ruskin, even as its will to scientific systematization occludes the materialist historicisms on offer in various instances of Romantic place reading. *Reading Places* recovers a pre-Marxian British tradition of using literature to theorize culture as the product of international material processes; it ends by tracing that tradition's echoes in the twentieth-century cultural histories and theories of writers like Raymond Williams and E.P. Thompson, who sought to restore local densities to Marxian materialism.

I do not mean—it would be *meaningless*—that it is possible to 'paint' 'living conditions,' to paint social relations or the forms of the class struggle in a given society. But it is possible, through their objects, to 'paint' visible connexions that depict by their disposition, the *determinate absence* which governs them. The structure which controls the *concrete* existence of men, i.e. which *informs the lived ideology* of the relations between men and objects and between objects and men, this structure, *as a structure*, can never be depicted by its presence, *in person*, but only by traces and effects, negatively, by indices of absence, *in intaglio* (*en creux*).

Louis Althusser, "Cremonini: Painter of the Abstract" (1966)

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Introduction

> A new theory of socialism must centrally involve *place*. Remember the argument was that the proletariat had no country, the factor which differentiated it from the property-owning classes. But place has been shown to be a crucial element in the bonding process—more so perhaps for the working class than the capital-owning classes—by the explosion of the international economy and the destructive effects of deindustrialization upon old communities. When capital has moved on, the importance of place is more clearly revealed.
>
> Raymond Williams, "Decentralism and the Politics of Place"

> Williams is a great critic, whose work I admire and have learned much from, but I sense a limitation in his feeling that English literature is mainly about England, an idea that is central to his work as it is to that of most scholars and critics.
>
> Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*

I. Marks left upon a stone

On July 19th, 1799, a French soldier named Pierre-François Bouchard, tasked with overseeing repairs of a recently captured fortress in occupied Egypt, made a remarkable discovery. The French Army had captured the building, located three miles northwest of the port city of Rashid, as part of Napoleon Bonaparte's attempt to consolidate French trading interests in the southern and eastern Mediterranean. The walls of Fort Julien, as they rechristened it, were covered in dusty ancient hieroglyphics, for the structure was originally built in the fifteenth century out of repurposed ancient Egyptian ruins. Bouchard was the first to notice that one of these scavenged blocks bore not only hieroglyphic inscriptions, but also Demotic and Ancient Greek scripts. The slab was eventually named, after the place of its discovery, the Rosetta Stone.

Bouchard was excited about the potential consequences of his find from the beginning. Demotic script had passed out of use by the middle of the fifth century, and there had not been any living readers of it for centuries. Hieroglyphs likewise had been famously—even proverbially—indecipherable for nearly one and a half thousand years. The Rosetta Stone, as Bouchard suspected, contained three translations of the same text, and would eventually prove to be the key to decoding two alphabets that had been forgotten for over a millennium. Initial reaction in the British Isles was muted: the first published account of the Stone in English appears in the March 1802 issue of the *Gentleman's Magazine* and musters only a passing mention, with the observation that it had been captured by British forces under the command of John Hely-Hutchinson.[i] Standard-issue reporting on the spoils of imperial war, however, soon gave way to a frenzied international race to decode the forgotten alphabets—especially the hieroglyphs—and the affair became a matter of international pride. With the publication of Jean-François Champollion's famous *Lettre à M. Dacier* in 1822, which decoded the hieroglyphics, Champollion rapidly became a national hero, while disappointed British Egyptologists led by Thomas Young came to scorn and resent him.

As Michael Allan points out, the notion that the Stone might function as anything more than a *memento mori* reflects a striking development in the history of ideas. Contemporary Egyptians and other Arabic speakers mostly treated the Stone as an opportunity to reflect on the vanity of human wishes, as indeed earlier eighteenth-century writers in France and England might have remained content to do. For writers active in the imperial core in the first years of the

nineteenth century, however, "the Rosetta Stone becomes meaningful not on account of what the object is, but on account of how it is *read*."[ii] Ultimately, the Stone's "entextualization," its transformation from decorative rock into legible record, mattered because it promised to open up whole ways of life that had seemed sealed for a thousand years. Decoding the Stone meant that readers everywhere, at any time, would be able to decipher *all* Coptic and hieroglyphic script, and thus to transform them from mute pictorial decorations into portals onto bygone cultural experiences. In Allan's words, "What is asserted at this moment historically is the birth of a particular modality of reading that [serves] as the key to unlocking an ancient world."[iii]

This dissertation explores the Romantic-era practice of reading places, a practice that neither began nor ended with the Rosetta Stone, but which finds in the Stone's conversion into text a neat microcosm of its stakes and concerns. Romantic place reading literature purported to offer a way of seeing various sites—rocks, old trees, ruins, shattered pottery, and excavated skulls, among others—as physical registers of a long and *legible* history. Often, as in Percy Shelley's "Ozymandias" (1818) or William Wordsworth's "Dream of the Arab" sequence in *The Prelude* (1805), these places were, like the Rosetta Stone, rocks stumbled across by a European in the Orient. But even more frequently, as in the fossils embedded in chalk cliffs and the huge bones excavated from the Sussex countryside in Charlotte Smith's *Beachy Head* (1807), they could be found within the British Isles. These reading places encoded vast histories spanning multiple centuries and continents, revealing rural British sites as nodes in a global cultural network. Ultimately, Romantic practices of locodescriptive reading and representation begin to think through British culture as a contingent and historical product of entangled local, regional, and international networks of material interaction.

The scope and ambition of this tradition of Romantic cultural theory has not yet been fully appreciated. Two hundred years before the so-called "transnational turn" in literary and cultural studies, Romantic writers were insisting upon the importance of thinking of culture beyond the arbitrary limits imposed by using the nation as basic unit. Several generations before Karl Marx's scientific systematization of historical materialism, they were suggesting that physical matter and history needed to be thought together if they were to be thought at all—indeed, that matter could not be accessed independently of human perception and that it always already encoded some form of human labor. Above all, these writers' conviction that *reading* could serve as a heuristic for the recovery and understanding of historical cultural formations positioned interpretive techniques that we now consider integral to literary criticism as the key to unlocking a fuller understanding of the past and the present. In this dissertation, I will recover the shape and influence of this Romantic tradition of theorizing culture, and explore the extent to which its insights might be put to use in our present moment.

II. Learning to Read the Whole Land: Cultural Materialism after Nationalism

One close twentieth- and twenty-first-century critical analogue of Romantic place reading, in its stakes and methodology, is Raymond Williams's "cultural materialism."[iv] Williams's reluctance to provide a brief definition of this term is well known. Hywel Dix has recently provided a useful summary of its main tenets.

> Cultural materialism is the name Raymond Williams gave to a series of theoretical and methodological perspectives that he worked out for the critical analysis of culture. He suggested that there is an important relationship between

> what is happening in a society and the content of the cultural forms produced by it. Moreover, the central proposition of cultural materialism is that this relationship is not merely reflexive or post-dated. Cultural forms and especially literature do not just reflect other social events. The creation of these things is also a material part of the make-up of the society.[v]

I would add, following Kevis Goodman, that Williams also insists upon the impossibility of seeing culture from an external perspective: culture, as a "whole way of life," encompasses and surrounds the would-be cultural critic, suffusing and saturating all attempts to interpret it in real time. In Goodman's words, Romantic writers like Wordsworth anticipate Williams's complex theorization of culture by recognizing that "the past . . . has pockets of history that never reached or just exceed coherent articulation"; these pockets thus "remained . . . 'in solution,' never precipitating into annals or written records."[vi] Williams similarly warns that we must always bear in mind that the past can only be recovered partially and imperfectly.

As Goodman points out, Williams's project was anticipated in several key respects by a variety of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century writers active across the British Isles. It is an ironic coincidence that the writer most responsible for establishing the prevailing narrative that nineteenth-century British cultural theory was chiefly idealist in character, preoccupied with establishing an autochthonous and exclusive sense of Britishness that needed to be protected from corruption, was Williams himself, in his landmark study *Culture and Society* (1958). While Williams locates the roots of a materialist analysis of culture in the mid-nineteenth century, however, I see such analyses taking shape some decades earlier, primarily in novels and poems, rather than within volumes advertising themselves as works of philosophy, criticism, or history.

Cultural materialism has recently fallen from critical favor, in large part because its supposedly holistic approach to theorizing culture was shown to be insufficiently broad in geopolitical and demographic scope by writers like Paul Gilroy and Edward Said in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The critique emerges with the most polemical force in *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack* (1987), where Gilroy likens Williams's work to what he calls the "new racism" of figures like Enoch Powell and Peregrine Worsthorne, arguing that Williams's analysis figures immigration to Britain as a threat to (white) national identity.[vii] This argument set the stage for Gilroy's subsequent critique of cultural studies as implicitly nationalist in *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (1993).

> The intellectual seam in which English cultural studies has positioned itself—through innovative work in the fields of social history and literary criticism—can be indicted here. The statist modalities of Marxist analysis that view modes of material production and political domination as exclusively *national* entities are only one source of this problem. Another factor, more evasive but nonetheless potent for its intangible ubiquity, is a quiet cultural nationalism that pervades the work of some radical thinkers.[viii]

Edward Said, in *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), takes a less national frame of focus, but still highlights blind spots regarding non-white peoples and the British Empire more generally that persist throughout Williams's criticism and theory. For Said, the considerable power of Williams's work is hampered by "a limitation in his feeling that English literature is mainly

about England," with the result that "the imperial experience is quite irrelevant, a theoretical oversight that is the norm in Western cultural and scientific disciplines."[ix]

Though Williams died before Gilroy and Said made their interventions, there is evidence that he had begun to recognize some of the nationalist shortcomings inherent in cultural materialism as early as the late 1970s and early 1980s. Intriguingly, this recognition seems to have manifested itself alongside Williams's developing sense of his own Welsh identity. In the series of interviews he conducted with *New Left Review* later published under the title *Politics and Letters*, Williams is finally asked about his increasingly public embrace of Welshness, especially in his fiction. "Your feelings about Wales, including your own sense of identity, have obviously undergone important changes since you first left Pandy," the interviewers observe. "Could you tell us what has been the history of your relationship to Wales?" Williams's answer is quite long and begins with an account of meeting with several Welsh intellectuals in the 1960s before he arrives at a remarkable formulation.

> Suddenly England, bourgeois England, wasn't my point of reference any more. I was a Welsh European, and both levels felt different. There's still a lot to work through from that, but I can hardly describe the difference of talking and relating now in Wales, with writers and political comrades who are all hard up against it . . . I want the Welsh people—still a radical and cultured people—to defeat, override or bypass bourgeois England.[x]

Williams's response continues, but the crux of the matter has here been touched: "Welsh European, and both levels felt different. There's still a lot to work through from that." The latter phrase is an invitation, an interviewee pleading for a follow-up. The follow-up never comes: Williams's interviewers shift their attention, without comment, to *The Volunteers*, a work, they observe, that is "a very different sort of novel from the Welsh trilogy."[xi]

Forty years later, the exchange seems baffling. Welsh European? Raymond Williams? The doyen of British cultural studies and the intellectual face of the British Left has just abandoned the geographical category of Britain and the nation-state of the United Kingdom in favor of a strange combination of local and international identities. Soon thereafter, he proceeded to join Plaid Cymru, the national political party of Wales. Invited to probe this striking about-face, his interviewers muster only uninterested silence.

Part of this silence derives, no doubt, from a certain exhaustion felt among some members of the New Left towards the cultural nationalism that was increasingly enticing leftist writers like Williams in the late 1970s.[xii] Perry Anderson, lead questioner throughout *Politics and Letters* and rapidly emerging as the leading British Trotskyist of his generation, would likely have had very little patience for this kind of thing.[xiii] Part of the interviewers' lack of interest likely also derived from Williams embracing *Welshness* in particular: Welshness, often associated with Welsh nationalism, has a long history of being portrayed by other British writers as the quixotic and hobbyhorsical aspiration of a small cadre of Welsh intellectuals. A representative example of these attitudes is Fred Inglis's downright offensive characterization of Williams in a biography which appeared at the surprisingly late date of 1995.

> His lecturing manner, 'putting his head back and speaking' (as Eagleton put it) in that strongly and rhythmically undulating way, a way close at times to

> incantation, with his eyes rolled upwards in his head, the deeply incised and geological landscape of his face kin to the bards and seers of his people.[xiv]

Inglis acknowledges that he disputed the importance of Wales and Welshness in Williams's thought with Williams when the latter was still alive, and continues to see the Williams's late adoption of Welsh identity as a product of anger alone.

> There is a hatred in this raw edge of Williams's dominant voices, an unguarded hatred of what has been made in and of Britain since the muffled optimisms of *The Long Revolution*. It surely explains his late-come Welshness, as he moved towards that little group of cheerfully self-mocking Welsh historians led by Gwyn Williams and Dai Smith, and their sometimes comic, always serious politics in Plaid Cymru.[xv]

To the New Left, Williams's late embrace of his Welsh identity was to be treated as half a joke, or as a puzzling eccentricity. Gilroy and Said evidently took the matter more seriously, though for Gilroy "Welsh European" is likely to have underscored further the whiteness of Williams's political and personal allegiances, and one even senses an arched pair of eyebrows underlying the more diplomatic Said's brief discussion of the *Politics and Letters* exchange.[xvi] But the term "Welsh European," with its deliberate excision of national identity, is important evidence that Williams was moving to displace the primacy of the modern nation-state in the formation of cultural identity.

The key to understanding how Williams might have revised cultural materialist analysis in such a way as to decenter nationality lies in two bodies of his later work. The first of these is critical, and comprises several essays on Welsh culture that appeared in various periodicals throughout the 1980s as well as *Towards 2000* (1984), his rarely cited final nonfiction book. There, Williams contemptuously refers to Margaret Thatcher's United Kingdom by the phonetic spelling "the Yookay," decrying it as a faceless, centralized technocracy wholly disconnected from the historical and material habitus of mid-eighties Britain. He also explicitly critiques his own early work as too preoccupied with the category of the nation: "Any such 'national' perspective is too narrow, even for the understanding of the nation concerned, and . . . this kind of narrowness has come to be a major component of the problems" facing cultural materialism.[xvii]

The second, and perhaps the more intriguing, case is Williams's later fiction, in which he becomes obsessed with place reading as a literary device. An exemplary instance occurs in Williams's third novel, *The Fight for Manod* (1979), in which his fictional alter ego Matthew Price stands on a Welsh mountain and recalls reading the landscape near his home village of Glynmawr (a thinly-disguised version of Williams's own Welsh hometown, Pandy).

> He remembered now, as from a different existence, the boy on the mountain, looking down at Glynmawr, seeing the history of his country in the shapes of the land. He saw the meeting of valleys, and England blue in the distance. On the high ground to the east were the Norman castles, and the disputed land in their shadow. On the limestone scarp to the south was the line of the ironmasters, the different frontier: on the near side the valleys still green and wooded, on the far side blackened with collieries and slagheaps and grey huddled terraces. That

> history had been clear, at the moment of going away. A defining history, which he had managed to write, and which in turn had become his profession.[xviii]

Here the land itself becomes a physical text disclosing "a defining history" of a specific place. It is tempting to read this passage, which uses place reading as a metaphor for Williams's alter-ego's signature professional accomplishment (an exceptionally well-received history that combined economic and cultural analysis), as biographical—if place reading emblematizes Price's magnum opus, does it also emblematize Williams's?

There is significant evidence that it does. In a creative essay titled "Black Mountains" (1981), Williams channels the voice of the prehistoric inhabitants of the area in which he grew up in order to declare that place reading is the key to retrieving lost cultures and ways of life.

> We have no ready way to explain ourselves to you. Our language has gone utterly, except for the place name which you now say as Ewyas. The names by which we knew ourselves are entirely unknown to you. We left many marks on the land but the only marks that you can easily recognize are the long stone graves of our dead. If you wish to know us you must learn to read the whole land.[xix]

As was the case with the Rosetta Stone, place reading here emerges as a way to recapture, even if only partially, lost structures of feeling and whole ways of life. The ancient cultural history of the Black Mountains cannot be accessed directly ("our language is gone utterly . . . the names by which we knew ourselves are entirely unknown to you"); it must be recovered by *reading* "marks" left on "the whole land."

Williams's final creative work, unfinished at the time of his death, was an attempt to figure the Black Mountains as a sort of palimpsest upon which it would be possible to read the traces left by intersecting local, regional, national, and international networks of physical, economic, and cultural exchange. *People of the Black Mountains*, as the monumental project came to be titled, was intended to narrate the lives of ordinary persons inhabiting the same space over the sweep of many thousands of years. At least as early as 1979, when asked about the work by the interviewers at *New Left Review*, Williams was thinking of it in these terms.

> People can be very blank about their own history; the physical stones, ruins, landmarks, names which represent the continuity of it are quite often incomprehensible to them. The point of the novel would be to show that these connections had been broken, but hopefully one would be showing that in this process of disconnection certain things can be reconnected.[xx]

Unsurprisingly, *People of the Black Mountains* begins with an extended episode of place reading.[xxi] The possibilities that treating places like texts opens might well be what underlies Williams's late insistence that, despite earlier Marxist orthodoxy that "the proletariat had no country," "a new theory of socialism must centrally involve *place*."[xxii] Above all, though, Williams was certain that place reading was a *creative* counterpart to the critical project of cultural materialism: "history which is both recorded and unrecorded can only find its way to personal substance if it then becomes a novel, becomes a story."[xxiii]

Williams, of course, did not invent all this himself. There is a long and rich tradition of place reading literature in Britain dating back to the Romantic period. And, as Williams came to

realize, poems and novels centered on the device could serve as an analogue and a complement to his critical project. Romantic cultural studies, in Williams's early work, appears both crude and almost exclusively idealist: the conceptions of Britishness he ascribes to Edmund Burke, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and John Ruskin in *Culture and Society*, for example, are wholly uninterested in the material minutiae of the past and instead preoccupied with conceptions of timelessness and purity. But there was a materialist countertradition of cultural theory that ran through the period, drawing on, confronting, and informing the idealist mainstream that Williams traces. Williams can hardly be blamed for missing this countertradition, since it was hiding in plain sight, in the best-selling and most popular imaginative literature of the period—much the same literature that mid-twentieth-century literary critics were hastily dismissing in favor of a new, introspective Romantic canon.

This dissertation focuses on works preoccupied with theorizing what British culture and British cultural identity were, and how they had come to take their present shape. Many of those works attained considerable audiences in the Romantic period—audiences occasionally much larger than what contemporary criticism might lead us to believe. If we really care about what and how Romantic subjects thought, we must read what they read, not least because many of the most widely read works of the Romantic period—works like Walter Scott's verse romances or Sidney Owenson's *The Wild Irish Girl* (1806)—insist that understanding past cultural formations necessitates reading popular literature of the time period in question, especially when that literature has more recently fallen into neglect. What I am after here is something similar to what Romantic place reading literature itself was after: the recovery and reanimation of a seemingly closed-off cultural tradition, one that often necessitates paying careful attention to the kinds of texts that we have been trained, institutionally, to overlook. As these texts warned, a failure to engage with evanescent pockets of the past will stymie any attempt to think through the present.

If, as critics like Bruce Robbins, Geoff Dyer, and Tristram Wolff among others have recently suggested, "Cultural Studies is staging a comeback" in our own historical present, then it must do so on the transnational terms opened by writers like Gilroy and Said, and gestured at by the Welsh European Williams.[xxiv] The old cultural studies—the cultural studies of the red brick school, of Williams and E.P. Thompson and Richard Hoggart—must be superseded by a new approach, one that transcends the category of the nation and articulates a way of thinking through even "British" culture as a global product. An integral component of that project, Williams recognized, must be the rethinking of that most reactionary and "Romantic" (in the pejorative sense) of categories, place. Once we recognize that a great deal of putatively localist Romantic writing was not preoccupied with burrowing away from a global horizon and into an ethnically sanitized neo-pastoral hiding place, we can begin to reclaim the period and genre's remarkable contributions to cultural theory.

III. Globalizing Romantic Localism

In the years around 1800, tea became a fixture on dinner tables across Britain. Walter Scott took tea every evening before going to sleep; William and Dorothy Wordsworth were obsessed with procuring their preferred variety. By 1830, it "was regarded as a necessity": "families that were too poor to buy it begged once-used tea-leaves from neighbors, or even simulated its colour by pouring boiling water over a burnt crust."[xxv] Despite its present-day reputation as the most stereotypically and quintessentially English of activities, as Lisa Lowe among others has pointed out, tea-drinking was a luxury of the imperial core, facilitated by the global extent and military

and economic dominance of the British Empire.[xxvi] Each cup of tea that Romantic writers drank was a tidy microcosm of the "intimacies of four continents": in the early nineteenth-century, tea leaves were imported from southern India and sugar from slave plantations in the Caribbean or the southern United States; the most prized porcelain tea-cups came from southern China, while teaspoons were forged with silver extracted from mines in South America and Africa; lace tablecloths were mass-produced using American cotton, and heavy oaken tea-tables were increasingly made from Canadian lumber. To sit at the tea-table was to sit at the intersection of all the corners of the world, and Romantic subjects were more aware of the cosmopolitan nature of the practice than we might suspect: the Welsh poet, prophet, journeyman mason, and sometime petty merchant Iolo Morganwg, for example, advertised sugar sold in his Bristol shop as "Uncontaminated with Human Gore"—that is, procured from non-slaveholding plantations.[xxvii]

Romantic place reading literature persistently traces similar confluences throughout the landscapes of the British Isles. Picturesque tourists in Wales, ostensibly there to celebrate uniquely Welsh beauty-spots, instead prized those places' resemblance to others in Scotland, Ireland, France, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Italy, Greece, the Levant, the Orient, India, southern Africa, North America, Central America, and modern-day Bolivia. In *The Bridal of Triermain* (1813), Scott populates a medieval Arthurian castle nestled into remote St. John's in the Vale, Cumbria, with half-nude African women holding leashed "Lybian tygers," Peruvian maids bearing palmetto baskets full of jewels, beautiful seductresses from "Candahar" (Kandahar, modern Afghanistan), and nationally costumed women from France, Spain, and Germany. In *The Wild Irish Girl*, Sydney Owenson presents an Ireland shot through with traces of London, Greece, Italy, the Kamchatka Peninsula, the West Indies, Egypt, Ohio, Phoenicia, Greenland, the Arabian desert, Tibet, Israel, India, and Peru. Even Wordsworth, in classic English pastorals like "Michael," repeatedly expands the scope of his remote Lake District settings "beyond the seas."[xxviii]

To read this body of purportedly localist literature is to recognize how intensely aware Romantic writers were of the correspondences and interconnections of British places with other sites scattered across the globe. In his recent book *Natures in Translation* (2017), Alan Bewell makes a similar observation: British natures were no longer, by the turn of the nineteenth century, exclusively or autochthonously British, and visiting the Royal Gardens at Kew, for example, meant occupying a new, strangely global sort of place, one full of plants native to North America, Australia, Africa, and Asia jostling against one another.[xxix] I would question the extent to which such spaces were *truly* new—Bewell alludes dubiously to a prelapsarian period when "natures . . . had previously been restricted to a single locality and understood in local terms"—given Romantic place reading literature's preoccupation with establishing even seemingly remote and isolated places as sites of ancient transnational cultural exchange, but he is certainly correct to suggest that Romantic writers were fascinated by the connections between places and skeptical that any place could maintain a static identity across history.[xxx] While Bewell takes a more explicitly ecocritical frame of reference than I will pursue, his insights into writers' encounters with rural places often overlap with my own: he points out, for example, that the American travel writer William Bartram saw "nature less as a symbol than as a lens for reading human history," that Wordsworth "learned from Bartram how to read the life of human beings in the natures that they left behind" and eventually came to "see nature as a historical document," and that Romantic-era subjects began to see natural sites as "palimpsests," written and overwritten by the people who moved along and through them.[xxxi]

Reading is indeed the correct metaphor, for what is at stake in this body of Romantic writing is a transcendence of the merely superficial, a deeper kind of interpretation than the aesthetic appreciation typically associated with the period's burgeoning landscape tourism industry. Such a model of meaning-making echoes both classical biblical hermeneutics and earlier eighteenth-century theories of literary reading: oft-reprinted works like John Mason's *Essay on Elocution* (1748) and Hugh Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (1783) had figured poetry reading, unlike other kinds of reading, as necessitating a certain struggle with form. Poetry's "sense," or meaning, these and other writers argued, was partially obscured by the complications of form, even as the presence of formal devices like meter, rhyme, alliteration, and so on were the structural precondition for poetry being recognized as poetry in the first place. In other words, the act of reading poetry entailed a paradoxical grappling: sense needed to be extracted from the obfuscations imposed by poetic form, even though poetic sense inhered in the very difficulties that form created.[xxxii] Place reading, as a practice, demands a similar sort of wrestling: the folds, wrinkles, tears, fractures, and smoothed patches generated by the interactions of humans and animals with the surface of reading places both obscure and encode meaning. Obscure, because these distressing actions wear the reading place down into either a naturalized, vanishing component of a seemingly inhuman scene (as in the case, for example, of a crumbling sheepfold half-erected amidst scattered stones) or a cliched sort of *memento mori* (as in the case of an effaced and exposed old castle dungeon). Encode, because a careful attention to the deformed surface of a place retrieves the story both of what it once was and of how it came to take its present shape.

It is no accident that pedagogical texts exerted such a pronounced influence, for one of Romantic place reading literature's most pronounced obsessions is with how to *instruct* readers of novels and poems to apply what we would now recognize as literary-critical reading techniques to places, and so to produce meaning from abstract marks left upon physical sites.[xxxiii] Places could be read, but they could also be read incorrectly, and it was important to extract the right sort of information from their initially impassive surfaces. There was great diversity of opinion as regarded what sort of insight place reading should produce. In pre-1800 Wales and in nineteenth-century Ireland, for example, a large number of antiquarian writers contended that reading correctly entailed recognizing the scars of English colonial violence; in Scott's wartime Scotland and Wordsworth's postwar Lake District, proper reading necessitated the acceptance and celebration of a commonly held national cultural identity. Writers also disagreed about the extent to which past cultural formations could be recovered. Scott was among the most optimistic, building vivid and richly detailed portraits of past life around even the most worn-down and cryptic of reading places, while Irish writers like Owenson insisted upon the corroding force of English colonization, which made the ancient past all but unknowable.

For these writers, anything that possessed spatial extension, a(n even theoretically) knowable history, and a tangible physical surface could potentially serve as a reading place.[xxxiv] For the purposes of this dissertation, however, reading places are not legible in the literal sense of the word. If, for example, one can read without much difficulty letters engraved upon a stone, then there is no mystery as to what the site commemorates: it tells its own story in a straightforward manner. If those letters are effaced, or inscribed in an inscrutable manner (as was the case with the Rosetta Stone), however, then a different, more literary kind of reading is necessary in order to liberate the history lurking beneath or within the site's blank or illegible surface. Wordsworth, in particular, is interested both in things that should be legible, but are not—as in the bloated and waterlogged copy of Voltaire's *Candide* in Book II of *The Excursion*,

or the faded epitaphs in the churchyard in Book V of the same poem—and in things that should not be legible, but are, like Michael's "green Valleys," which "*like a book* preserv'd the memory" of his actions among them.[xxxv] Again, some writers were more selective than others in suggesting how frequently one might encounter reading places. Scott, eager to portray all of Great Britain as congealing the materials necessary for the construction of a commonly held national culture, is especially generous: virtually every named place in his bestselling verse romances can be read (and indeed is, in long antiquarian footnotes subtending the poems proper). Wordsworth, especially early in his career, is rather more selective; his Lake District only occasionally discloses glimpses of rapidly vanishing ways of life.

In every case of Romantic place reading, however, a place is more than a mere collection of local detritus to be sublimated in favor of a timeless ideal. Some recent critical treatments, following M.H. Abrams's influential account of Romanticism's "natural supernaturalism," have suggested that Romanticism's master trope is a two-stage piercing-through of local detail and concomitant accession to universal truth.[xxxvi] In her 2010 study *Local Attachments*, for example, Fiona Stafford argues that Romanticism was "a new kind of literature that discovered universal meaning in local truth."[xxxvii] But this is perhaps truer of earlier eighteenth-century poetry, like that of Alexander Pope, James Thomson, and Thomas Gray, among others. These writers' locodescriptive poetry tends to use natural description as a vehicle for the introduction of didactic apothegms and assertions of timeless truths—Thomson's *Spring* (1728), for example, combines long descriptive passages of considerable detail with celebrations of a vaguely described class of the rural poor who purportedly love to labor, portrayals of the remote past as a Golden Age of plenty, and flurries of personification meant to elucidate a universal moral code.[xxxviii] Gray's "Ode on the Spring" begins with careful description of a place where an "oak's thick branches stretch / A broader browner shade," only to make that shade the site of abstract reflections: "How vain the ardour of the Crowd, / How low, how little are the Proud, / How indigent the Great!"[xxxix] John Dyer's painstaking enumeration of the peculiarities of the Welsh countryside in "Grongar Hill" (1726)—including the "Mossie Cells" near "*Towy*'s Flood" and "Old Castles on the Cliffs"—rapidly gives way to generalizations about "the Vanity of State," "the Smile of Fate," and so on.[xl] While each of these poems devotes some energy to sketching the contours of local detail, that detail is ultimately subordinate to a broader moral purpose, and local variety is chiefly valuable insofar as it provides opportunity for comment on the diverse ways that universally applicable truths manifest themselves. Romantic place descriptions, by contrast, tend to be far less interested in immediately pivoting from the particular to the universal; in the later tradition, there is generally more patience for the sort of thing that Samuel Johnson impatiently dismissed as "number[ing] the streaks of a tulip."[xli]

It is interesting to note, however, that the earlier eighteenth-century tradition nevertheless anticipates the transnational dimensions of Romantic localism. Pope's "Windsor-Forest" (1713), for example, is not content to remain in Windsor: the place both calls to mind the hallowed sites of Greek mythology and, more intriguingly, anticipates the translocation of its timber across the world in the form of imperial warships:

> Not proud *Olympus* yields a nobler Sight,
> Tho' Gods assembled grace his tow'ring Height,
> Than what more humble Mountains offer here,
> Where, in their Blessings, all those Gods appear.
> See *Pan* with Flocks, with Fruits *Pomona* crown'd,

Here blushing *Flora* paints th'enamel'd Ground,
Here *Ceres*' Gifts in waving Prospect stand . . .
Thy Trees, fair *Windsor*! now shall leave their Woods,
And half thy Forests rush into my Floods,
Bear *Britain*'s thunder, and her Cross display,
To the bright Regions of the rising Day;
Tempt Icy Seas, where scarce the Waters roll,
Where clearer Flames glow round the frozen Pole;
Or under Southern Skies exalt their Sails,
Led by new Stars, and borne by spicy Gales![xlii]

If the Romantic period witnessed a rise in the transportability of plants and ecosystems, as Bewell follows Theresa M. Kelley in arguing, then they had at least been recognized as *capable* of movement for some time prior.[xliii] Charlotte Smith's *Beachy Head* (1807) exaggerates the impulse to read global correspondences in local places to its logical extreme: in an attempt to describe the East Sussex landmark Beachy Head, Smith soon finds within it both vast extensions of historical time and traces of the whole world, including Sri Lanka, "Scandinavia," and "Afric's forest glooms and tawny sands."[xliv] The articulation of Beachy Head's constituent parts soon becomes a literally unspeakable task—Smith adopts and discards the voices of eighteenth-century prospect poet, didactic moralist, ornithologist, botanist, geologist, local folklorist, micro-historian, and more as the poem spirals into an *avant la lettre* nominalist deconstruction of empiricist epistemology.[xlv]

If, as critics have held since the middle of the twentieth century, Romantic writing is typically suspicious of universal truisms and eager to embrace and celebrate local difference, then, I would add, it is often also wary of the impulse to imagine local places as entirely untethered from a broader global context. Saree Makdisi's pathbreaking book *Romantic Imperialism* (1998) establishes the desire latent in much Romantic writing, especially the early poetry of Wordsworth, for an escape from the ravages of imperialism and globalization.[xlvi] Romantic place reading literature, however, reveals local places to be *not* womblike shelters from an ominous, looming, all-consuming Universal Empire, but rather discrete nodes in a global network of competing and mutually informing processes of exchange. This literature attempts to stake out a position that synthesizes and transforms both a reductive localism and the eighteenth century's expansive universalism.

If we are to account for the understudied influence this tradition exercised within Romantic culture more broadly, then we must also resist the polemical allure of works like Manu Samriti Chander's 2017 study *Brown Romantics*.[xlvii] While Chander is certainly correct to deplore the overwhelming whiteness of the Romantic canon and the reluctance of Romanticist scholars to engage with writing from the imperial periphery, his call for a disciplinary pivot away from British writing altogether would entail throwin the baby out with the bathwater. Chander follows Katie Trumpener's *Bardic Nationalism* (1998) by seeing Romantic poetry and the formation of national identity as inextricably interwoven projects. The Brown Romantics, Chander argues, were nineteenth-century non-European "poets whose poetic, philosophical, and political commitments were informed by the British Romantics [and who] labored to organize local readers into a collective whole, anticipating the rise of a reading nation that would not be fully realized in these poets' lifetimes"; by exerting "pressure against the development of a national literature," the British Empire made it impossible for these poets to "unite [their] readers

into a cohesive nation."[xlviii] Trumpener frequently re-creates the allegedly maniacal Romantic focus on national cultural identities through playful formulations that threaten to tip into semantic satiation:

> From the mid-eighteenth century onward, nationalist antiquarians in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales had developed a historical model of national literary life which stressed the primacy of national institutions rather than the imagination of individual writers.[xlix]

Trumpener proceeds to argue that the imperial core of the British Empire constrained any and all peripheral attempts to establish independent national identities. She also posits a parallel advancement from nationalistic to imperialistic thought within British *literature*, where the generic dominance of the national tale gave way to that of the historical novel.[l] As these and other postcolonial critics point out, modern nation formation (and inchoate national literatures) both emerges from and responds to the geopolitical logic of imperial capital—nation, as political and literary construct, emerges as the antithesis of empire, and the local becomes a wellspring of anti-global resistance.

This is a persuasive and compelling account, and I am not contesting the existence of the struggles towards a national literature that Chander and Trumpener trace. I mean only to add that these struggles were not univocal: there was another, contemporary tradition of theorizing culture that complicated and often chafed against the limitations imposed by the category of the nation, and it was vibrant, popular, and influential. That tradition has begun to be articulated in the writings of a host of current critics, comprising writers active both within the fields of postcolonial criticism and in the work of specialists in Scottish and Irish Romanticism. What this project shares with that body of work is a conviction that the Romantic conception of the categories of the local and the global were more complex than is currently recognized, and that part of what is needed now in Romanticist criticism is not a pivot away from the local to the global, but rather a recognition that, for many Romantic writers, the local was never *not* global to begin with.

IV. Materialist Historicisms and Historical Materialism

Part of the British Romantic turn towards a transnational localism was driven, as Kelley and Bewell show, by a newfound ecological consciousness of the mobility and translatability of plants and ecosystems. Part, too, was driven by discoveries facilitated by imperial expansion—Sir William Jones's grammatical studies of Sanskrit and translations of Vedic poetry and philosophy, for example, prompted his fellow Welshman Iolo Morganwg to recognize, or believe he recognized, a correspondence between Hindu and ancient Welsh beliefs, and thus to argue that the ancient Welsh were in fact displaced Brahmins who had migrated to the British Isles from India.[li] Finally, part of this turn also derived from place reading literature's characteristic rhetorical appeals to the material world as evidence for its hypotheses: as Marx would later show, it is difficult to limit materialist accounts of cultural development to the boundaries of a single nation.

A reader in the early twenty-first century is justified in feeling some trepidation and exhaustion at the prospect of slogging through yet another intricate and carefully defined new materialism; indeed, as writers like Alberto Toscano and Marjorie Levinson have recently

pointed out, "materialism" has become one of the great empty critical catchwords of our time.[lii] The reader of this dissertation will find no such systematic account here. I resist systematization in part because the authors I examine resisted it. Each of the cultural materialisms sketched in the chapters to follow attempts to think the historical development of culture as in some way dependent upon the "material" world—but what each author means by that latter phrase differs, occasionally a great deal. Indeed, much of the work of this dissertation will lie in exploring what Romantic writers throughout the British Isles meant when they invoked the material world as evidence for their narratives about the historical development of local and national cultures. Beyond a general consensus that physical matter cannot be thought of as possessing an existence independent of human perception and labor, the materialist accounts of culture in the chapters below are quite diverse.

For Scott and the Welsh antiquarian poet Richard Llwyd, for example, matter was not merely or solely physical, but charged with a destabilizing and impossible-to-pin-down historical indeterminacy. For Scott, the unknowable history humming within the physical contours of the material world is rarely threatening. In the case of the ruins of Egglestone Abbey near Durham, which Scott reads in his verse romance *Rokeby* (1813), it is downright trivial:

> The ruins of this abbey, or priory, (for Tanner calls it the former, and Leland the latter,) are beautifully situated upon the angle formed by a little dell called Thorsgill, at its junction with the Tees. A good part of the religious house is still in some degree habitable, but the church is in ruins.[liii]

Here material, physical specificity (the ruins are "situated upon the angle formed by a little dell called Thorsgill, at its junction with the Tees") and historical indeterminacy go hand in hand—as Scott cheerfully observes, the ruins function as a sort of Schrödinger's Cat: because it is impossible to know if they once constituted an abbey or a priory, we must be content to think of them as both at once.

Llwyd can be considerably more anxious about this sort of thing. In a footnote to his long antiquarian poem *Beaumaris Bay* (1800), for example, he appends a revisionary local history to the phrase "Courda's meads":

> At a distance of about two miles westward [from Llangoed], in the church of *Llan Iestyn*, the antiquary will find a precious morsel; an antient tombstone of curious workmanship, and generally supposed to have been that of *Iestyn*, the patron saint; but it is evidently the produce of a much later period. The figure of a man, depicted in a sacerdotal habit, the pastoral staff, and other official insignia, denote it to have been erected to the memory of some dignified ecclesiastic; and, though much defaced, the words *Gryffydd ap Gwilym* are still legible.[liv]

For Llwyd, the consequences of place reading—of really attending to material evidence—are rather more severe than they are for Scott: the tomb in the center of the fourteenth-century St. Iestyn's Church belongs not to the church's patron saint, who lived and died in the sixth or seventh century, but to someone else entirely. As is the case with Scott, the fastidious location and description of the material dimensions of a reading place unleashes a destabilizing history, though here the history does more than insist upon the conjunction of mutually contradictory truths—it actively discredits earlier historical narratives. The unsettling implication of this

discovery, and of other similar discoveries scattered throughout the footnotes to *Beaumaris Bay*, is that the physical contours of Wales threaten to disclose tangible evidence that contravenes established history.

The poetry of Scott and Llwyd most clearly exemplifies the influence of eighteenth-century antiquarianism on Romantic place reading. Writers like James Chandler, Peter Fritzsche, and Mark Salber Phillips have argued that the era we now refer to as the Romantic period witnessed the rise of a newly historicized sense of self and society.[lv] Antiquarianism was especially pioneering in its insistence that everyday materials like old walls, broken jugs, and declivities in fields—the kind of matter that could be touched or held in one's hands—bore evidence that necessitated re-thinking received historical narratives.[lvi] The revisionary potential inherent in thinking history by means of (as well as in) physical objects led writers like William Godwin, in his *Essay on Sepulchres* (1809), to suggest that the associative force of specific places and simple monuments far exceeded the "cold and uncertain record of words." For Godwin, the "spirit of antiquarian research" that characterized his own era, with its insistence on precise observation of the physical contours of place, would ensure that monuments to the dead would be placed on their exact burial sites and thus maximize the monuments' associative power.[lvii] In his 1797 essay "Of History and Romance," Godwin had deplored the macrohistorical scope of Whig histories that treated of "mankind in a mass": such a "history of a nation might be written . . . entirely in terms of abstraction, and without descending so much as to name one of those individuals to which the nation is composed."[lviii] The microhistorical focus of matter-obsessed antiquarianism, on the other hand, was the key to unlocking a fuller and richer understanding of the past.

Godwin's great political and theoretical opponent Edmund Burke, by contrast, deplored antiquarian attention to what he called "the shell and husk of history," and preferred instead a more didactic historical approach, one that conceived of national identity as something ideal and independent of material exigencies.[lix] I treat Burke's objections to Romantic materialist historicisms at some length in Chapter Two, since his argument for an idealist British history—and indeed an idealist conception of Britishness—exercised greater influence on later nineteenth-century cultural theorists eager to dismiss the transnational localism endemic to Romantic place reading literature. For Burke as for the rest of the writers comprising this tradition, the purity of British identity needed to be protected from corrupting foreign influence, and antiquarian dabbling with decontextualized historical relics threatened to explode popular trust in the sort of triumphal Whig historiography that they felt was necessary to ensure the continued commercial and geopolitical preeminence of the United Kingdom.

For the most part, however, this dissertation will linger with writers who felt that appeals to material evidence were rhetorically irresistible, even when such appeals forced them to articulate more nuanced accounts of locality and cultural identity than had previously been felt necessary. Let us return to the "enormous bones" in Charlotte Smith's *Beachy Head* for a representative example. Smith reads the bones, unearthed in 1740 in the Sussex countryside, as belonging to ancient Roman war elephants—or perhaps prehistoric megafauna like mastodons or woolly mammoths, which had recently been discovered in North America—rather than to giants. Her recourse to a transnational history (the bones have come to England from "Afric's forest glooms and tawny sands") clarifies that such modes of thinking had become more compelling than earlier, less scientific and materially rigorous ascriptions of the bones to autochthonous or antediluvian beings like "giants dwelling on the hills."[lx] To be clear: there were still, in the Romantic period, writers willing to argue in earnest that bones like these belonged to the biblical

Nephilim, but the widespread tendency of place reading literature to reach for and uncover more earthly, transnational explanations of local phenomena demonstrates that such older models were in the process of being superseded.[lxi]

As was the case for eighteenth-century antiquarians, the tangible, objective existence of such reading places demanded further thought—earlier seventeenth- and eighteenth-century dismissals of difficult-to-explain matter as mere *lusus naturae*, or "tricks of nature," no longer really held water.[lxii] Romantic writers, in the course of thinking through the material evidence congealed within the physical dimensions of places, frequently found it necessary to trace local phenomena back to global sources, whether they were fossils in chalk cliffs, Scottish dungeons bearing Arabic names and architectural features, or apparently Carthaginian swords retrieved from Irish bogs.[lxiii] Some writers were willing to use these material reading places quite loosely as the raw material for the construction of elaborate counter-histories. Iolo Morganwg, for example, acknowledged that "facts are stubborn things," but saw no problem with putting such facts to work in elaborate forged counter-histories: authenticating evidence, he realized, could be stripped of context and made to serve various narrative (and political) ends. Still others saw the absence of material evidence as a peculiar and counterintuitive kind of proof all its own. For Sydney Owenson, the material blankness of Ireland was proof positive of the existence of what could not otherwise be demonstrated: in *The Wild Irish Girl*, the greatness and richness of ancient Irish culture is attested, oddly, by the dearth of evidence it has left behind, since only a truly magnificent culture would need to have been erased so thoroughly at English hands.

Despite their heterogeneous definitions of the material world, all of these writers share a willingness to appeal to it as an authenticating gesture and to use it as a rhetorical flourish. Their persistent association of matter with history, and of history with matter, along with their shared eagerness to explain culture as a product of a material history, anticipate Marx's scientific systematization of historical materialism in *Capital* (1867). Hence my decision to call the shared set of assertions underlying much Romantic place reading literature "materialist historicisms": many of the pieces of Marx's historical materialism are here, though they have not been fully assembled quite yet. This dissertation concludes with an examination of the shift from Romantic materialist historicisms to the science of historical materialism, and of some of the consequences of that shift in popular conceptions of materialism, Romanticism, and localism.

V. Chapter Summaries

This dissertation tells a story in two parts. The first part begins in Wales, England's oldest colony, where the sheer scale and speed at which the landscape was transformed in the years 1780-1830 spawned exceptionally plastic conceptions of place and history. My first chapter, "The Other Within," demonstrates the integral role that Wales played in establishing hegemonic ways of interpreting landscape and history throughout the long eighteenth century. I begin by showing how William Gilpin's practice of picturesque view-making, first conceptualized in south Wales, incorporates colonial logics of extraction and improvement that were emerging throughout the industrializing Welsh countryside. Turning to two native responses to the new British obsession with Welsh history and culture, I demonstrate that at the same time as the Welsh landscape enabled English writers to fantasize about the productive and profitable manipulation of subjugated places, it also generated discourses of resistance to imperial power. Foremost among these is Iolo Morganwg's "philosophy of history," which articulates a dialectical engagement with the history of English oppression that promises to open onto a new,

Welsh world order. Richard Llwyd's long topographical poem *Beaumaris Bay* (1800) uses antiquarian place reading to unsettle Whig historiographical accounts of the English domination of Wales, even as it struggles to render Welsh landscapes classically beautiful and Welsh history politically coherent. The chapter argues that, despite scholarly neglect over the last two centuries, Romantic Wales was a crucial testing-ground in the development both of techniques of colonial control and of practices of anti-imperial resistance.

My second chapter, "A Tale of Two Skulls," focuses on Irish Gothic, a genre that makes Ireland's history of colonial violence horrifyingly legible. Beginning with a consideration of Edmund Burke's emphatic but little-studied contempt for antiquarian history, I show that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century antiquarians portrayed Irish landscapes as saturated with traces of exploitation and dominance—a legible public record of colonial violence that kept threatening to erupt into the Romantic present. In *The Wild Irish Girl*, Sydney Owenson compares the Irish landscape to a dizzying array of British overseas colonies and strategic holdings, so that Ireland functions as a dark mirror of insatiable colonial ambition. I then read James Hardiman's narrative of the destruction of the skull of the eighteenth-century Irish bard Carolan at the hands of "a northern Orangeman" in 1796 as an instance of the colonial erasure of native archives. Finally, the chapter turns to Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu's novel *The House by the Churchyard* (1863), which also recovers a history of colonial violence from a disinterred Irish skull. The novel uses the emblem of a crushed and trepanned—but crucially still legible—skull to figure colonial violence as seeping from Irish history up through the Irish soil and into vengeful Irish bodies.

Part One of the dissertation, then, seeks to establish how place reading was used to resist British imperialist objectives in the Celtic periphery. For writers in Wales and Ireland, reading the land meant discovering disquieting information that threatened to interrupt and corrupt imperial protocols of establishing a controlled monoculture. Part Two, by contrast, examines programs of place reading that sought to use the technique to consolidate British national and imperial identity in the face of external and internal threats. In the process, I shift from chapters that examine a range of authors to chapters focusing on a Scot, Walter Scott, and an Englishman, William Wordsworth. I do not mean to imply, of course, that all English and Scottish writers enlisted place reading to fortify a centralized British national identity—John Clare, Charlotte Smith, and James Hogg, for example, all used the device for quite the opposite purpose—nor do I wish to suggest that all Welsh or Irish writers were interested in extracting destabilizing histories from Welsh and Irish places. The outsized influence of Scott and Wordsworth upon later nineteenth-century literary and cultural-theoretical traditions, however, demands longer and more considered engagement. Scott and Wordsworth came to be seen as the most representative and influential writers of their era, and any account of the development of nineteenth-century localism and cultural studies needs to reckon with their work at length.

Chapter Three, "Walter Scott's Transnational Localism, 1806-1815," argues that Scott's immensely successful but now neglected verse romances articulate a collectivism that accounts both for their unprecedented wartime popularity and for their sudden fall from favor in the postwar period. By casting rural British landscapes as virtual storehouses whose physical features register evidence of a common heroic past that belongs equally to all Britons, the verse romances both defuse intranational difference and reassure their readers that the nation could withstand Napoleonic invasion. Although their rousing collectivism struck a chord across class lines in the uncertain days of the Napoleonic Wars, intensified class warfare in the postwar moment generated deep skepticism about their morality and social utility. As the threat of

invasion subsided, the poems' nationalistic promises became less urgently appealing even as their economic implications became newly uncomfortable. Against critical claims that Scott outgrew writing poetry, I argue that his shift from verse to prose romance owed as much to changing geopolitical conditions as it did to his artistic development. While Scott is often cast as an inventor of national tradition and of cultural Scottishness more generally, I show that much of his international appeal was due to his unparalleled ability to reveal Scottish culture as a contingent product of global and hyperlocal forces (military invasions, small-time smuggling, climate change, and traditional agricultural practices, for instance), and to make the retrieval of these occluded histories pleasurable to diverse and far-flung audiences.

My last chapter, "The Global Parish: Anglicanism, Localism, Empire," examines nineteenth-century debates over the cultural function of the Anglican Church at home and abroad. I begin by showing how William Wordsworth's *The Excursion* makes a Church-guided program of monitorial pedagogy invented by a Scotsman and applied in India (Andrew Bell's "Madras System") integral to the construction of an English national culture. For Wordsworth, unifying the nation entails teaching the populace to read, both literally and figuratively, for it is only once *The Excursion*'s local places become historically legible that domestic community and national harmony can take root. Turning to Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *On the Constitution of Church and State Government* (1829), I show that Coleridge recognized and rejected the simultaneously local and international materialism implicit in the place reading tradition from antiquarianism through Scott to *The Excursion*. Coleridge sought to transcend the materialist and historicist impulses latent in Scott and Wordsworth by pivoting to an idealized medieval socialism that positioned materialism as an unreliable—and dangerously foreign—foundation upon which to construct a national culture.

A coda on Karl Marx's *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* and the opening chapter of *Capital* casts Marx's understanding of commodities as "congealing" human labor as a different kind of departure from the Romantic place reading tradition. Marx revives Enlightenment universalist projects that find in all sites the same message and the same universal history. The international scope of historical materialism rebuffs the idealist loco-socialisms of Coleridge and Ruskin, even as its will to scientific systematization occludes the materialist historicisms on offer in various instances of Romantic place reading. "Reading Places" recovers a pre-Marxian British tradition of using literature to theorize culture as the product of international material processes; it ends by tracing that tradition's echoes in the twentieth-century development of historical materialist theory.

PART I:

Visions of Resistance

"Rattling with clanking chains; the Universal Empire groans . . . "
William Blake, *The Four Zoas,* Night the Seventh

1.

The Other Within: Three Ways of Looking at Wales, 1782-1800

> Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past.
>
> Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*

Introduction

I begin this dissertation by examining a subject—Wales—that has so far mostly eluded extensive attention from critics of Romantic British literature. In this chapter, I focus upon Wales not only as a physical site that registered the widespread social, cultural, environmental, and economic upheaval of the British Romantic period in especially interesting ways, but also to three striking literary responses to that upheaval. The first response I highlight, comprising a newly thriving landscape tourism industry as well as a nascent field of aesthetic debate, has been referred to using the umbrella term "the picturesque." While the ideological and historical implications of the picturesque have been explored at some length, no critic has yet paid special attention to the phenomenon's historical and theoretical roots in Wales; I seek to explore those roots. The second response, the bizarre and elaborate historical prophecies of the Welsh stonemason-poet Iolo Morganwg, have generally been dismissed as the product of opium addiction and/or mental illness. Against this dismissal, I identify a consistent (if admittedly tortuous) logic that persists through what Iolo refers to as his "philosophy of history"—a logic that bears some striking resemblances to the practice and theory of the picturesque as it emerges in the works of the aesthetic theorist William Gilpin. The third response is the place reading of Richard Llwyd, the antiquarian-poet who was known in his own time as "the Bard of Snowdon," which combines aspects of both picturesque discourse and Iolo's revisionary attitude towards established narratives of Welsh history. My aim is to show that place reading, as exemplified in Llwyd's long poem *Beaumaris Bay* (1800), was an activity that both drew upon and responded to characteristically Romantic social and cultural anxieties regarding place, materiality, history, and labor.

I. A place in flux

"All periods, of course, are 'periods of change'" observes John Davies in his 1993 *A History of Wales*, "but it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the changes which the people of Wales underwent between 1770 and 1850 were of a fundamental nature."[lxiv] The Romantic period was, for all of Britain, a period of major social and cultural upheaval. In this chapter, I have nevertheless chosen to focus my attention on Wales, for two major reasons: first, the country has been largely neglected by critics, who, when they have thought of it at all, tend to elide its difference from England. This conception of Wales as mere extension of England is an anachronism. Romantic-era writers persistently alluded to subtle differences between Wales and England, and as a result, Wales and the Welsh landscape came to represent a complex body of connotations; special attention is needed to recover these connotations. Second, as Davies suggests, while the Romantic period was an era of change for all of Britain, changes in Wales

were exceptionally dramatic; accordingly, the country witnessed an extraordinary ferment of various written responses to these large-scale transformations. Before examining those responses, it is important to review the physical and social forms that this upheaval took.

In 1770, Wales was one of Europe's most rural, agricultural, and poorest countries; by the middle of the nineteenth century, it had been transformed into one of the continent's richest, most urban, and most industrialized. During those years the country became a global leader in the production of iron, coal, slate, and copper, with the Swansea capitalist Thomas Williams at one point controlling half of the world's copper production. Welsh iron, smelted from Welsh ore by Welsh labor, fueled the engine of the industrialized British economy throughout the nineteenth century. Wales's iron built cannons and rifles used in the Napoleonic wars, and its iron and slate built railroad lines throughout the British Isles and beyond, while its coal fueled the trains that ran along those railroads. So rapid was the progress of Welsh industrialization, and of capitalist investment (Wales was, in the years around the turn of the century, the site of the most concentrated capital investment in the world), that one historian has argued that Wales briefly threatened to displace England as Britain's richest country.[lxv]

These transformations seemed especially striking to Romantic writers because of the relative cultural, political, and economic stasis that had prevailed within Wales in preceding centuries. By the late eighteenth century, apart from a few brief exceptions, Wales had not existed as a truly independent nation for hundreds of years. The ancient mountain roads that had connected north and south Wales had deteriorated, and separate traditions and ways of life evolved in the northern and southern halves of the principality.[lxvi] Since its union with England in the thirteenth century, Wales had become oriented along east-west, rather than north-south, routes of trade and cultural exchange: the English city of Liverpool became the primary economic engine and major urban center for the north Welsh economy and cultural tradition, while Bristol (and to a lesser extent London) served a similar role for south Wales.[lxvii] A united Wales was, from the end of the Glyndŵr Rising around 1415, a purely geographical conceit, and the stretch of land referred to as Wales bore no homogeneous character, culture, or even language: different dialects developed in the north and south and the country was, basically, a poor rural squirearchy differentiated from neighboring English counties only in the persistence of a few old customs.[lxviii] Until the so-called Welsh Renaissance in the mid-eighteenth century, Welsh culture and literature slipped into near-total oblivion.

In 1770, the largest city in Wales was Wrexham (modern Wrecsam, in Clwyd), which held a little more than 4,000 inhabitants. Fifteen percent of the Welsh population lived in towns and cities, with the rest spread out over at least 50,000 agricultural units and commonly held lands. Leases on these small farms were long-term and permissive: landlords tended to take a hands-off approach to their tenants' planting and harvests, and stepped in only to ensure that they were paid correctly and on time. Many of these units, however, had recently been enclosed: enclosure by parliamentary act began in Wales at the late (for Britain) date of 1733, and by 1770 nearly three-quarters of the total surface area of the nation had been enclosed. Parliamentary acts enclosing what little common land there was left dramatically increased in frequency between 1793 and 1818, and rents skyrocketed while lease terms dwindled to single-year contracts. 1770 also witnessed the beginning of the British commodification of the Welsh landscape: it was in that year that an English cleric and schoolmaster named William Gilpin sailed down the Wye. His book-length recounting of that journey, *Observations upon the River Wye* (1782), initiated a craze for Welsh scenery and tourism, and between 1770 and 1818, at least eighty full-length

books exclusively devoted to recounting tourist excursions in Wales were published. The early 1770s also witnessed the first large-scale rebuilding of the old Welsh roads.[lxix]

Many of these changes were driven by a massive demographic increase: between 1770 and 1850, the total population in Wales more than doubled. This population explosion, combined with the process of enclosure, meant that unprecedented numbers of Welsh rural inhabitants found themselves forced into cities, both long-established (like, for example, Swansea and Cardiff, where populations surged as displaced agricultural laborers poured in), and entirely new. Previously rural districts like Flintshire and Anglesey urbanized extremely rapidly, and recently uninhabited areas like Ebbw Vale, Blaenafon, and Merthyr Tydfil suddenly became major population centers. Merthyr Tydfil, which was only a part-time home for a few shepherds in 1770, had by 1801 raced past Wrexham to become Wales's largest city, with over 10,000 inhabitants. By 1831, Merthyr's population had swelled to 30,000, not including the more than ten thousand additional merchants and seasonal workers who passed through it each year.[lxx]

These previously uninhabited areas had been uninhabited for good reasons: they frequently lacked access to any source of food, and often had little clean water. The British state rebuilt the Welsh road system in order to facilitate access to these new industrial centers, tramways carrying goods and people crisscrossed the northeast, and a "canal mania" in the southeast sprang up in the 1790s to feed the tens of thousands who could not grow or gather food in the mountains. Those tens of thousands came for the coal, lead, and slate that lay beneath the soil, or to work in the iron industries which had been built next to the mines for reasons of expedience. They came from enclosed estates (many of which would become picturesque destinations once forcibly depopulated and properly re-landscaped), usually from the valleys of north Wales or the hills of west Wales, and their movements initiated a building craze that, among other things, witnessed one chapel built, on average, every eight days between 1801 and 1851. This latter surge reflected an unprecedented religious upheaval. Wales had been a stronghold of the Church of England for much of the eighteenth century; in the first half of the nineteenth it became a bastion of Methodism. In search of new markets for the metals they extracted from the earth and smelted, Welsh sea-merchants rediscovered long-abandoned shipping routes to Ireland and the Continent, and new port cities like Porthmadog sprang up to facilitate this trade.[lxxi]

Within Britain more broadly, cultural perceptions of Wales were likewise changing: while the country had been derided in the early eighteenth century on the grounds of its supposed physical ugliness (Daniel Defoe, for example, found it "full of horror" and "barbarous and inhospitable" and declared "the Devil lives in the Middle of Wales") and ridiculed in Restoration and early Georgian comedies as a land of impoverished and ignorant cheese-munching country bumpkins, by the turn of the century it had been transformed not only into England's premier industrial colony, but also into a cultural destination, a bewitchingly beautiful land shrouded in an aura of mystery and magic.[lxxii] Even as broader British cultural attitudes towards Wales were shifting, however, the Wales they romanticized—rural, ritual-driven, at once familiar and foreign—was slipping into the past. Written responses to this transformation alternately celebrated the freshly depopulated rural spaces as canvas-like sites for the appreciation, and occasional invention, of picturesque beauty, and lamented the homogenization of local difference that industrialization and proletarianization imposed upon the Welsh working class. Often, these laments and celebrations happened simultaneously.

II. Simple parts, infinitely varied

It is a striking peculiarity that, despite the thousands of pages of critical writing that late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century picturesque discourse has engendered, there have been no serious attempts to explore—or indeed even to mention—the fact that the picturesque, as concept, tourist destination, and commodity, was born in Wales. The picturesque, as first formulated by William Gilpin, came to be the hegemonic way of looking at a landscape throughout the Romantic period; it ought to matter more that this way of looking was initially theorized as a mode of observing England's oldest and most productive colony.[lxxiii] In the opening pages of *Observations on the River Wye* (1782), Gilpin repurposes Thomas Gray's description of the Welsh landscape along the Wye as "a succession of nameless beauties."[lxxiv] From the first, Gilpin attempts to profit from the picturesque's status as a *new* aesthetic category, stressing on the book's opening page the originality of his pursuit as justification for his introduction of unfamiliar scenery to his readers' eyes.

> We travel for various purposes – to explore the culture of soils, to explore the curiosities of art, to survey the beauties of nature, and to learn the manners of men, their different politics and modes of life. The following little work proposes a new object of pursuit: that of examining the face of a country *by the rules of picturesque beauty:* opening the sources of those pleasures which are derived from the comparison. (*Observations*, 1; original emphasis)

The novelty of the picturesque as aesthetic category depends upon the anonymity—the "nameless" -ness—of the landscape that Gilpin chooses as exemplary of that category. The remoteness of the Wye Valley, located on the Welsh-English border far from any large cities, enabled Gilpin to fashion his new aesthetic on a blank canvas, untainted by earlier cultural associations.

Wales proved an especially apt blank canvas throughout the Romantic period, since the country's status as a sort of other within Britain—a colony at once familiar, since England had dominated it for nearly half a millennium, and unfamiliar, since it persisted in speaking its own language and carrying on its own cultural rituals, and prided itself upon its culture pre-dating not only the Norman, but also the Roman invasions—allowed it to stand in for a slew of different places. These included, among others, Scotland, Ireland, France, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Italy, Greece, the Levant, the Orient, India, southern Africa, North America, Central America, and modern-day Bolivia.[lxxv] And yet, the fact of Wales's political and economic subjugation by England rendered it not only a kind of destabilizing, mutable appendage that threatened to transform into something decidedly *not* British, but also a useful colony that offered vacationing Britons the ability to see all the world without ever leaving British shores. This latter quality would prove especially useful during the years of the Napoleonic blockade, when tourists unable to see the Continent flocked to Wales in record numbers.[lxxvi]

From the opening pages of *Observations*, Gilpin stresses a similar fungibility or elasticity inherent to the Welsh landscape, portraying the act of picturesque looking as entailing a labor of adjustment, rather than precise representation and reproduction: picturesque view-making consists of "not barely examining the face of a country . . . not merely describing; but of *adapting* the description of natural scenery to the principles of artificial landscape" (*Observations* 2; my emphasis). This "adapting" seems to have generated considerable confusion within the period, much to Gilpin's consternation. Tourists who flocked by the thousands to the

Wye Valley to see the same views Gilpin sketched in *Observations* were dismayed to find that Gilpin had so thoroughly "adapted" the actual scenery as to make it virtually unrecognizable: one friend wrote to Gilpin "If a voyager down the river Wye takes out your Book, his very Boatman crys out 'nay sir you may look in vain there no body can find one Picture in the least like.'"[lxxvii] In response, Gilpin complained that any careful reader of his work could see that he had never promised faithful reproductions of the landscape; on the contrary, his book consistently portrayed the landscape as a mere starting-point, furnishing the reader with the raw materials necessary to create a correctly picturesque scene. This notion of the picturesque as the product of an observer's conscious aesthetic labor, drawing upon raw materials latent in the undeveloped Welsh landscape, is interesting both because it formulates a late-eighteenth century critique of the notion that "mere looking" can be a passive or non-ideological act and because it claims a virtual (that is, non-physical) form of laboring upon and in tandem with a physical landscape as the pleasurable prerogative of a leisure class.[lxxviii]

All of these characteristics of picturesque practice and discourse anticipate central preoccupations and distinguishing features of Romantic place reading. Perhaps the most direct of these anticipations is Gilpin's tendency to find within picturesque practice a hard limit-point at which what he calls "adaption" breaks down and cannot progress any further. Fantasies of human control over a given landscape were not in any sense new: as John Barrell points out in his seminal study of picturesque literature, Alexander Pope had celebrated the limitless potential of the human mind to overcome physical boundaries in poems like the *Epistle to Burlington*.

> Consult the genius of the place in all;
> That tells the waters or to rise, or fall,
> Or helps th' ambitious hill the heavens to scale,
> Or scoops in circling theatres the vale;
> Calls in the country, catches opening glades,
> Joins willing woods, and varies shades from shades;
> Now breaks, or now directs, th' intending lines,
> Paints as you plant, and as you work, designs.
>
> Still follow sense, of every art the soul,
> Parts answering parts shall slide into a whole,
> Spontaneous beauties all around advance,
> Start ev'n from difficulty, strike from chance;
> Nature shall join you; time shall make it grow
> A work to wonder at – perhaps a STOWE.[lxxix]

Gilpin can sound like Pope when enumerating the picturesque view-maker's rights to revise a given scene in accordance with "the rules of picturesque beauty," and at times his imperatives practically demand that his readers exercise those rights.

> The eye is pleased with the tuftings of a tree: it is amused with pursuing the eddying stream . . . it rests with delight on the shattered arches of a Gothic ruin. Such objects, independent of composition, are beautiful in themselves. But the rock, bleak, naked, and unadorned, seems scarcely to deserve a place among them. Tint it with mosses and lychens of various hues, and you give it a degree of

> beauty. Adorn it with shrubs, and hanging herbage, and you still make it more picturesque. Connect it with wood, and water, and broken ground; and you make it in the highest degree interesting. (*Observations*, 13)

But, unlike Pope's "willing woods" and "parts answering parts," which pose no obstacle to the sovereignty of the visionary mind, Gilpin also became keen in later works to stress the limits beyond which the adapting mind could not fairly encroach.

> [Picturesque revision] is not intended to give [the spectator] licence instead of liberty . . . nothing should be introduced alien to the scene presented. Such alterations only, [the] artist should make, as the nature of the country allows, and the beauty of composition requires. Trees he may generally plant, or remove at pleasure. If a withered stump suit the form of his landscape better than the spreading oak, which he finds in nature, then he may make the exchange – or he may make it, if he wish for a spreading oak, where he finds a withered trunk. He has no right, we allow, to add a magnificent castle – an impending rock – or a river, to adorn his fore-ground. These are *new features*. But he may certainly break an ill-formed hillock; and shovel the earth about him as he pleases, without offence. He may pull up a piece of awkward paling – he may throw down a cottage – he may even turn the course of a road, or a river, a few yards on this side, or that. These trivial alterations may greatly add to the beauty of his composition; and yet they interfere not with the truth of his *portrait*.[lxxx]

However arbitrary this insistence upon what the landscape "allows," and however silly Gilpin's preoccupation with the "truth" of his admittedly revised landscape sketches might seem, it is an innovative and distinctive characteristic of picturesque discourse.

Gilpin's theoretical limit to the revisionary capacity of the human mind evinces a curiosity about a stubbornness or resistance seemingly inherent in matter.[lxxxi] Matter's unwelcome but undeniable stubbornness is never displayed more clearly than in Gilpin's infamous evaluation of the picturesque beauty, or lack thereof, of Tintern Abbey.

> Though the parts are beautiful, the whole is ill-shaped. No ruins of the tower are left, which might give form, and contrast to the walls, and buttresses, and other inferior parts. Instead of this, a number of gable-ends hurt the eye with their regularity; and disgust it by the vulgarity of their shape. A mallet judiciously used (but who durst use it?) might be of service in fracturing some of them; particularly those of the cross isles, which are not only disagreeable in themselves, but confound the perspective. (*Observations*, 32-33).[lxxxii]

Here Gilpin's advocacy for painterly revision of a given scene veers into a fantasy of physically manipulating the subject matter itself: Tintern Abbey's defects demand correction, but such correction is beyond the ability of the picturesque viewer to supply. If Tintern Abbey is to be made picturesque, it must be made so physically. In these passages, Gilpin's limit seems broadly consistent with Newton's theorization of the conservation of matter: within a picturesque composition, a hillock or cottage can be removed, so long as the dirt and wood composing them are thrown down and/or shoveled around rather than obliterated entirely; trees can be planted or

cut down, though large rocks cannot; conjuring a castle or a river out of thin air is wholly out of the question, though gently manipulating the course of an existing river or road is permissible.

This notion of a hard limit to picturesque practice ultimately depends upon a kind of atomism, an atomism that, for Gilpin, rhetorically licenses aesthetic revision in the first place.

> Every view on a river, thus circumstanced, is composed of four grand parts: the *area*, which is the river itself, the *two side-screens*, which are the opposite banks, and mark the perspective; and the *front-screen*, which points out the winding of the river . . . the views on the Wye, though composed only of these *simple parts*, are yet *infinitely varied*. (*Observations*, 8; original emphasis)

The picturesque conception of any given scene as inherently adjustable (akin to a play's set, comprising front screen, side screens, and area) thus derives from understanding any and every conceivable scene as composed of "simple parts . . . infinitely varied": that is, as simply a new combination of previously existing raw materials. Picturesque revision finds its limit-point at and in these simple parts: once broken down into their simplest forms (piles of dirt, branches, building materials), the parts can be stretched, compacted, and/or re-arranged within a scene, but neither wholly erased nor wholly invented. This is what is new about Gilpin's picturesque and what distinguishes it from the effortless revision of Pope's unchecked, "scooping" mind, which molds any and all landscapes in tandem with an idealized "genius of the place."

One effect of this shift from unlimited to limited models of human capacity to adjust a given scene, as Alan Liu and Kim Michasiw among other critics have pointed out, is a heightened verisimilitude in regards to real landscape development, with a concomitant heightening of the pleasure of such fantastical remodeling. Such a shift marks the picturesque as a bourgeois ideology: without extensive lands of their own to re-model and design, British bourgeois and petty-bourgeois tourists settled for a purely aesthetic, painterly substitute that nevertheless pretended that its materials were somehow limited because it was more fun to do so.[lxxxiii] Another effect of the picturesque's embrace of a hard limit to the viewer's capacity to adjust a scene is a re-inscription of imperial logics of extraction and of colonial division of labor. Davies observes that early industrial Wales did not produce finished commodities, but rather capital goods—the raw materials necessary to produce such commodities. The picturesque, which originates as a fantastical manipulation of Welsh landscapes that contain within themselves latent wealth and potential to be extracted and exploited by the enterprising English tourist, thus re-instantiates broader imperialist practice, allowing the viewer to fulfill the role of the "improving" colonist.[lxxxiv]

The imperialist and bourgeois elements of picturesque play, along with arbitrary picturesque limits upon the elasticity of aestheticized landscapes, differentiate the budding aesthetic from contemporaneous theories of the unlimited capacity of the human mind to impose its will upon its surroundings. Such late Enlightenment optimism, which flowered alongside the early successes of the French Revolution in the early-to-mid-1790s, reaches its most exhilarating conclusions in works like William Godwin's *Political Justice* (1793), in which humanity's innate perfectibility will eventually manifest itself physically: humankind, Godwin insists, will eradicate illness and physical needs on the way to attaining universal immortality.[lxxxv] Such conclusions were exceptionally bold, but it is not an understatement to say that the French Revolutionaries believed human reason capable of redefining time and space, attempting to institute the metric system and a new ten-day work week on a national scale and declaring the

dawn of a new Year One.[lxxxvi] During the same period, in rural districts on the British side of the Channel, the burgeoning tourist class was, by means of the picturesque, celebrating some of the same shackles the Revolutionaries were attempting to cast off. This sense of reaching, acknowledging, and happily laboring within boundaries to the capacities of human endeavor persists throughout a vast body of Romantic literature, one that has only recently been considered as something potentially exceeding conservative reaction and revulsion to Revolutionary optimism.[lxxxvii]

III. 'Facts are stubborn things'

The journeyman stone-mason, poet, forger, and "one-man Welsh Romanticism" Edward Williams, better known now as in his own time by his self-selected 'bardic' pseudonym Iolo Morganwg, imported many of the distinguishing characteristics of Gilpin's landscape aesthetic to the discourse of history, though he could never be mistaken for a reactionary bourgeois tourist.[lxxxviii] Iolo was a Jacobin from first to last, proudly embracing the label as late as 1819 and, during the height of Pitt's "Reign of Terror" in the mid-1790s, personally berating "Billy" while being interrogated on suspicion of espionage.[lxxxix] In 1790s London, Iolo rubbed shoulders with fellow radicals Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Godwin, Priestley, and much of the London Corresponding Society, including Thomas Hardy, John Horne Tooke, and John Thelwall, among others, and declared:

> I wish all the nations in the world would suffer the histories of their Kings and their wars, their established religion and all other infernalities to sink into the deepest oblivion, and to keep memorials only of what arts of peace and civilization thus have appeared amongst them. This is the first step, in my opinion, that should be taken towards reforming or rather civilizing mankind.[xc]

Iolo's forgeries, which sketch an invented Welsh past, imagine a "bardic" society governed on recognizably Jacobin political principles and evince a sneering contempt for established history, which he critiques not only as inaccurate, but as actively destructive in the here and now. And yet, sympathetic as Iolo was to the Revolution, and antithetical as his politics were to those of the picturesque view-makers, he could not quite bring himself to embrace Revolutionary millenarianism regarding the concept of history, at least not wholeheartedly, insisting that while history could—even needed to—be reinterpreted, such reinterpretation nevertheless had to be conducted within certain boundaries. Iolo's attitudes towards and theoretical conceptions of history are vexed and vexing, but his writings are important because, more vividly than most contemporary writing, they reveal an evolving Romantic understanding of the past as something fungible, elusive, and yet ultimately ineradicable.[xci] This bifurcated attitude towards history is a crucial ideological tenet of Romantic place reading as it emerges around the turn of the century.

In order to understand Iolo's conception of history, one must first grapple with his highly idiosyncratic and technical definition and treatment of the word "truth." For Iolo, historical writing necessarily entails a search for truth, even and especially when that truth has been obscured in and by dominant historical narratives. This goal emerges in the opening pages of his only published collection of English poetry, *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral* (1794), when Iolo discusses the supposedly "historical" notes he adds to his purported "translations" (the translations were, in fact, forgeries, and the notes include mostly invented material).

> I have in several places aimed at rectifying some mistakes of modern *Welsh Historians,* gentlemen (if they may be so called) of *no conscience,* who are partial to every thing but *Truth*. The true history of the *Ancient Welsh Bards* is willfully suppressed in favour of the wildest preconceptions and absurdest theories that could ever enter the brain of the most barbarous *Goth*.[xcii]

There is much here that characterizes Iolo's writing more generally, including casual denigration of the Continental ancestry of English persons ("the most barbarous *Goth*"), sullen hints at unnamed enemies ("gentlemen (if they may be so called) of *no conscience*"), and a thinly veiled contempt for north Welsh antiquaries ("modern *Welsh Historians*"), whom Iolo believed to be complicit supporters of the existing Anglo-British cultural and political order.[xciii] What is perhaps most striking here, however, is Iolo's assertion that established history deliberately tends to suppress truth—a suspicion (deeply rooted in his Welshness and his radicalism) that bubbles to the surface whenever Iolo discusses history more generally.

In *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral*, for example, we read of the "fables" of Geoffrey of Monmouth and the "savage Scandinavian mythology" underpinning Thomas Gray's conception of the medieval order of the Welsh bards in "The Bard" (1757)—the latter a "truly ridiculous" conflation of Scandinavian and Celtic moralities (*PLP* I:195; II:195).[xciv] Iolo continues his assault upon established historical tradition in his correspondence, castigating, to list just a few examples, the "lies and absurdities" that fill Edward Jones, Bardd y Brenin's *Musical and Poetical Relicks of the Welsh Bards* (1794), the "pious frauds" that historians had falsely "fathered on Taliesin [the sixth-century Welsh bard]," and the "jumble of odd conceits, wild ideas and presumptuous falsehoods" in Edward "Celtic" Davies's *Celtic Researches, on the Origin, Traditions and Language, of the Ancient Britons* (1804).[xcv] The claim again surfaces in the Iolo-authored introduction on ancient bardism in William Owen Pughe's *The Heroic Elegies and Other Pieces of Llywarç Hen, Prince of the Cumbrian Britons, with a literal translation* (1792), in which Iolo sneers at Henry Rowlands's *Mona Antiqua Restaurata* (1723) on the grounds of its author's "partiality for his native place," a partiality which, Iolo maintains, obscures the true history of the Welsh bards.[xcvi] Such criticism likewise proliferates in Iolo's marginalia and in manuscripts not published during his lifetime.[xcvii]

Whether or not we agree with the established critical consensus that Iolo's opposition to much accepted history reflects his supposedly Anglophobic politics of *ressentiment*, his insistence on an absence of truth in existing historical discourse sorts oddly with his forgery of thousands of "historical" manuscripts.[xcviii] At first glance, this is a breathtaking inconsistency that can look like outright hypocrisy, and critics who examine Iolo's work insist that his attitudes towards historical truth (like his opinions on most subjects) depend upon inconsistent and at times antithetical modes of reasoning.[xcix] In contrast to this prevailing belief, however, Iolo's conceptions of "truth" and "history," though tangled, do indeed follow a recognizable and relatively consistent internal logic.

The best place to begin exploring this logic is in Iolo's celebrated bardic motto, which he made central to bardism as cultural institution: "*Y gwir yn erbyn y byd* – the truth against the world." The phrase first occurs, in published form, in Pughe's *Heroic Elegies,* and Iolo later highlights it in *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral*. Indeed, Iolo's preoccupation with the concept of truth becomes a full-blown obsession as he seeks to disentangle it from received and state-sanctioned understandings of the "world." In his essay "An Account of, and Extracts from, the Welsh Bardic

Triades," Iolo sketches a fictionalized, utopian Welsh past, in which the Welsh were administered, taught, and guided by a professionalized class of bards, who sought to inculcate moral and religious truth while effectively serving as elected officials, representing the political interests and tending to the cultural needs of various communities in exchange for economic support. This history, of course, is a fictionalized product of what Iolo believed to be the ideological needs of his own present historical moment. As numerous critics have noted, Iolo's "bardic" Welsh past is in essence a Jacobin democratic vision, interspersed with an eclectic selection of ideas borrowed from doctrines of metempsychosis, druidism, and freemasonry, among others. While Iolo claims that this bardic society did in fact exist, James Mulholland (among others) has argued convincingly that Iolo's "history" is instead a call for contemporary society to be restructured in such a way that it will resemble the culture and government of his imagined ancient bardic Wales.[c]

The notion of "science" in Iolo's phrase "the science of tradition," the set of practices by and through which Iolo's bards produced and regulated the concept of "truth," demands some explication. By "science," Iolo seems to mean something like a body of knowledge or a way of presenting knowledge that is verifiable by more than one person; hence his claim that the ancient Welsh bards "reduced the *Arts of Memory* and *oral tradition* into a well *Systematized Science*" that enabled ideas to "be transmitted without the aid of letters from one person, time, or place, to another, though ever so remote" (*PLP* II, 219; original emphasis). Such an understanding is very similar to Iolo's friend Joseph Priestley's conception of truth as something propagated through experiment, as laid out in the "Preface" to Priestley's *Experiments and Observations on Different Kinds of Air* (1774-1790).[ci] Iolo's rules of bardic transmission, detailed in the "Advertisement" to his "Ode on the Mythology of the Ancient British Bards," are as strict as they are elaborate: any proposed additions to the corpus of common knowledge must be unanimously approved by three consecutive convocations of bards before they can be formally accepted, and each convocation of the bards begins with a communal poetic recitation of previously accepted truths (*PLP* II, 219-224). Communal acceptation or rejection and collective performance thus preserve the entirety of Iolo's imagined society's knowledge—that is, its "truth." The bards themselves, who functioned as teachers and priests as well as politicians and were materially supported by their local communities, would then proceed to inculcate the collectively generated and preserved knowledge in their respective constituents.

Here, it is the transmission of ideas—their circulation as matters of public knowledge and interest—that qualifies them as "scientific." Although any lone writer, Iolo warns, may introduce unobserved error into a given history at any point in time, the bards' transmitted knowledge is scientific precisely because it resists error, and this resistance is a byproduct of the public repetition of, and the vast numbers of persons responsible for, that knowledge (here Iolo purports to be deeply suspicious of any written accounts of history). Hence Iolo's phrase "the science of tradition": his bards have engineered a means of protecting communally determined truth from corrupting error by depersonalizing it, removing it from intimate, privileged writer-reader communication and extending it into common circulation. Because it is propagated by a body of local, representative political agents (the bards), and because it is collectively generated and maintained, Iolo's "science of tradition" is, by and large, a democratization of history and of fact.

In *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral*, the "truth" Iolo envisions his bardic system protecting is not an empirical truth, nor a representation of the world as it is, so much as it is a set of moral judgments. Hence the roots of Iolo's motto "the truth against the world": for Iolo, the truth that history ought to transmit is the very social structure that "letters" have occluded; namely, the

Welsh bardic society he sketches in the "Account." The "truth" Iolo claims his bards protected, then, is not the historical truth his contemporaries accept: whereas the latter purports to be an impartial record of persons and events ("the world," properly speaking), Iolo wants to recover (or, more accurately, to perform) a set of shared values, customs, and moral attitudes—that is, an ideology—that rejects the repressive, Anglocentric status quo within British culture and politics.

What Iolo proposes here is an overthrow of centuries of tradition in the name of (re)creating a society founded on a better, purer "truth." Considered in conjunction with his claims that this truth, in days of Welsh glory past, was maintained by a democratic "science of tradition," Iolo's gambit becomes clear: like his own imagined bards, he is testing a potential truth of his own, and submitting it to his peers for their review. If those peers accept his truth, then he and they will be free to cast off the weight of received historical tradition and to install Iolo's new, collectively determined historical truth in its stead. Such a radical suggestion would fit Iolo's enthusiasm for the French Revolutionaries willing to see the Revolution as the dawn of a completely new era—a new Year One.

Striking and coherent as Iolo's espousal of an oral, bardic, and "scientific" production and regulation of democratically produced truth might appear, however, it is here that an impasse central to Iolo's work and thought arises. How can we reconcile Iolo's avowed hatred and distrust of written histories with his career as the most prolific and successful forger of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries? Why would Iolo, after giving himself license (via the "science of tradition") to abandon accepted historical discourse entirely, turn around and invent a mass of supporting evidence to interweave with that same established history? Why does Iolo insist that established history is worthless, but attempt to provide evidence for his claims *within* that established history anyway?

While Iolo recognized that bardism was sure to appeal to his political allies, given its promises to reject received narratives about the past and to produce new universal truths democratically, he also realized that this appeal was not likely to extend to everyone. The academic guardians of established history, the landed aristocracy, and the Church of England, for example, would not be so easily convinced that that history ought to be, or even could be, collectively forgotten. Iolo's forgeries generally take the form of invented passages from and citations of manuscripts that were either known to have existed before being lost (for example, in a famous library fire), in which case Iolo claimed to have seen them before they were lost, or in previously unknown (because invented) manuscripts, which Iolo either claimed to own personally or claimed to have seen before they too were destroyed in tragic accidents. In any case, Iolo's familiarity with real ancient Welsh manuscripts made him a very convincing faker, and the verisimilitude of his forgeries duped scholars for over a century. Iolo's deployment of this realism testifies to the sincerity of his attempts to establish the legitimacy of bardism to more skeptical and powerful audiences. Mary-Ann Constantine has shown that, despite the intensity of Iolo's radicalism (a fervor that, in the 1790s, repeatedly cast Iolo's own life and liberty into jeopardy), he was willing to appeal to persons of opposing political principles, as his anxious letters to Hannah More and the diverse set of subscribers to *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral* (which boasted More, the Prince of Wales, and Harriet Bowdler as well as Thomas Paine, Horne Tooke, and George Washington) evince.[cii]

But how are we to reconcile the contradictions inherent to these stances? For it is not only a problem that Iolo seems to want to have his history and forget it too—it is also difficult to explain how a writer could remain committed to "truth" and insist that "facts are stubborn things" while simultaneously forging hundreds of historical manuscripts. Put another way, if

Iolo's truth is something that can only be produced and verified collectively and democratically, then how can he justify pointing to "historical" documents that he alone authored as evidence for his claims, especially given that he claims that the ancient bards "never refer[red] to written authorities"?[ciii] We can only reconcile these impasses if we accept that *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral*'s "science of tradition" reflects just one aspect of Iolo's understanding of truth. In order to understand that truth in all its complexity, and to comprehend how Iolo justified his seemingly contradictory actions, we need to engage with his poetry as well as his prose, including a selection of the esoteric knowledge that Iolo believed his bardism would spread throughout the world and a short essay on what he called the "philosophy of history."

The vast majority of the forgeries that Iolo managed to publish within his own lifetime lie in the *Myrvyrian Archaiology of Wales* (1801; 1807), a collection of mostly authentic Welsh manuscripts and folklore sponsored by Owen Jones (Owain Myfyr), a wealthy London furrier and chief financial backer of the London-based Welsh cultural society the Gwyneddigion. The *Archaiology*, the crown jewel of the Gwyneddigion's publication initiative, appeared in three volumes researched by Iolo and collated and edited by his then-friend William Owen Pughe. While much of the content of the first two volumes is authentic, a great deal of the bardic triads published in the third volume are versions of triads Iolo himself forged and included in his published works and unpublished correspondence throughout the 1790s.[civ]

In his introductory essay to the bardic triads he included in *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral* and claimed to be transmitting from antiquity (the same triads that would later appear in the *Archaiology*), Iolo maintains that the bards' "*well-guarded Tradition* was a better *Guardian of Truth* than letters have ever been" (*PLP* II, 221; original emphasis) and argues that "*Letters* . . . unlooked after, commit daily the most enormous *rascalities*" (*PLP* II, 223; original emphasis). From the first, then, Iolo encourages his readers to remain skeptical of what they might learn in print—including the essay they are currently reading. It is this winking playfulness that leads Michael Franklin to assert that

> As he played in virtually postmodern ways with the concepts of the 'ancient' and the 'genuine,' [Iolo] seemed to realize that mythical, and indeed historical, texts might be seen as literary artefacts, their 'truth' existing simply in terms of the powerful investment of belief accorded them.[cv]

Here again we seem near to the democratic production and regulation of truth that Iolo sketches in his account of the bardic "science of tradition." And yet, this explanation cannot account for triads like the following.

> Three things increase continually: *Fire*, or *Light*; *Understanding*, or *Truth*; *Soul*, or *Life*: these will prevail over every thing else, and then the state of *Inchöation* will cease. (*PLP* II, 246-247)

> Trust in truth is brought about by three things: believing everything, disbelieving everything and believing no matter what.[cvi]

If, as Iolo maintains, the bardic tradition is "nearly extinct," and if, as he likewise maintains, the bards inculcate truth more effectively than inherently unreliable written accounts ever could, then any understanding of "truth" (like Franklin's) as a mere measure of collective belief cannot

account for Iolo's simultaneous insistence that truth is "increas[ing] continually."[cvii] Indeed, if truth is a mere measure of collective belief in bardic proclamation, then the rapid decline of the bards would seem to entail a *decrease* in "truth," rather than its increase. Moreover, if truth is a mere function of collective belief, then "disbelieving everything" could not logically "bring about" "trust in truth."

Enter Iolo's "philosophy of history." This text, occasionally mentioned but rarely examined by critics interested in Iolo's work, holds the key to unlocking Iolo's definition of "truth"—a concept that, we have seen, is of the utmost importance to his philosophy, theology, and politics. Written in 1798, Iolo's short remarks on what he terms the "philosophy of history" appear in a letter to David Williams, the philosopher, political theorist, and author of *The History of Monmouthshire* (1796).[cviii] Congratulating Williams on the success of the *History*, Iolo writes:

> This philosophy of history and that of conjecture differ widely, but in how many instances do we find the latter mistakenly, or perhaps designedly, with sinister views, substituted for the former, casting false lights on some things and injurious darkness on others? History, however, should be something better than a mere mass of annals. It should inform, illuminate, and improve the mind. Every occurrence should appear to be what it always is, the result of some virtue or vice, some wisdom or folly of the government, morals or vices of the age wherein it appeared what operated in its production and how it operated in producing its results and consequences. Thus would the history of the country become a system of ethics for it, for all ages, for all the world as far as it should ever become known; a narration of the most important truths, powerful in their causes and effects, that would be lights to guide us into safe parts [*sic*.], as well as to point out shelves and rocks and other dangers. History that answers not such purposes is nothing better than a series of old wives tales, idle chat about nothing at all of any real use.[cix]

Once again, we observe the opposition of historical "truth" with "a mere mass of annals" (the "world" of Iolo's bardic motto), but here Iolo begins to couple that contention with a more positive definition of truth (rather than the mere negative definition that it emphatically is not "world"). Here truths are historically narrated bits of knowledge that illuminate and *protect* those who read that historical narration. For Iolo, then, good history navigates between the Scylla of bulky compilations of undifferentiated historical facts (what he had earlier called "world" or "the histories of . . . Kings and their wars, their established religion and all other infernalities") and the Charybdis of conjectural histories, which "[cast] false lights on some things and injurious darkness on others." Properly philosophical history is a voyage that terminates in "safe [ports]," illuminated not by "false lights," but rather by "truths": beacons that point out "shelves and rocks and other dangers" that lie in the way of an above-all *ethical* mode of interpreting the past.

In a later letter, Iolo congratulates Williams upon

> making History the vehicle of Philosophical research after Truth, [and] at the same time not suffering Philosophy to quit its vehicle and stroll abroad into long winding and very often dark ways, quite out of sight, never properly returning to the point whence it wandered, and redundantly exhibitting [*sic*] delineations of

> things that are too remote to be seen from the path which ought to have been kept in.[cx]

Most important here is the notion of good history as a "vehicle" that at once enables "Philosophical research after Truth" *and* ensures that that philosophical research remains, so to speak, on task: properly philosophical "research after Truth," Iolo maintains, ought to be grounded in history ("the path which ought to have been kept in"). Here, history, at least when conducted properly, becomes the means to an end, a conveyance along "the path" to understanding "truth." This formulation echoes Iolo's later assertion, in an unpublished essay titled "Schools of Welsh Poetry," that the bards "made verse the vehicle of religious and moral instruction."[cxi] Like history above, poetry is here a "vehicle" that guarantees the transmission of knowledge. Indeed, the similarities and relationships between the concepts of "truth," "history," and "verse" are crucial to the overarching logic of Iolo's bardic philosophy.

In his introduction on "Bardism" to Pughe's *Heroic Elegies,* Iolo begins to untangle the web.

> The Bards bestowed great attention to the formation of their Poetical Institutes, which they brought to a high state of perfection at a very early period; because verse was generally the medium whereby they preserved historical events, and taught the moral, and religious duties to the people. The peculiar character of the poetry of the *Britons* was to avoid fable; for, agreeable to the radical principles of Bardism, it was consecrated to be the organ of Truth.[cxii]

Here, verse mediates history, and by extension becomes "the organ of Truth." Hence, for Iolo, the act of determining what is true ("philosophical research after Truth," as he calls it in his later letter to Williams), an act that by definition ought to be guided by the "vehicle" of history, demands an engagement with poetry: a consideration of how bardic poetry reflects and encodes the collectively produced truths of its society. In *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral,* Iolo is still blunter:

> Truth was held so sacred by the ancient British Bards and Druids, that they would never admit into their poetical compositions any thing whatever of a fictious [*sic*.] nature; their fundamental nature was to search for truth, and to adhere to it, with the most rigid severity: hence in all genuine works that are extant of our ancient Welsh Bards, from MEUGANT, about the close of the fourth century, to the present time, we meet not with a single poem founded on fiction; and, singular as it may appear, contrary to the practice of all other nations, the most authentic histories of the *Welsh* are in *verse*, and all their *fabulous* writing in *prose*. (*PLP* II, 1-2n.; original emphasis)

The act of searching for and codifying truth is here an inherently *poetic* one. Deciphering truth requires both a commitment to remaining within the vehicle of "history" and of decoding the "medium" of poetry:

> It has in all ages been the uninterrupted practice of the Welsh poets to record in verse the events and occurrences of their own times, and possibly there is no

> country in Europe whose history can be collected so completely from its poetry as that of Wales.[cxiii]

In other words, for Iolo, the critical reading of Welsh poetry can recover an occluded history.

"Truth," then, evidently is not a mere measure of collective belief, nor is it a pile of so much empirical fact, nor even an epistemological condition. It is a peculiar kind of knowledge produced by an engagement with history that is best effected through the critical study of Welsh poetry. Sought after at all costs and valued above all else by Iolo's utopian bards, "truths" are principles of social organization to be researched, embraced, and taught to society at large: they are "lights to guide us into safe [ports]" that "point out shelves and rocks and other dangers." They can, and in an ideal society would, be collectively produced and orally maintained. In Iolo's own age, however, the bards are all but dead, and desperate times call for desperate measures. In historical moments when there were only two bards remaining (as Iolo maintained was the case in his own day), the final two bards would make a proclamation regarding what was true:

> The proclamation was therefore an appeal, or reference to public opinion, and to that original authority from which the institution was first derived; and the acquiescence of the public, in bringing no objections to the proposals of such proclamation, constituted the legality of any act done.[cxiv]

If they are to survive in the absence of a larger oral community of bards, then Iolo must ensure the existence of the bardic truths by publicizing them. This is how Iolo reconciles himself to publishing his ideas, despite his avowed distrust of print; it is also how he justifies interweaving the historical record with references to and quotations from manuscripts that do not exist: both practices are necessary for the preservation of "truth," in Iolo's highly developed and highly technical (and, of course, rigidly circular) sense of that word. If bardism was to become the organizing social, cultural, and political principle of the world, as Iolo clearly hoped it would, then he needed to publish and diffuse his "proclamation" to the widest possible audience.[cxv] Given the political differences amongst his audience, he also needed to diversify his message: he could appeal to the principle of democracy when offering his bardic "truths" to his fellow radicals, but convincing fellow historians and established power brokers demanded that he produce evidence, in the form of facts that he despised, of the actual existence of a Welsh bardic past. Iolo's forgeries, quotations from invented material and fake citations of and extracts from lost manuscripts, fulfilled the latter requirement. Iolo's universalizing goals likewise explain his decision to translate ancient Welsh secrets into English, and to disperse those secrets as widely as possible.

Iolo's faith in his own ability to divine "truth" was, of course, of paramount importance to his mission. Iolo believed that it was possible for him to determine what was "true"—that is, to imagine what moral principles ought to guide all of humanity, and he devised a system that he thought could put those principles into effect. This faith in the ability of the self to understand the needs of all human beings necessarily depends upon a universal view of human subjectivity, a view that Iolo was likely to have adopted from the first philosophers he had read, namely John Locke, David Hume, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau.[cxvi] This belief likewise underpins Gwyn A. Williams's declaration that Iolo "was working like a dedicated scholar of the Enlightenment in the service of a Romantic delusion."[cxvii]

At the same time, however, it is clear that Iolo did not believe that either his bardic utopia or his personal beliefs could be implemented successfully without drawing upon the extant historical record. His historical forgeries provided more solid grounding for his at-first-glance (and perhaps at-second-and-third-glance) outrageous claims. By pointing to manuscripts that had conveniently disappeared, or that only he had seen, or that had been burned, and by using his own brilliant research to discover obscure names and manuscripts that he could plausibly claim to have encountered, Iolo drew on existing historical fact to weave his own history—one "truer" to the needs of humanity than the brutal record of "Kings and their wars" that supplied him with the raw materials for bardism (and, he hoped, for a future utopian society).[cxviii] Given the depth of Iolo's commitment to actual historical research, as well as his much-admired skill as a scholar, it should perhaps come as little surprise that his forgeries passed undetected (though not entirely unsuspected) well into the twentieth century.[cxix]

Here at last, a parallel emerges between Iolo's history and Gilpin's picturesque. Like Gilpin and the material resistance he encountered in the physical landscape that he imaginatively reshaped, Iolo found the "facts" of history to be "stubborn things." Such facts needed to be controverted if a "truer" and more just society was to be established, but Iolo could not dispense with them entirely if he was to convince his political enemies that his bardic system could work, and had worked in the past. Indeed, even the cruel spread of the British Empire on a global scale, so inimical to the pacifist principles of Iolo's bards, itself turns out to be a necessary evil, since its institution of English as a global language and its increasingly hegemonic political power offers the widest possible potential audience to whom Iolo can proffer his bardic "proclamation."[cxx] Iolo's own contention that, given the natural pacifism and blissful insularity of bardic Wales, ancient bardism was doomed not to spread throughout the world likewise testifies to the historical necessity of English ascension both within Britain and on a global level.[cxxi]

According to this logic, ancient bardism was destined to be overrun, only to emerge later, phoenix-like, within the framework of the very state that had conquered it. Such a logic accords well with Iolo's essentially teleological understanding of history as manifest in his "Advertisement" to "Ode on the Mythology of the Ancient British Bards," in *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral*. In that advertisement, Iolo explains that according to the bards, all human souls, through a system of metempsychosis, steadily progress through various stages of existence, from *Annwn* ("the lowest point of existence," in the form of a worm that lives in the ocean) through various animal incarnations and humanity to, ultimately, heaven. Humanity, for Iolo, is a kind of probationary state, in which souls gain the power of free will for the first time. If human beings live morally good lives, then their progression towards permanent bliss and eternal communion with God continues. If they live morally reprehensible lives, then they are demoted according to the magnitude of their sins—perhaps even to *Annwn*. Crucially, however, all souls eventually, inevitably, will reach heaven. Iolo writes:

> Man, attaching himself to *Evil*, falls in Death into such an animal state of existence as corresponds with the turpitude of his soul, which may be so great as to cast him down into the lowest point of existence, whence he shall again return through such a succession of animal existences as are most proper to divest him of his evil propensities. After traversing such a course (*treiglo'r Abred*), he will again rise to the state of HUMANITY, whence, according to contingencies, he may rise or fall; yet should he fall he shall again rise; and, should this happen for

> millions of ages, the path to happiness is still open to him, and will so remain to *all eternity*; for, sooner or later, he will infallibly arrive at his destined station of happiness, whence he never falls. *Eternal Misery* is a thing impossible; it cannot possibly consist with the attributes of GOD… (*PLP* II, 197; original emphasis)

The infallible arrival of every soul at its "destined station of happiness" testifies to Iolo's teleological conception of world history. On the grandest possible scale, though it might take "millions of ages" to unravel, Iolo's narrative of world history is the narrative of souls joining God in their "destined station of happiness." That narrative will terminate, inevitably, in universal bliss. Thus "truth" could, as Iolo's triads maintain, be said to "increase continually" despite bardism's evident decline: bardic truth fell into (relatively) short-term abeyance so that it could later erupt on a greater scale than ever before. Despite a lack of outward evidence, "truth" thus increased continually: it diminished outwardly, casting the world in relative darkness, so that the expansion of the English state could set the stage for its triumphant return. Iolo's work, he hoped, would ("re-")establish bardic truths on a newly massive scale, illuminating the "path to happiness" to a larger audience than even the great ancient bards could hope to reach, and in the process affirm God's inherent goodness by educating a greater number of souls than ever before.

It is only within this dialectical operation—bardism was in several senses dependent upon the very historical facts that Iolo despised—that Iolo's bardic utopia ever could have succeeded. In this sense, Iolo's work, with its teleological history and its reliance upon a dialectical engagement with the narratives of established history, hews close not only to the historical writings of Johann Gottfried Herder, to whom he is often compared, but also to the *Weltgeschichte* theorized in the work of G.W.F. Hegel (whom Iolo anticipated in using the phrase "the philosophy of history").[cxxii] Far-fetched as the comparison might seem, I am not the first to make it: Karl Marx declared in a letter to Friedrich Engels dated May 11th, 1870 that Iolo's bards were "quite some lads . . . But born dialecticians, everything being composed in triads."[cxxiii]

IV. How to Read Beaumaris Bay, or, Place Reading as Pedagogy

While Iolo Morganwg's conception of history and William Gilpin's theory of the picturesque both make use of an interweaving of fictional (consciously author- or viewer-created) and real (already-existing) material, place reading draws on the fungibility integral to both discourses—it considers both landscape and history open to reinterpretation—while purporting to prefer the real to the fictional. For this reason, Romantic place-reading poetry entails a difficult conceptual balancing act: it presents the historical and physical world as something ontologically and epistemologically primary to visionary or ideal conceptions of existence, while nevertheless insisting that the historical and physical world, as presently understood, remains open to further reinterpretation and revisualization. The precariousness of this balancing act shines through especially clearly in my final Welsh case-study, the little-known antiquarian poet Richard Llwyd's debut poem *Beaumaris Bay* (1800).

Llwyd was born in 1752, in the King's Head Public House, in Beaumaris, Anglesey. The son of a small-time coastal trader, he was apparently expected to take over the family business, as he received no formal education until his father John Llwyd's death (of smallpox, in Lancashire) sometime around 1760. John Llwyd's trading sloop was wrecked on its return to Wales, with all his wealth aboard, necessitating the sale of the Llwyd family household and their dispersal in search of work. After nine months' study in the Beaumaris Free School, Llwyd

became a domestic servant at the age of twelve, and by 1780, he had become the chief steward and secretary to the sole magistrate in a district comprising northwestern Wales and the whole of Anglesey. It was in the service of this magistrate (one Mr. Griffith, of Caerhun, near present-day Conwy) that Llwyd developed keen interests in antiquarian histories of Wales and in medieval heraldry; by the turn of the century, he had received a competency and was widely regarded as an authority on both topics.[cxxiv]

After retiring from his position as a servant, Llwyd began writing in earnest. His first volume of poetry, *Beaumaris Bay*, was published in Chester in 1800, and his two later collections (*Gayton Wake; or Mary Dod* and *Poems . . . In Two Volumes*) were published in the same city four years later. Following the considerable success of *Beaumaris Bay*, the popular press dubbed Llwyd "The Bard of Snowdon," a title that he grew fond of, adopted, and affixed to all his later productions. Some of his later poems appeared in local periodicals, but *Poems . . . In Two Volumes* (1804) was the final book-length publication of Llwyd's verse to appear during his lifetime. Later in life, Llwyd produced the antiquarian historical tour guide *Beaumaris Bay: The Shores of the Menai, and the Interior of Snowdonia* (1832), which was also printed in Chester, three years before his death in 1835. A final, posthumous collection of his work, *The Poetical Works of Richard Llwyd*, appeared in 1837.[cxxv]

Llwyd was by all accounts fairly popular during the early-to-mid nineteenth-century: he published four books during his lifetime, each of which was financially successful enough to justify the added costs of being printed in Chester and then transported to and sold in London. In 1808, after the publication of his three volumes of poetry, Llwyd visited London and was received warmly by the thriving Welsh expatriate community there. While in London, he met the leading Welsh writers and cultural critics of the day, including Owen Jones (Owain Myfyr, patron of the *Myvyrian Archaiology*), William Owen Pughe, and Sharon Turner, among others, and paid visits to both the Honourable Society of the Cymmrodorion and the Gwyneddigion Society (the two leading Welsh expatriate clubs of the era). He befriended Angharad Llwyd (no relation), Sir Richard Colt Hoare, Richard Fenton, Peter Roberts, Jonathan Hughes, Richard Robert Jones (Dic Aberdaron), and David Thomas (Dafydd Ddu Eryri), and his familiarity with the intricacies of Iolo's mythology, coupled with a few fleeting references in Iolo's published correspondence, suggests that the two knew each other (and each other's work) well.[cxxvi] A posthumous publication of Llwyd's collected poetry, funded by over 300 subscriptions from both Wales and England, evinces his enduring popularity in the years leading up to the mid-point of the nineteenth century.[cxxvii] Since that time, however, Llwyd has evidently vanished into a historical chasm, and it is only within the past few years that his work has received any significant English-language critical attention.

This small but growing body of criticism tends to focus on the poem that made Llwyd's name, *Beaumaris Bay* (1800). At first glance a relatively straightforward locodescriptive poem supplemented with recondite notes on local history, genealogy, and heraldry, upon closer inspection *Beaumaris Bay* yields more, and more interesting, material, as critics have begun to acknowledge. In her investigation of Welsh Gothic, Jane Aaron reads *Beaumaris Bay* as modelling a common trope in Gothic literature from and about the principality. After observing that the footnotes to the poem "read like a contemporary, twenty-first century, argument for the concept of Welsh colonization," Aaron proceeds to suggest that the historical narratives the poem and its notes relate infuse it with a spectral *frisson* of past Anglo-Welsh violence.

> For the Bard of Snowdon, 'Britain' (as in the 'Muse of Britain') and 'British' (as in 'British names') clearly signify an ethnicity whose modern-day representatives are the Welsh and whose historical oppressor is that England which excluded their ancestors to the rural outskirts of post-conquest castle towns like Beaumaris. And the poem suggests that this past history is still haunting contemporary Britain: the castle's crumbling walls still echo to the groans of old atrocities and endure as a monument to horror and oppression. But that leaves 'Great Britain' a divided state, with its differing peoples haunted in opposing ways by these massed stones: [King] Edward's 'haunted race' fears retaliation for past crimes while the Bard's descendants are haunted by loss and a bitter sense of injustice.[cxxviii]

Crucial here is Aaron's claim that "these massed stones" (the remnants of Beaumaris Castle) somehow possess the ability to "haunt" those who observe them. Romantic place reading is obsessed with the notion of places being haunted, suffused with a present absence that exceeds their superficial appearance.

At first glance the superficial appearances of *Beaumaris Bay*'s landscapes conform exceptionally well with John Barrell's classic account of picturesque poetry in his *The Idea of Landscape and the Sense of Place 1730-1840* (1972). For Barrell, the primary characteristic of picturesque topographic poetry is a sort of virtual, literary re-creation or simulation of the effect of the great oil landscapes of Claude Lorrain, Nicolas Poussin, and Salvator Rosa, whereby the speaker (echoing his painterly forebears) directs the reader's eye ceaselessly toward the horizon. Barrell's discussion of the topographical poetry of James Thomson (especially *The Seasons* [1726-30]) provides a useful introduction to the grammatical tactics of the sort of picturesque tendencies Barrell reads in Thomson and his poetic heirs throughout the eighteenth century.

> [T]he objects in the passage . . . have to be enumerated in the same order as they appear to the poet's eye as it moves . . . The features of the landscape are, certainly, active themselves – they can snatch the eye towards them – but at the same time they are being so thoroughly controlled by the poet's eye that they cannot impose themselves on him or demand any more of his attention than he is prepared to concede. And the sense in which they are *subjected* to the poet is reflected, as we should expect, in the grammar of the passage especially. They draw the eye into the landscape, but are in turn governed by the preposition 'o'er', as the eye is snatched over them. In other passages of Thomson, or of other landscape-poets after him, the features of a landscape will often all be placed as objects of a single verb: 'survey,' for example, or 'view'. They are made to be passive under the eye, if they are not always felt to be so, and they suffer the action of the verb.[cxxix]

Some passages of *Beaumaris Bay* exemplify the influence of picturesque description and painting exceptionally well.

> Now Nature soft'ning, from the Carnedd† bends,
> And gently to the humbler dale descends,
> Alternate spreads the saline sheet or sands,
> And checks the waves with Aber's* lengthened strands;

> Here looks at Claude with eye benign and mild,
> There stares at Rosa* like a maniac wild. (*BB*, ll. 374-379; footnotes omitted)

Here, the reader follows the course of the poet's eye as it sweeps down from the summit of the mountain Carnedd Llewelyn, along and *over* the softly-lit meadows and sea-coast near the village of Aber, between Bangor and Conwy on Wales' northern coast, even invoking the very names of Barrell's two most influential picturesque painters as metonymic stand-ins for, as the notes make clear, the sublime mountains of "*Snowdon, Cader Idris*, and other impressive features on the Cambrian countenance" (for "Rosa like a maniac wild") as well as the more placid landscape between that horizon and the observer's eye (for "Claude with eye benign and mild") (*BB*, l. 379n.).

As Aaron notes, however, *Beaumaris Bay* represents these landscapes as suffused with present absences—the hidden histories of local places, and registers them as a kind of excess baggage or as a collection of remainders, left over after a place has been digested as a coherent aesthetic or historical entity. In order to underscore this point, Llwyd uses typographical devices (*, †, ‡, etc.) as pedagogical tools that force the reader's eye to halt and excavate the history that figuratively and literally (that is, in the notes printed on the page) *underlies* place names. By arresting the smooth progression of the reader's eye, the devices catch and hold the reader's attention and interrupt the classic sweep of the picturesque gaze. What had been picturesque bits of contrast in color, texture, or time become charged with historical remainders. Reading Llwyd's poem thus becomes practice for historically informed "reading" of the landscape itself: just as the experienced antiquarian rests his or her eyes upon historically significant ruins or landmarks, so too does the reader of the poem. Llwyd is explicit about this purpose of the notes in his brief "Advertisement" to the poem as a whole.

> THE subject of the following sheets is a Summer-day's Tour, commencing and terminating on the Isle of Saint Seiriol, and including the circuit of the Bay of Beaumaris. The author was induced to prefer verse to prose, because it admitted of occasional deviations into the regions of poetic imagery, and at the same time served as a vehicle for the introduction (by way of note) of a variety of historical and other matter, now scattered in obsolete or expensive books, to be found only in the collections of the curious; yet necessary to through light on past times, and the events of a district peculiarly inviting in the variety of its combinations, and the sublimity of its features. (*BB*, "Advertisement.")

Evidently, a standard picturesque account of "a Summer-day's Tour" cannot, on its own, suffice: while verse seems to offer Llwyd the best medium for expressing the beauty of the landscape, giving a fuller (more historically informed) account of the region demands supplementation in the form of prose notes.

Often, as in the case of "COURDA's† meads" (*BB* 70) mentioned in passing in the lines of the poem proper but expostulated upon at length in a footnote, the history that Llwyd's place-reading recovers can be destabilizing and disorienting.

> At the distance of about two miles westward, in the church of *Llan Iestyn*, antiquaries will find a precious morsel; an antient tombstone of curious workmanship, and generally supposed to have been that of *Iestyn*, the patron

> saint; but it is evidently the produce of a much later period. The figure of a man, depicted in a sacerdotal habit, the pastoral staff, and other official insignia, denote it to have been erected to the memory of some dignified ecclesiastic; and, though much defaced, the words *Gryffydd ap Gwilym* are still legible . . . (*BB* 69n.)

Here historical uncertainty and geographical specificity go hand-in-hand in the concrete form of the "antient tombstone": though general supposition attributes the stone to a patron saint, Llwyd's feat of reading makes the true history of the place "legible." But this legibility involves several sharp shifts in timescale, from the present back to the time of Iestyn (that is, the sixth and/or seventh centuries), then forward to "a much later period," then again back to the present, in which Llwyd reads the tomb.

This sense of disorientation or uncertainty recurs throughout the poem, in geographical as well as historical registers. One especially telling instance is Llwyd's description of the Nant Ffrancon Pass, complete with very long notes.

> Here Britain boasts an Ida of her own,
> . . . here the Muses have their favorite Meads :†
> Even now the Nine, along their verdure stray,
> Or, laving in the lucid waters, play;
> While OGWEN‡ clasps the heavenly Nymphs he loves,
> And slowly from their mossy margin moves . . .
>
> † *Dôl Awen*; *Dôl* (Mead) and *Awen* (Furor Poeticus) the Meads of the Muses.
> "Dwyn o 'r Nen
> "Ddechreuad achau 'r Awen." – *Edm. Prys.*
> We derive from Heaven
> The primeval inspiration of Bardism.
>
> A tenement so called, situated near the entrance into *Nant Francon*; its meads, through which the river Ogwen meanders and lingers, seem clothed with a verdure uncommonly inviting, the effect, perhaps, of a contrast with the awful sterility that towers above them.
> We owe to this worthy man (*Edmund Prys*, Archdeacon of *Meirionydd* in 1660) the version of the Psalms, now in use, into [*sic*.] Welsh.
>
> ‡ A river, whose source is the lake of the same name, and which, after a course of twelve miles within the same property (that of *Penrhyn*) empties itself into the *Menai*, near the ruins of *Capel Ogwen*.
> The valuable fisheries in this neighbourhood were, probably, the inducement to build a chapel on this spot, the Monks in general being too deeply read in the system of Epicurus, to suffer the superior flavor of the trout and salmon in the Ogwen, to escape their attention.
> Within the memory of persons now living, it was customary for the ministers of parishes near the sea-shore, to attend and read prayers where the nets were laid

> out, and to receive, at the drawing-up, a part of the produce. The late apostolic Dr. Wilson, Bishop of Man, composed a formulary for this purpose.
> It appears from several poems of the 14th and 15th centuries, that the principal persons in the isle, and on this side of Carnarvonshire, were interred in the monastery of *Llanfaes*; and *Gutto 'r Glyn*, in an ode addressed to *William Gryffydd*, of *Penrhyn*, about 1450, says,
>
> > "Ni weled yn nhai William,
> > "A Llanfaes, wraig well na hon!"
> > *Llanfaes*, nor William's dome, before
> > Contained a dame like her whom we deplore.
>
> And there is still a tradition in the neighbourhood, that the bodies of the deceased were deposited in this chapel till weather and tides permitted to convey them aross the *Menai* for interment. (*BB*, ll. 287-290; 294-8)

While Aaron and Elizabeth Edwards have read *Beaumaris Bay* as a nationalist poem that suffuses the Welsh landscape with traces of English state violence and whose notes insist on the marginal-but-threatening position of Welsh culture within Britain more generally, passages like these suggest that Llwyd is not thinking in straightforwardly national terms.[cxxx] Llwyd's point is that this Welsh landscape *can* seem like an Ida while still maintaining its own stubborn locality. The readerly dissonance that attends imagining Greek nymphs plunked in the frigid waters of the River Ogwen is part of the larger argument that Llwyd is making about places: like texts, this landscape uncomfortably registers and encodes multiple timelines and multiple places at once. Even if the area's properly chauvinist (and British) Welsh Protestants have finally kicked the superstitious habit of importuning epicurean local clergy for blessings as they fish, as Llwyd's ludic note suggests, the very existence of the ruins of a Roman Catholic monastery ("*Capel Ogwen*") within rural northern Wales attests to the international and transhistorical currents of cultural exchange that have shaped the place's present form. Reading the landscape, like reading a text, thus entails a complex act of historical interpretation, as the land itself comes to seem like a sort of palimpsest, marked and wrinkled at different times by different cultures and actors.

Llwyd's discomfort with this friction increases dramatically in later poems like "The Castle of Harlech" (1804). In that poem, Llwyd attempts to espouse a Whig-progressivist ideology in which the present moment represents the best of all possible worlds, and the past is a mere record of barbarism and atrocity from which the present is lucky to have escaped. This, at least, is the gist of the following stanzas:

> Now no Duenna guards the door,
> Where Beauty, Love, reposes;
> No Argus, with unnumber'd eyes,
> The jealous portal closes.
>
> No knight in famed La Mancha born,
> With addled pate and gory,
> Now takes a windmill's wings by storm,
> For one Gazette of Glory!

No caves are haunted, woods explor'd,
For Damsels* undefended;
And say our teachers what they will,
The social world is mended.

Yet, some there are, whose twisted Pates,
For feudal days have fretted;
And they alone, of all mankind,
Have happier times regretted.[cxxxi]

Within these quatrains, Llwyd declares simply and without complication that the only thing worth celebrating about the past is that is over, and that the abuses and savagery of the feudal era have ended at last: after all, since the days of romance, "the social world is mended." Only the most foolish of "teachers" (whose "twisted Pates" recall Don Quixote's own "addled pate") tilt at windmills by regretting the "happier times" that have succeeded "feudal days." Again, however, Llwyd's notes tell a different story, undercutting this Whig triumphalism with a record of the heroism, noble sacrifice, and bravery of the very "feudal days" he affects to despise.

> * The walls of Harlech were, for a time, in 1460, the refuge of that Amazon, Margaret of Anjou, the heroic Queen of the pacific and unfortunate Henry the 6th, after her defeat at Northampton. She quitted this place for the North of England, where she rallied her scattered adherents, and once more successfully met her opponent, York, at Wakefield. The magnificent Margaret, kept a public table in her progresses with the "Meek Usurper," and bestowed little silver swans, the badge of the young prince, on the leading men who favored her cause.
> ("Harlech," l. 48n)

> * The siege of Harlech, and the hardships suffered by its brave garrison, was so much the subject of conversation in the country, that it gave rise to a malediction, still living in the voice of the neighbourhood. – "*Yn Harlech y be chwi*" [lit., "May ye be in Harlech"] ("Harlech," l. 97n.)

> * After Sir Richard Herbert's manly resistance to the King's will, as to the honorable performance of the articles of capitulation, he was never afterwards beheld with the eye of favor. ("Harlech," l. 118n.)

As in *Beaumaris Bay*, there is a struggle here to mediate between the body of Llwyd's verse and the stubborn historical matter subtending it in notes, a friction between parts that ultimately renders the poem as a whole internally contradictory.

This struggle, rooted in late eighteenth-century conceptions of theoretical limits to revisionary practice, evinces many of the theoretical concerns of Romantic place reading poetry considered generally. As we shall see in the chapters to come, such poetry shares with Llwyd the conviction that attempting to portray a given landscape as a finished aesthetic or historical product necessitates a kind of revisionary practice of choosing which features of the landscape, or which thorny uncertainties within its history, to omit. Llwyd's use of footnotes as a repository for such leftover information is not characteristic of all place reading poetry—many of these

poems do not use footnotes—but it is a striking visual representation of the stakes of such poetry in general.[cxxxii] Stubborn local and global histories that resist the Whig progressivism on display in Llwyd's poems must, Llwyd insists, be both omitted (if the landscape is to come into coherent focus) and included (if the reader is to be given the fullest possible understanding of the place). Poetry thus provides the best possible "vehicle" for place reading, Llwyd and other poets insist, because it allows for and even demands a reckoning with such conflicting and competing bits of evidence. For Llwyd, the friction that emerges from this conflict is ultimately destructive: the notes of *Beaumaris Bay* swallow and disrupt the standardized picturesque views his verse would inculcate by driving that verse nearly entirely off of each page; the notes of "The Castle of Harlech" undercut and undermine the triumphalist history the verses directly above them attempt to celebrate. Place reading, for Llwyd, ends with the recognition that no place can ever be fully, finally understood in a coherent matter. Such pessimism, however, does not characterize all Romantic place reading: while recognizing the tendency of the practice to unearth difficulty and uncertainty within the physical manifestations of a place's history, other poets make this act of readerly recovery the very basis of new forms of community ultimately productive of a better world.

2.

A Tale of Two Skulls: Irish Gothic and the Incorporation of Colonial History, 1790-1863

> I lay waiting
> between turf-face and demesne wall,
> between heathery levels
> and glass-toothed stone.
>
> My body was braille
> for the creeping influences . . .
>
> Seamus Heaney, "Bog Queen" (1975)

This chapter examines four texts produced over three-quarters of a century, either within Ireland or by Irish writers. While only one of the texts has traditionally been classified as a Gothic work, I argue that in their treatments of Irish history and landscape each makes use of Gothic tropes in order to articulate a perceived cultural danger that eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Ireland posed to the expanding British Empire. Crucially, each work also finds itself drawn to and horrified by place reading: when unleashed in Irish settings, place reading—the privileged Romantic literary technique for making the silent land disclose its secrets—uncovers both too little and too much. On the one hand, the uncannily smooth surface of the picturesque Irish countryside slides past would-be place readers, who initially fail to grasp onto historical markers that tell the story of the development of local cultures. On the other, once readers manage either figuratively or literally to pierce that smooth surface, Irish places unleash a deluge of evidence attesting to their violent colonial history.

Unlike in Scotland, England, or Wales, Irish place reading opens onto budding nineteenth-century racial discourse, in which histories of social and cultural development gradually give way to ahistorical, biological narratives purporting to explain national and local character. Ultimately, the unique horror of Irish Gothic depends on the conflation of colonial violence and its recipients: place reading reveals that the "Irish race" is at once a contingent and an irreversible product of British colonial violence. Oriented around the telos of vengeance, the Irish race—and its analogues in Britain's overseas colonies, which repeatedly resurface in Irish places—increasingly appears destined to overrun and cancel its violent birth by way of retributive destruction of the colonizer. In these texts, place reading warns us that Britain's buried secrets, its black history of exploitation and extermination, will not always rest in peace.

I. Burke's (Nec)Romantic Antiquarians

It can be easy to miss it, among the hundreds of pages that Edmund Burke spends condemning the rationalism and universalism of the French Revolution in *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), but there is a spectral counterpart to the demonized revolutionaries who receive the bulk of Burke's vitriol, one that haunts the peripheries of his argument. Burke first identifies it in the sentence that immediately follows his famous portrayal of British society as preserved by "a kind of mortmain" of historically consistent cultural values, "a sure principle of

transmission" that ensures that British culture is "never wholly new [nor] wholly obsolete."[cxxxiii] "By adhering in this manner and on those principles to our forefathers," he clarifies, "we are guided not by the superstition of antiquarians, but by the spirit of philosophic analogy" (*Reflections* 34). If the revolutionaries have been too anti-local and anti-historical in their proceedings, too "wholly new," Burke here hastens to exculpate Britons—or more precisely, "the people of England"—from the charge of antiquarian superstition, of being "wholly obsolete." In context, the charge represents an excessive localism and historicism, the mirror opposite of the misguided ideology that was stripping France of centuries of accreted legal, political, social, and cultural norms and values.

This seemingly innocuous phrase— "the superstition of the antiquarians"—would have conveyed a subtle but unmistakable connotation in 1790. As scholars of Gothic have long pointed out, "superstition" was a late eighteenth-century British dog-whistle for Catholicism.[cxxxiv] Burke links superstition with Catholicism explicitly in his 1780 "Speech at Bristol Previous to the Election," referring to the Roman Catholic Church as a "vast structure of superstition and tyranny" that "could not be brought to the ground without a fearful struggle; nor could it fall without a violent concussion of itself and all about it."[cxxxv] But it would be overly simplistic to say that Burke, a famous Catholic sympathizer, uses superstition as a casual anti-Catholic slur. Indeed, "superstition" connoted more than straightforward Catholic belief and religious practice: Seamus Deane points out that many eighteenth-century British thinkers, beginning with David Hume, associated superstition with cultural and political servility. Catholic religious superstition thus supposedly made southern European countries especially susceptible to tyrannical rule.[cxxxvi] Burke's friend and Club-mate Samuel Johnson's definitions of the word "superstition" present an even clearer picture of the complex associations that Burke's phrase evokes.

> 1. Unnecessary fear or scruples in religion; observance of unnecessary and uncommanded rites or practices; religion without morality . . . 2. False religion; reverence of beings not proper objects of reverence; false worship . . . 3. Over-nicety, exactness too scrupulous.[cxxxvii]

Here insistence upon the immorality and epistemological invalidity of Catholic belief ("False religion" and so on) goes hand-in-hand with superfluousness or inutility: superstition, fundamentally at odds with Protestant pragmatism, is *unnecessary*, curiously in excess of requirements. Johnson's second definition of "superstitious" frames the matter even more precisely—to be superstitious is to be "over-accurate, scrupulous beyond need."[cxxxviii]

It may seem strange to conceive of Burke the supposed worshipper of historical precedent as critical of a surplus of historical accuracy, but the position is logically consistent with Burke's claim that the English (rightly) adhere to a "spirit of philosophical analogy" when thinking about the past.[cxxxix] Eighteenth-century Protestant critiques of Catholicism often centered on a supposed Catholic reverence for ritual over the divine truths that rituals were intended to reveal. Most frequently, these critiques fixed upon the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation: to claim, as Roman Catholic dogma held, that Sacramental bread and wine transformed into the actual body and blood of Christ in the communicant's mouth was, Protestant writers objected, to literalize a ritual that was clearly intended to be metaphorical. This excessively materialist worship of ceremonial objects and actions, rather than the actual happenstance that the ceremony commemorated (namely, Christ's self-sacrifice and redemption

of humankind), both obscured and cheapened the ritual's truer, *symbolic* function. Burke's metaphor casts superstitious antiquarians as making a version of the same mistake: by focusing on the retrieval of lost dates, sites, and historical happenings, antiquarians fix their attention on the wrong things. Rather than cataloguing the sort of minutiae that Burke later dismisses as "the shell and husk of history" (*Reflections* 142), antiquarians ought to focus instead on how these changing particulars reflect the same unchanging (or barely changing) national character. This proper approach to history would proceed in "the spirit of philosophical analogy": it would show how a specific national cultural identity endured analogously through, molted, the husks and shells of bygone outward forms, retaining its fundamental character even unto the present day.

While Burke's distaste for excessively materialist superstition is easy enough to understand, his urgency can seem puzzling. Antiquarian historical revisionism, after all, would hardly seem to amount to a serious threat to national identity. But Burke is exceptionally strident on this topic, arguing that a proper approach to history holds the key to the dissolution of all existing societal discord.

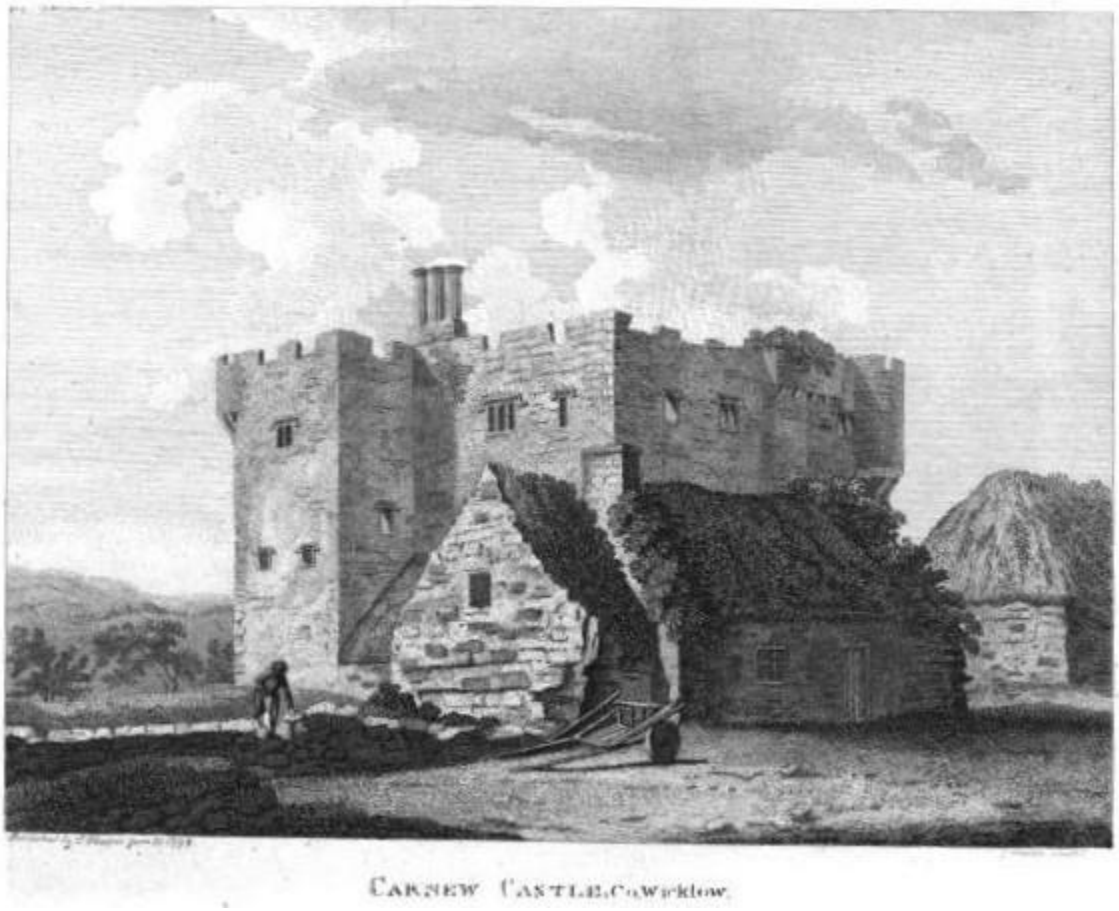
> History, in the nineteenth century, better understood, and better employed, will, I trust, teach a civilized posterity to abhor the misdeeds of both these barbarous ages. It will teach future priests and magistrates not to retaliate upon the speculative and inactive atheists of future times . . . It will teach posterity not to make war upon either religion or philosophy. (*Reflections* 144)

To write history in any other way, for Burke, was to postpone the urgent work of societal reconciliation; it was a betrayal of the project of peacemaking in the historical present. Proper history was above all a didactic science, one that always kept in mind the teleological purpose of social harmony. If history is to accomplish this most exalted of ends, then proceeding in "the spirit of philosophical analogy," respecting and transmitting the mortmain of cultural values to the next generation, is of the utmost importance. Burke here seems uneasily aware of a broader cultural shift in attitudes towards history: as scholars like Peter Fritzsche, Mark Salber Phillips, and James Chandler among others have shown, the Romantic period witnessed the rise of historic subjectivity and, paradoxically, a historical unsettling—even as the *now* became newly historical, the past became newly open to reinterpretation.[cxl] Antiquarianism, with its characteristic bickering, trivial point-scoring, and above all its revisionism, loses sight of the metaphorical forest (the proper social and cultural telos of Burke's history) for the trees (focusing on and championing small-scale discoveries that evidently disprove larger historical narratives). As David Bromwich points out, Burke always insists that the present generation possesses "a choice of inheritance"; here he frets about what the wrong choice might entail.[cxli]

The potential for Romantic antiquarian endeavor to summon a demonic inheritance was especially pronounced in Burke's Irish homeland, where hardly a square inch of land had escaped being soaked in blood shed by colonists and conquerors. Luke Gibbons points out that Ireland is never far from Burke's mind in the *Reflections*, in part because Irish history was an instructively dangerous minefield, one that proved that the past needed to be managed very carefully if it was not to open onto further violence.[cxlii] Clare O'Halloran has shown that Burke was part of a mid-century cadre of elite London Irish who scouted the ranks of young Irish antiquarians hoping to find one capable of writing a "philosophical"—that is, non-sectarian—history of Ireland. From the 1750s to the 1770s, Burke served as an interested go-between for several promising historians and London publishers, before eventually growing disillusioned

with the project and pulling out altogether. Such frustration was, O'Halloran demonstrates, in keeping with broader cultural trends: as Protestant-Catholic relations deteriorated in the run-up to the Irish Rebellion of 1798, antiquarian literature became more and more partisan and played an increasingly volatile role in an ever-more-turbulent social milieu. *Reflections* shows the extent of Burke's disgust: by 1790, his earlier hope that antiquarian endeavor could promote intra-Irish reconciliation had evidently calcified into skepticism regarding antiquarianism in general.[cxliii]

Burke had good reason to be skeptical: Irish antiquarian writing of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries furnishes dozens of instances of place reading that make legible previously hidden or obscured records of colonial violence. Such is the case, for example, in Edward Ledwich's description of an apparently unremarkable apothecary's shop as it appeared in Kilkenny in 1804: upon closer inspection, the shop proves to have been the legislative headquarters of the Confederate General Assembly of the Irish Rebellion of 1641, as attested by a large main hall, authentic (if somewhat broken-down) benches and tables, and, more menacingly, iron-barred windows and "a dungeon under-neath, twenty feet square."[cxliv] The symbolism of this kind of excavation of violent history is still more pronounced in Francis Grose's *Antiquities of Ireland* (1795), in which a picturesque illustration of Carnew Castle in County Wicklow is made to yield gruesome evidence of anti-imperial warfare.



CARNEW CASTLE, Co. Wicklow.

Grose's gloss turns the bucolic view macabre and tersely touches on the colonial source of its hidden violent past. His narration enfolds the violent source of the castle's present appearance

within precise description; the reader-viewer is guided into a careful sort of looking at the castle that makes its hidden history inseparable from its physical form.

> CARNEW CASTLE . . . belonged to the O'Toole's, a powerful sept; who, secured in their fastnesses, defied for many centuries the power of the English. The castle is built of a bluish stone and good workmanship. At present there is nothing but its walls. There are turrets, on consoles, on two of the angles. In digging near the walls, the skeletons of several men where [*sic*.] discovered, with musket-barrels near them, some loaded, the balls of which were of the common size . . . [cxlv]

Here, antiquarian place reading contravenes established ways of seeing in two senses: by appealing to legible evidence hidden beneath deceptively placid surfaces, it insists not only on the historicity of what otherwise might function as a seemingly timeless memento mori, but also on the lingering traces of a violent past that writers like Burke were eager to move on from. The skeletons, onetime retainers of a powerful native family and testaments to imperial violence, lurk just beneath the surface of the picturesque composition, their still-loaded muskets a potent metaphor for the enduring threat that the past poses to English dominance in the present. The aesthetically pleasing architectural features of the castle—thick walls of "good workmanship," turrets, and so on—were originally built not to impress tourists but to fend off English invasion. The lingering menace here is very similar to Jane Aaron's contention in *Welsh Gothic* (2013) that late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Welsh sites were "haunted by history" and served as grim repositories of colonial violence, ever-looming reminders of past struggle that always threatened to disinter the secrets they (barely) concealed.[cxlvi]

This is the nightmare Burke sees Romantic antiquarians unwittingly ushering in, and crucially for our purposes, he uses a metaphor of *reading* to convey the danger. By rummaging amidst the dead and discarded shells and husks of (rightfully) forgotten history, Burke warns, antiquarians are unearthing and making accessible a large amount of potentially explosive material. In effect, they are turning the past into "a *magazine*, furnishing offensive and defensive weapons for parties in church and state" that might be used "for keeping alive, or reviving dissensions and animosities" (*Reflections* 141; my emphasis). Burke's pun is no accident, for by making the past into a kind of "magazine," the antiquarians both make it legible by all sorts of dilettantes and amateurs (Burke probably has in mind here the widely-circulated *Gentleman's Magazine*, which frequently included extensive samples of antiquarian historical revisionism and dispute) and simultaneously transform it into a storehouse of weapons. Antiquarian place reading and violence are inextricably intertwined.

Playing with shells and husks might seem innocuous, but it is for Burke a revolting kind of necromancy: it can artificially prolong or even *revive* "dissensions and animosities" that the past thought it had killed off and settled once and for all. Burke had warned against this kind of dabbling a decade earlier, in his 1780 "Speech on Economical Reform."

> But when the reason of old establishments is gone, it is absurd to preserve nothing but the burden of them. This is superstitiously to embalm a carcass not worth an ounce of the gums that are used to preserve it. It is to burn precious oils in the tomb; it is to offer meat and drink to the dead – not so much an honour to the deceased, as a disgrace to the survivors. Our palaces are vast inhospitable halls.

> There the bleak winds . . . howling through the vacant lobbies, and clattering the doors of deserted guardrooms, appall the imagination, and conjure up the grim spectres of departed tyrants.[cxlvii]

Burke is never clearer on the importance of progress, of refusing to remain slavishly devoted to custom for custom's sake. Lingering with the past, playing with it when its usefulness has expired, rendering it superstitious homage in the form of metaphorical and recognizably Catholic burnt oils and ancestor veneration (one thinks of the newly-founded catacombs of Paris or the much older catacombs at Rome): these practices are not only a "disgrace" to Protestant pragmatism, but actively threaten to "conjure up the grim spectres of departed tyrants," to unleash the monstrous extremities of Britain's tyrannical Catholic past upon the present. It is not an accident that Burke here reaches for the language of Gothic romance, nor that he returns to it in the *Reflections* when decrying what antiquarian practice and Romantic historiography have made possible for the French revolutionaries.

> They find themselves obliged to rake into the histories of former ages (which they have ransacked with a malignant and profligate industry) for every instance of oppression and persecution [that they can find] in order to justify, upon very iniquitous, because very illogical principles of retaliation, their own persecutions, and their own cruelties . . . they invent a sort of pedigree for their crimes. (*Reflections* 140)

This raking through history with "a malignant and profligate industry," disturbing what ought to have remained undisturbed, and inventing a pedigree for what ought never to have been born anticipates by nearly three decades the monstrous activities of Victor Frankenstein, "dabbl[ing] among the unhallowed damps of the grave" before producing a pedigree-less monster composed of discarded, no-longer animate parts (read: shells and husks), one that will wreak the ultimate vengeance upon its creator: "I collected bones from charnel houses; and disturbed, with profane fingers, the tremendous secrets of the human frame."[cxlviii]

For Burke, then, the new Romantic history, best exemplified in antiquarian practice, was inescapably *necro*mantic.[cxlix] *Reflections on the Revolution in France* inaugurates what would become a long nineteenth-century Irish tradition of figuring landscapes and disinterred corpses as the bearers (and potential enactors) of hidden, but still explosive, colonial violence. Place reading resuscitates this latent violence by making legible what ought to have been left undisturbed; like the sorcerer's apprentice, it unleashes monstrous forces beyond its control. While recent attempts to define Gothic as more ideology than genre have focused on British anti-Catholicism as a central preoccupation, the place reading tradition suggests that we cannot disentangle Gothic literature from Britain's imperial past *and* present.[cl] To adapt Horace Walpole's biblical interpretation of the moral of his novel *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), Irish Gothic threatens to revenge the sins of imperial fathers upon their sons, to the third and the fourth generation. Reading Irish places unmakes triumphalist Burkean history and its ambitions of cultural reconciliation by reanimating imperialist violence, refusing to let it become history, to let it rest in peace.

II. A Tale of a Skull I: Bardic Oblivion

No Romantic-era writer was more invested in retrieving the material preconditions for the development of Irish culture from colonial oblivion than the historian James Hardiman (1782-1855). In the opening pages of his first book, a local history of Galway, Hardiman identifies Ireland as a British colony and laments the impossibility of reading the local landscape.

> These defects [that is, in knowledge about the history of the town and its environs], which must evidently be prejudicial to the empire at large, have been ascribed to many causes: the only one, however, deemed necessary to be mentioned here, is, that scarcity of useful topographical information, which may be pronounced as great an obstacle to the improvement of the country, as it is an unquestionable reflection upon its literature.[cli]

Hardiman thus frames *The History of Galway* (1820) as primarily invested in supplementing an evident "scarcity of local topographical information," and in so doing he yokes the history of Ireland, Irish literature, imperial culture ("the empire at large"), and economic "improvement" to a better understanding of local landscapes. The intersection is a common one in other instances of Romantic place reading. For Hardiman, it is necessary to address this scarcity because at present Ireland remains disturbingly blank and unknown—in another move that characterizes much Romantic place reading, a dearth of local knowledge renders a place that ought to be familiar more foreign and obscurely threatening than the exotic fringes of the empire.

> [I]t is a fact, no less singular than certain, that the public in general is better acquainted with every particular relating to the most obscure district in the East Indies, or the most insignificant island in the southern Archipelago, than with the affairs of this extensive and populous province.[clii]

The remedy for this conspicuous lack of historical and topographical knowledge is place reading, as attested by Hardiman's metaphor for his research methods, which consist of "investigating ancient records, *decyphering* the rude and mutilated remnants of former times, and the abstracting, arranging, and connecting of events . . . through the dark periods of antiquity."[cliii] Disavowing "mere antiquarian research" and explicitly advocating for Catholic Relief by castigating past colonial abuses of Irish Catholics, Hardiman's *History* proceeds to read a slew of sites with precisely the kind of revisionist, sectarian results that Burke would have despised.[cliv]

Hardiman's second publication, *Irish Minstrelsy, or, Bardic Remains of Ireland* (1831), presented him with a more considerable challenge. In the vein of Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765) and Walter Scott's *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802-3), Hardiman here sets himself the task of recovering an oral poetic tradition, the relics of which are less tangible than the ruins and monuments whose material histories he traces in *The History of Galway*. As Seamus Deane observes, Hardiman's biography and reconstitution of a partial catalogue of the songs of the bard "Carolan" (Turlough O'Carolan [1670-1738]), whom Hardiman refers to as "our national bard," is another attempt to recover a lost and authentic Irish cultural identity—though the very act of transcribing oral performance itself constitutes a kind of betrayal-into-print, a disfiguring of Irish culture for an Anglophone audience.[clv]

Hardiman's challenge is further complicated by the fact that Carolan, unlike most of the bards championed by Hardiman's contemporaries, evidently had left some material and publicly legible traces of himself and by extension of his literary output. These come not in the form of

transcribed performances (though Hardiman does recover some of these) but in the form of Carolan's decaying body.

> On opening the grave, in 1750, to receive the remains of a Catholic clergyman, whose dying request was to be interred with the bard, the scull of the latter was taken up . . . It was placed in a niche above the grave [inside the church], where it long remained an object of veneration, several persons having visited the church for the sole purpose of seeing this relic of a man, so universally admired for his musical talents.[clvi]

The skull's literal enshrinement, its establishment as a site of pilgrimage, puts the church on the map. As a "relic," the skull functions as a legible testament to what had previously been ethereal and immaterial: namely, Carolan's songs and the itinerant, bardic lifestyle of a figure that Hardiman makes representative of the Irish national character ("our national bard"). In effect, the skull becomes a reading place in its own right, a portal to or contact zone with a vanished culture. The skull's status as material remnant, as trace, rescues that lost way of life and preserves some access to it, making legible the culture that Hardiman lamented had vanished into the Irish landscape eleven years earlier, in his *History of Galway*.

This particular reading place, however, is most notable because it has been defaced (overwritten) by an act of colonial violence.

> At length, in the year 1796, it disappeared. A person on horseback, and in the garb of a gentleman, but supposed to have been a northern Orangemen [*sic*], came to the church, and desired to see it. It was brought from the niche, and, watching his opportunity, he discharged a loaded pistol at it, by which it was shattered to pieces.[clvii]

Hardiman is doing something quite complex here. He is drawing attention to his own attempt to supplement Carolan's absent voice *and* demolished skull, along with the material cultural context in which they existed, through writing.[clviii] The physical shrine to Carolan being empty, it is now the task of Hardiman's anthropological act of verse-recovery to preserve, in some limited and mutilated fashion, what he later ambiguously terms "the Remains of Carolan": the bard's poetic and physical residue.[clix] This task of embalming, or of reanimation, finds rhetorical license only because of the act of violent, colonialist erasure (in fittingly Gothic language, Hardiman declares the northern Orangeman to have acted "in the demoniac spirit of party rage" in the run-up to 1798) that voided the initial monument.[clx] The church still bears, in the "empty niche," testimony to a conspicuous absence, a gap that demands to be filled. Colonial violence, in other words, is the necessitating precondition of antiquarian place reading in the first place.

If we extend this logic to the more straightforward place reading of Hardiman's *History of Galway*, then we can understand the full scope of Hardiman's critique of Burkean idealism. The Irish landscape can only have invited antiquarian endeavor if something in it had remained tantalizingly blank. The history and topography of Ireland, Hardiman argues, ought to be rescued from obscurity, and "decyphering the rude and mutilated remnants of former times" is the way to do it. But the remnants and the landscape only require interpretation (decipherment) because they have been mutilated in the first place, deformed and emptied out by colonial violence. Burke's idealist (supra-material) cultural inheritance, figurally expressed as a sort of mortmain, molted

various physical, material forms in its process of becoming: the point, Burke insisted, was not to focus on the material shells and husks but to use history to craft a triumphalist narrative of the progress of an immaterial national character. Such a narrative cannot be extended to Ireland, Hardiman replies, because Irish shells and husks insist on resurfacing, and their disfigurement is manifest as a conspicuous emptiness that invites supplementation. Even institutionalization cannot rescue Irish history from this defacement, as the case of Carolan's skull demonstrates. For Hardiman, antiquarians do not go rummaging through the graves of the dead so much as they find themselves confronted with the barely concealed dead everywhere that they turn. It is a remarkable rejoinder, one that emerges more than four decades after Burke's initial declarations that received historical narratives were not to be trifled with. But its critique could only have emerged in the wake of another, considerably earlier text, one that had popularized associating the Irish national character with the Irish landscape and with colonial projects more broadly.

III. Tainted Love: Illegible Landscapes and Uncanny Unions in *The Wild Irish Girl* (1806)

The conventional reading of Sydney Owenson's *The Wild Irish Girl* (1806) is that the novel's central plot, featuring the Englishman Horatio M——'s gradual courtship and marriage of the eponymous Irish girl Glorvina, recapitulates the 1800 Act of Union and prophesies a future cultural reconciliation between England and Ireland.[clxi] The novel explicitly invites such a reading.

> In this the dearest, most sacred, and most lasting of all human ties, let the names of Inismore and M—— be inseparably blended, and the distinctions of English and Irish, of protestant and catholic, for ever buried . . . look forward with hope to this family alliance being prophetically typical of a national unity of interests and affections between those who may be factiously severe, but who are naturally allied[.][clxii]

It is also customary to acknowledge that *The Wild Irish Girl* makes heavy use of Gothic tropes and commonplaces: a ruined castle, a dutiful Catholic daughter of a rapidly failing (in health and finances) minor noble, a setting on a geographical and temporal periphery of modern Europe, disguised identities and hidden parentages, a thwarted romance plot with heavily incestuous undertones (Glorvina marries Horatio only after having been betrothed to his father), and other familiar machinery all lumber across the stage at one point or another. But the novel's optimistic ending, in which its protagonists appear totally freed from an inheritance of national violence that both engenders and threatens their eventual marriage, would seem to preclude any suggestion that the novel qualifies as Gothic in the correct sense of the word. Seamus Deane and Luke Gibbons among others have argued that Irish Gothic features a general pattern in which the horrors of the nation's colonial past manifest themselves as monstrous forces working to preclude its entry into or participation in standard world history.[clxiii] By this rubric, the forecast success of Horatio and Glorvina's symbolic marriage disqualifies *The Wild Irish Girl* from Gothic classification on the grounds that the work is too invested in Burkean Whig progressivism, too content to figure Irish national history as prehistory, a mere prelude to national maturity in the form of Union.

Other readers have begun to point out, however, that the novel's concluding marriage is not so settled and settling as it initially appears. Christina Morin observes, for example, that "the

consent Glorvina offers to Horatio's marriage proposal remains ambiguous at best," and Katarzyna Bartoszyńska reads the whole courtship as covertly riddled with anxieties regarding sympathetic contagion and witchery.[clxiv]

> References to Glorvina as bewitching or possessed of supernatural powers abound in the text—for instance, "this little Irish girl, with all her witcheries" (*WIG* 132) and "the enchantress!" (*WIG* 211)—and, perhaps most sinister, she is also repeatedly called a "syren," a reminder that a beautiful voice can easily imperil the listener. Though such descriptions are a convention of sentimental romances, their excessive frequency in this novel, and the context, gives them a different valence.[clxv]

Bartoszyńska proceeds to point to no fewer than nineteen additional instances of this kind of language, and while her focus remains on instances of Smithian and Humean sympathetic transmission of dangerous sentiments, it is worth mentioning that Glorvina is also the last scion of a withered family, one whose lone other remaining member is wasting away in mortal illness.[clxvi] The threat of transferability, of corrupting contagion, is not limited to feeling alone.

Indeed, it is not only Glorvina, representative of noble Irish culture and history, who threatens to infect Horatio, but the Irish landscape itself. The Ireland that England marries in the novel is tainted with a destabilizing mutability that holds a bewitched mirror up for English inspection. What Horatio and by extension the novel's readers see in that mirror is a reflection of broader British colonial abuses: the conspicuous erasure of specifically Irish history opens onto inescapable proof of the violent ravages and limitless scope of imperial ambition.[clxvii] Instead of leading Ireland from prehistoric myth into proper history, Horatio's and Glorvina's marriage represents England's wedding itself to a shapeshifter, and its subsequent contamination by a destabilizing and violent synchronism that renders the borders of empire, and the colonial violence enacted therein, horrifyingly present. The move is characteristic of a tendency that Gibbons finds integral to Irish Gothic literature as a whole: "it is, in fact, through Gothic appropriations of racial theory—emphasizing disease, invisibility, and infiltration—that the Irish brought imperial demonology back to the metropolitan heartlands as the enemy within."[clxviii]

As the novel opens, the ancient and authentic Irish cultural identity that the Prince of Inismore, his daughter Glorvina, and the rest of their household represent appears infertile and doomed to extinction. Their ancestral castle lies in an undisclosed location on the remote coast of northwestern Donegal, sealed off from the mainland and modernity by an imposing mountain range. While the inhabitants of the castle and its attached village speak Irish, dress in the ancient Irish manner, practice ancient Irish customs, and attend regular Roman Catholic church services, both the castle and the chapel are in ruins, and the village population appears to be mostly elderly. The dying Prince insists upon styling himself after the nearly extinct Milesian system of titles, has lost the majority of his patrimonial lands, and has failed to produce a male heir.

If this autochthonous way of life is to be preserved, it evidently cannot remain insular: it demands rejuvenation and invigoration from an outside source. The solution, the novel insists, does not lie in an unabashed and characteristically Scottish embrace of commercial economic modernity.[clxix] Horatio's father's scheming and improving Scottish land-agent Clendinning proves to be the novel's only real antagonist, greedily racking rents, extorting hapless peasants, and lying to and double-crossing the honor-bound quasi-feudal Irish at every opportunity.[clxx] The correct prescription for Irish culture's barren decline seems instead to be a combination of

patriarchal guidance moderated by compassion, indulgence, love, and sympathy, represented in the novel's late endorsement of colonialism wrapped in the metaphor of the bourgeois family dynamic: masculine, colonizing, English Horatio rescues and, by implicit future impregnation, will eventually preserve and reproduce some aspects of feminine, colonizes, Irish Glorvina. Union becomes a vision not of straightforward, unfeeling capitalist improvement so much as compassionate, even romantic paternalist colonization.

But the subtle horror that the novel evokes hinges upon the implied transferability of a taint or stain *from* Glorvina-Ireland to Horatio-England, one that threatens their marriage from the start. We have already observed how Glorvina threatens to bewitch and contaminate Horatio, but the novel suggests that the more menacing corrupter is the Irish land itself—the same land that Horatio's father mandates he spend eight out of every twelve months upon ("that spot from whence the very nutrition of your existence is to be derived" [250]), in order to remain in possession of his inheritance. As it turns out, that land has already been infiltrated by just about everywhere else in the world; drawing nutriment from it involves ingesting what has already been deposited inside it. Consistently, Horatio gets more than he bargained for.

Before setting sail from Great Britain, it is the world-weary Horatio's "*confirmed prejudice*" (13; original emphasis) that Ireland is a barren wasteland, empty of anything interesting or even distinctive. But his first glimpses of the island immediately revise this position—Dublin Bay seems an exact copy of the Gulf of Naples (14)—and Ireland-as-nowhere rapidly gives way to Ireland-as-everywhere. Owenson is especially eager to furnish the Irish landscape and Irish cultural practices with legitimating Classical (most often Greek) origins. It seems hardly possible for Horatio to breathe in Ireland without being reminded of Greece, beginning with the "Corinthian pillars" (15) he sees throughout Dublin: the traditional Irish custom of retaining a child's nurse as family servant was also practiced "formerly in ancient Greece" (39n.); Glorvina observes a "coincidence of style which existed between the early Greek writers and the bards of Erin" (91) and links ancient Greek costume with modern Irish dress ("the bodkin, you know, is also an ancient Greek ornament" [99]); Horatio comments that "there is something Bœotian in this air" (133) and gushes that "there is a fairy vale in the little territories of Inismore, which is almost a miniature *Tempé* [*sic*]" (140); Father John notes "the Irish are all dancers . . . like the Greeks" (146) and repeatedly compares Irish mourning practices to ancient and modern Greek ones ("With respect to the attendant ceremonies on death . . . I know of no country which the Irish at present resemble but the modern Greeks"; the Irish, like the ancient Greeks, partake in a mourning feast and a brief wake [183-4]); Irish Druids, "like the ministers of Grecian mythology" (143), were often crowned with flowers, and "the ancient Irish, like the Greeks, were religiously attached to the consecrated fountain" (153).[clxxi] Nor does Owenson stop on one side of the Ionian Sea. Beyond the similarity of Dublin and Naples, "Ireland, like Italy, has its *improvisatorés* [*sic*]" (22; later, Father John dubiously claims that mourners at a funeral are "professional *improvisatori*" [183]); Father John remarks "it is a circumstance singularly curious, that a sword found in the Bog of Cullen should be of the exact construction and form of those found upon the plains of Canae" (105-6), and Horatio is fond of explicit comparisons: for example, his father's lodge is a "*Tusculum*" (36) and "Lough Derg . . . is the *Loretto* of Ireland" (153). No wonder that Horatio finds "something truly classic in this spot" (153).

The novel's Irish places encode more than merely Mediterranean correspondences. Predictably, its landscape reminds Horatio of Wales (though the Irish landscape is far superior), and Dublin is similar to—though, again, better than—London (16-9). Less predictably, it also

invokes more exotic locales. These include the polar regions (Horatio originally conceives of the Irish as similar in habits to "an *Esquimaux* group circling round the fire which was to dress a dinner, or broil an enemy" [13]; his encounters with non-English speakers in Donegal remind him of stories he has read about Greenlanders [18], and his father's manor house resembles a "*Kamscatkan palace*" [17]) and the tropics (the extreme cruelty of Clendinning is comparable to the abuses of "some West Indian planter" [34]; lovesick Horatio compares his anomie to the condition induced by the electric shock of a fish native to the tropical waters of Africa and South America when he observes "I frequently think I have been bit by a torpedo" [133]), along with North America (Dublin, contrary to expectations, proves quite different from the camp of "a party on the banks of the Ohio, with a tribe of Indian hunters" [16]), the Levant and the Middle East (Father John remarks that the Irish tradition of strewing plants over doorways and entrances was "most probably was brought hither . . . from Greece by our Phœnecian progenitors" [143] and Horatio's study of Irish history reveals the signal importance of "the Phœnecian migration hither from Spain" [88]; Horatio suspects his father's country lodge "to be the *harem* of some wild Irish *Sultana*" [34]; an Irish bog and noon sun, improbably, "gave [Horatio] no inadequate idea of *Arabia Deserta*" [22]; "many figures in Irish song are of oriental origin" [91] and Irish funereal singing derives from a similar "custom [that] prevailed among the Hebrews" [182n.]), Africa (Irish women's "ancient head-dress so perfectly resembles that of the Egyptian Isis, that it cannot be doubted but that the modes of Egypt were preserved among the Irish" [45n.]; Glorvina's body is as "pliant as that of an Egyptian *alma*" [145]), East Asia (an Irish priest stands before his parishioners "with as much self-invested dignity as the *dalai lama* of Little Thibet [*sic*] could assume before his votarists" [134]), and India and South America (Glorvina insists "we too had our Peru and Golconda in the bosom of our country – for it was once thought rich not only in gold and silver mines, but abounded in pearls, amethysts, and other precious stones" [98]).

It is an exhausting (though not an exhaustive) list, one that must have bewildered contemporary readers looking for a portrait of Ireland in a novel subtitled *A National Tale*. Looking carefully at Irish landscapes and history, the novel insists, provides not a closer understanding of what is specifically and authentically Irish, but rather a disorienting window onto a slew of other places, snatched from across the globe. In Chapter One, we saw that picturesque writers and artists stretched the Welsh landscape so that it looked like a similarly broad range of different places from all around the world. But those places are less directly tied to geopolitical strategic objectives than these (the novel's list reads like an index of key producers of exotic commodities or important land sites and seaports positioned along colonial trade routes), and *The Wild Irish Girl* is sharper and more explicit in its account of how its Celtic landscape can be so mutable. That account takes shape around place reading. It is unusual that *The Wild Irish Girl* contains very few instances of the device, especially compared to its prominence in the works of national-historical novelists like Walter Scott.[clxxii] Indeed, these peculiar references to other places occupy the spaces that in other national tales and historical novels tend to be occupied by place reading, which furnish accounts of how landscapes and the cultures surrounding them took their current shape.[clxxiii] The novel cleverly and subtly addresses the conspicuous absence of place reading in two conversations between Horatio and Father John.

In the later of these, peeved by an untimely trip to Northern Ireland, Horatio perfunctorily observes that the landscape is "rich in all the boundless extravagance of picturesque beauty" and mentions that "the ruins of an ancient castle, or the mouldering remains of a desolated abbey,

gave a moral interest" (but not a historical one) to the scene. He then asks Father John a pointed question.

> Is it not extraordinary . . . that among your gothic ruins, no traces of a more ancient and splendid architecture are to be discovered . . . From the ideas I have formed of the primeval grandeur of Ireland, I should almost expect to see a Balbec or a Palmyra rising amidst these stupendous mountains, and picturesque scenes. (191)

The question is a thinly veiled expression of doubt regarding Father John's grandiose claims – if ancient Ireland was so magnificent, then why did it fail to leave any traces of its greatness to posterity? Why is the Irish landscape impossible to read? Father John's reply is multipronged.

> [A] country may be civilized, enlightened, and even learned and ingenious, without attaining to any considerable perfection in those arts, which give to posterity *sensible* memorials of its passed splendour. The ancient Irish, like the modern, had more *soul*, more genius, than worldly prudence, or cautious calculating forethought . . . besides, at the period to which you allude, the Irish were in that era of society, when the iron age was yet distant, and the artist confined his skill to the elegant workmanship of gold and brass, which is ascertained by the number of warlike implements and beautiful ornaments of dress of those metals, exquisitely worked, which are still frequently found in the bogs of Ireland. (191-2; original emphasis)

The intersection of these defenses is important. Father John's call for cultural relativism (entailing a reappraisal and appreciation of the atypical greatness of Irish society) goes hand-in-hand with *excavating* physical proof of an ideal and ahistorical (timeless) national character: the bogs at once ingest and maintain "memorials of its passed splendour." Cause and effect become confused here, for the uncanny preservation of ancient cultural splendor associates that culture with the ground itself, as if it is an *organic* rather than historical development. Father John is linking blood with soil as he articulates an early version of the nineteenth-century racial conception of the "doomed Celt": noble, warlike, poetic, improvident, beautiful, proud.[clxxiv]

Here Father John implies that Irish places appear blank because of the enthusiastic and impatient Irish national character (though he proceeds, in a brief episode of footnoted place reading in the style of Richard Llwyd, to demonstrate to Horatio that they remain legible to skilled readers [192-3]). It is a careful elision, one meant to avoid further aggravating the already agitated Horatio, and it works: Horatio soon tires of Father John's place reading and returns to inattentive and sullen longing for the absent Glorvina (193-4). But Father John is less circumspect in a slightly earlier episode in the novel, one in which Horatio similarly demands archival proof of the alleged greatness of ancient Irish culture. There, he is more explicit about why there are no accepted historical sources attesting to ancient Ireland's magnificence.

> 'Manuscripts, annals, and records, are not the treasures of a colonized or a conquered country,' said the priest; 'it is always the policy of the conqueror, (or the invader) to destroy those mementi [*sic*] of ancient national splendour which keep alive the spirit of the conquered or the invaded . . .' (174-5)

As is the case for Hardiman, writing a quarter of a century later about Carolan's skull, the conspicuous absence of a colonial archive here becomes proof of violent eradication: the lack of documentation of a history peculiarly confirms, rather than disproves, that history's authenticity. If we apply the same explanation to the Irish landscapes that Horatio finds frustratingly and inexplicably illegible, then the historical reason for their blankness becomes clear: there are no memorials of greatness left on the land because colonialism has destroyed them.

The force of the novel's critique of colonialism lies in these passages. Ireland's lack of evident Irishness is precisely what allows it to appear as both nowhere and everywhere at once: because its history has been stripped away, Horatio is free to see the landscape as polar Canada, Africa, India, Peru, Tibet, and so on. The correspondence is no accident, for what Ireland shares with these places is a conspicuous erasure of local distinctiveness: the places are interchangeable because they share a common history of colonial violence and destruction. This is why their too-smooth surfaces glide into and emerge from one another with an uncanny lack of friction. But, the novel warns, that local difference is not entirely gone, only submerged—in the bogs, or, as in antiquarian writers like Grose, just beneath the placid surfaces of initially illegible picturesque beauty spots. The fact that those bogs disgorge weapons, just as picturesque castles eject skeletons armed with still-loaded muskets and apothecary's shops open onto subterranean dungeons, however, suggests that even if Ireland's history of colonial violence can be temporarily buried, it will nevertheless continue to rise again.

The Gothic horror produced by place reading in *The Wild Irish Girl* springs from two sources. First, there is the discomfiting realization that the novel has begun conceiving of national character in a manner similar to later German theories of *Blut und Boden*: the Irish land or soil has been tainted by colonial violence, and the repeated unearthing of violated and violently marked Irish corpses and weapons formally envisions that historical violence as if it were sprouting uncontrollably from the Irish soil. The repetitiveness of the pattern, its presence even in texts that, like *The Wild Irish Girl*, are not generally considered Gothic, suggests that the stain or taint of original violence has become ineradicable, indissociable from the land and character of the Irish themselves. The historical has become the irreversible; the sins of the father cannot be redeemed until they are revenged upon the sons. Second, the marriage of Horatio to Glorvina, and of England to Ireland, intimates that the historical and geographical mutability of Ireland—its capacity at once to disgorge and make present once-buried colonial violence and to transform itself into a slew of other similar colonies (doubtless barely concealing their own violent histories that are likewise ready to spring forth, zombielike, into the present)—has been brought into uncanny proximity with England. The marriage of Horatio and Glorvina has treated the history of colonial violence in Ireland and elsewhere like the vampire of legend, inviting it across the threshold and thus allowing it to penetrate the realm of the *heimlich*.

At some level, Horatio recognizes the threat. After he falls from the ruined towers of the Castle of Inismore (while climbing them, he was "entranced" by Glorvina's harp [53]), Horatio is taken inside it, where he sleeps fitfully. Immediately before his first face-to-face meeting with Glorvina, he has a disturbing dream.

> I dreamed that the Princess of Inismore approached my bed, drew aside the curtains, and raising her veil, discovered a face I had hitherto rather guessed at, than seen. Imagine my horror—it was the face, the head, of a *Gorgon*! . . . I cast my eyes through a fracture in the old damask drapery of my bed, and beheld—not

> the horrid spectre of my recent dream, but the form of a cherub hovering near my pillow—it was the Lady Glorvina herself! Oh! how I trembled lest the fair image should only be the vision of my slumber: I scarcely dared to breathe, lest it should dissolve. (60)

The warning has been sounded and, if indeed it was ever avoidable, ignored. Horatio succumbs to the Gorgon's gaze; bewitched and breathless, he remains transfixed by Glorvina for the duration of the novel, and, it is implied, for the duration of their (eternal) wedded union. Viewed in this light, a novel that has been read as narrating English cultural conquest of a recalcitrant colony instead forecasts the petrification (ruin-ification) of England itself. The temporary burial of Ireland ends in a potent reversal: Horatio becomes the kind of legible stone marker whose absence in Ireland he laments, and the erased colony entombs, makes history of, its colonizer.

IV. A Tale of a Skull II: From Place to Race in *The House by the Churchyard* (1863)

The various currents of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Irish Gothic that we have been following reach their tumultuous confluence in Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu's oft-overlooked 1863 novel *The House by the Churchyard*. As Victor Sage observes, the novel begins with "an elaborate set of frames."[clxxv] It is of signal importance for our purposes that each of these frame narratives takes the form of an instance of place reading, and that each narrator assumes the role of place reader. The main narrator, who introduces himself as Charles de Cresseron, opens the novel by taking the reader on a guided tour of Chapelizod, a suburb of Dublin, recalling local landmarks like "the broad old street" and the "jolly old inn" and giving their positions relative to the still-standing, but sadly renovated, "village church," with its "tower . . . with half its antique growth of ivy gone" and "the village tree – that stalworth elm [which] has not grown an inch these hundred years."[clxxvi] Other landmarks are no longer traceable.

> As for the barrack of the Royal Irish Artillery, the great gate leading into the parade ground, by the river side, and all that, I believe the earth, or rather that grim giant factory, which is now the grand feature and centre of Chapelizod, throbbing all over with steam, and whizzing with wheels, and vomiting pitchy smoke, has swallowed them up. (*House* 2-3)

Here, as is often the case in Irish Gothic, is the notion of the earth swallowing up history and hiding it from view, though de Cresseron's self-correction ("the earth, *or rather* that grim giant factory") not-so-subtly challenges the naturalizing rhetoric of improvement and assigns the loss of an Irish past to a monstrous ("grim, giant") industrial revolution.

De Cresseron's deictic tour gives way, after he focuses his attention on the churchyard abutting the village church, to another frame: many years ago, as a boy, de Cresseron witnessed the accidental disinterment of a mutilated skull from an unmarked grave. In his retelling, the skull functions as a reading place whose severe deformation calls out for narrative interpretation, as the villagers' puzzled responses demonstrate.

> 'Be the powers o' war! here's a battered head-piece for yez.' said young Tim Moran, who had picked up the cranium, and was eyeing it curiously, turning it round the while.

> ‘Show it here, Tim;’ ‘let *me* look,’ cried two or three neighbours, getting round as quickly as they could.
> ‘Oh! murdher;’ said one.
> ‘Oh! be the powers o’ Moll Kelly!’ cried another.
> ‘Oh! bloody wars!’ exclaimed a third.
> ‘That poor fellow got no chance for his life at all, at all!’ said Tim.
> ‘That was a bullet,’ said one of them, putting his finger into a clean circular aperture as large as a half-penny.
> ‘An’ look at them two cracks. Och, murther!’
> ‘There’s only one. Oh, I see you’re right, *two*, begorra!’
> ‘Aich o’ them a wipe iv a poker.’ (*House* 4)

As in Hardiman, a battered Irish skull, evidently the recipient of past violence, manifests a kind of conspicuous absence, a gap that demands narratorial supplementation and generates an interpretive community. The unnamed villager’s decision to plunge his finger into a large hole in the skull literalizes the desire to make it whole once more, though the continued speculation (how did the skull come by its two large cracks?) gestures at the inadequacy of the supplement. Satisfaction eventually comes by way of a mysterious old soldier, a former drummer in the Royal Irish Artillery who correctly identifies the hole’s source as not a bullet but a trepanning, and first tells de Cresseron how the skull came to be marked in its own peculiar way (*House* 6-7).

The drummer’s tale, later corroborated by de Cresseron’s extensive research into local archives and correspondence, begins with a final early instance of place reading. A mysterious coffin arrives in Chapelizod during a thunderstorm in the middle of the night in the spring of 1746; its inscription, as George O’Brien points out, encodes the central mysteries of the novel.[clxxvii]

> R. D.
> obiit May 11th,
> A.D. 1746.
> ætat 38.
>
> And above this plain, oval plate was a little bit of an ornament no bigger than a sixpence. John Tracy took it for a star, Bob Martin said he knew it to be a Freemason’s order, and Mr. Tressels, who almost overlooked it, thought it was nothing better than a fourpenny cherub. But Mr. Irons, the clerk, knew that it was a coronet; and when he heard the other theories thrown out, being a man of few words he let them have it their own way, and with his thin lips closed, with their changeless and unpleasant character of a perfect smile, he coldly kept this little bit of knowledge to himself. (*House* 15)

Irons knows even more than the narration here intimates, for beyond correctly identifying the “little bit of an ornament” as a coronet (indicating that the deceased was an Earl), he also knows that “R. D.” is the late Earl Dunoran, a native of Chapelizod who committed suicide in prison in London at the age of 38 after being framed for the murder of a man named Beauclerc. Irons knows all this because he was a witness of the murder, which was really committed by his associate Charles Archer, a man whose arrival in Chapelizod in 1767 under the assumed identity Paul Dangerfield and subsequent blackmail of Irons sets the novel’s central plot in motion.

From the very start, then, the novel makes place reading integral to the gradual introduction of the plot: three successive instances of place reading, stage-managed by three successive place readers, each of whom knows more than the previous one, slowly immerse the reader into the story and the social world of Chapelizod in 1767. Indeed, de Cresseron can sometimes be quite explicit when advocating the importance of place reading to anyone attempting to understand history at all.

> I don't apologise to my readers, English-born and bred, for assuming them to be acquainted with the chief features of Phœnix Park, near Dublin. Irish scenery is now as accessible as Welsh. Let them study the old problem, not in blue books, but in the green and brown ones of our fields and heaths, and mountains. (*House* 81)

As W.J. McCormack observes, to Le Fanu, "landscape offered a surviving past, a palpable reality"; in *The House by the Churchyard*, the extraction of the past encoded within those "green and brown" books manifests itself in a famously diffuse and tangential narrative style.[clxxviii]

One of the distinguishing features of *The House by the Churchyard* is its commitment to fusing the expansive history recovered by place reading with Gothic metaphors and eschatology.[clxxix] Because of Ireland's colonial past, the novel suggests, reading Irish places often entails recovering cadaverous testaments to an inheritance of violence and horror. Sage observes of Le Fanu's work more generally: "the topography is full of an ominous vacuity. It is all haunted . . . The rule in Le Fanu is that the past never goes away."[clxxx] Again we find Irish places displaying a conspicuous lack, a present absence, though here it is tinged with the sinister. In Le Fanu's own words, taken from another story, "the *present* is the inheritance of evil."[clxxxi]

This inheritance manifests itself in *The House by the Churchyard* in surprisingly – because so straightforwardly – colonial terms. The novel's triple frame narrative asks three questions that animate the whole book: How did pleasant, pastoral Chapelizod come to look so ugly? How did the skull in the churchyard take its deformed shape? And, why did the burial scene featuring the mysterious coffin take place in the way it did? In each case, the brief answer is: violence inflicted upon Irish bodies by English persons. We have already observed that de Cresseron disputes the liberal rhetoric of inevitable improvement by rendering the erection of a "grim, giant" factory in the center of Chapelizod monstrous, intrusive, and all-swallowing: the industrialization of greater Dublin at the behest of English capital thus becomes foreign and threatening. The answers to the other two questions are even more straightforward in their anticolonial stance. The fractured skull belongs to a regimental doctor named Sturk, who was cracked over the head and put into a coma by Archer *alias* Dangerfield after Sturk recognized Dangerfield's true identity and (unwisely) attempted to blackmail him. The trepanning wound also comes, indirectly, from Dangerfield, who hires a surgeon to trepan Sturk in the belief that the operation will finish him off once and for all (the decision backfires; Sturk miraculously recovers consciousness for a few hours and testifies to Dangerfield's assault, ensuring the latter's eventual imprisonment and death). The coffin holds the remains of the late Earl Dunoran, framed for murder and driven to suicide by the same Dangerfield; it must be buried in secret because, as a suicide, the earl's body should not be interred in consecrated ground (hence also the need for the coffin's cryptic inscription).

O'Brien warns that "it would be too reductive to think of [Dangerfield] as an interfering Englishman who disturbs the smooth course of Irish life," but this seems to me an overly

cautious reading—as O'Brien acknowledges, it is surely no accident that upon being apprehended, Dangerfield begins abusing the Irish for the first time (his arrest is, he protests, "rather an Irish proceeding" [*House* 440] and he addresses the local magistrate as "your stupid arrogance . . . you blundering Irishman" [*House* 443]). Nor can it be mere coincidence that the novel's lone English character is a serial killer, predatory gambler (he has built his vast fortune by bilking Irish nobility like the late Dunoran of their wealth in card games) and would-be usurper of the marriage and property of the novel's enigmatic Irish protagonist Mervyn.

Dangerfield is not, however, merely English; as another critic observes, "Dangerfield [is] no ordinary melodramatic villain but a creature from another, nonhuman world."[clxxxii] The novel is alternatively subtle and sardonically over-the-top in its association of Dangerfield with various Gothic monsters: he is by turns "A Vampire in the Church . . . a phantom, with the light of death, and the shadows of hell, and the taint of the grave upon him," an "enchanter" carrying a magic "wand," "dead to some, you see, and living to others," "a ghost," and "half-man, half-corpse—a vampire" (*House* 259, 264, 325, 344, 346). Once his true identity is finally revealed and Dangerfield/Archer is arrested, the text bursts out with a flurry of such associations; the passage reads like a hysterical catharsis.

> [The people of Chapelizod had been] admiring and honouring a masked assassin. They had been bringing into their homes and families an undivulged and terrible monster. The wher-wolf had walked the homely streets of their village. The ghoul, unrecognised, had prowled among the graves of their churchyard. One of their fairest princesses . . . had been on the point of being sacrificed to a vampire. Horror, curiosity, and amazement were everywhere. (*House* 447)

Here the very qualities that had immediately distinguished Dangerfield within the social world of Chapelizod—his wealth, his sophistication, his Englishness—are figured as the markers of a monstrous alterity: what once had been admired now appears uncannily foreign and threatening.

The fusion of Dangerfield's Englishness with his demonic character traits channels the long tradition within Irish Gothic that we have been tracking, that of figuring historical English colonial violence in Ireland as the effective insemination of the Irish landscape with a monstrosity that threatens to break forth and wreak vengeance in the present. Even Dangerfield's assumed name is a double-edged Gothic pun in this tradition: Dangerfield is certainly a man dangerous in fields, where he commits two of his four murders and briefly considers attempting a fifth, but those fields also pose a danger to he and his unwilling accomplice Irons. A ballad about the vengeful spirit of a man killed and buried in a field returning from his burial place to haunt his murderer reminds Irons of his erstwhile associate Glascock's murder and burial in remote Suffolk at the hands of Dangerfield/Archer years ago; the ballad inspires Irons to confess his part in Glascock's and Beauclerc's murders to the local magistrate (*House* 420-5). Nor are the body in the ballad and Glascock's moldering corpse the only dangers lying in fields: the retrieval of the comatose and heavily bleeding body of Sturk from the field near the Butchers' Wood ultimately leads to Dangerfield's apprehension and death. If Dangerfield puts bodies in fields, then they refuse to stay there, and their uncanny return is the source of his unmaking.

The peculiar effect of Dangerfield's violence, however, is that it corrupts the present as well as the past. De Cresseron describes the bodies Dangerfield disfigures and destroys using the Victorian language of race; in passages reminiscent of Gibbons's analysis of Irish Gothic as threatening to corrupt the imperial metropole with racialized contagion, Dangerfield's bodies

haunt the present as grotesque manifestations of distant colonial violence.[clxxxiii] It is significant that upon his arrival in Chapelizod in 1767, the little village begins to teem with traces of the burgeoning British Empire: Dangerfield kicks off an exotic bird-buying competition with Major Cluffe, and soon the town is suffused with cockatoos, parrots, pelicans, monkeys, and exotic flowers (*House* 41, 95, 131-2).[clxxxiv] *Racial* difference, however, only appears as the byproduct of violence inflicted by the English Dangerfield upon his Irish victims, and it is important to observe that the novel's racialized descriptions intersect with Gothic language in an attempt to render racial difference the object of horror and disgust. Here is Irons, driven half-mad by his terror of Dangerfield: "[He] stared straight at her, with a look so strange, and a visage so black, that she was half-frightened . . . he looked for a moment something like that fine image of the Wandering Jew, given us by Gustave Doré . . ." (*House* 424). The racializing effects of Dangerfield's assault upon Sturk are still more pronounced: "There lay the hero of the tragedy, his smashed head strapped together with sticking plaster, and a great white fold of fine linen, like a fantastic turban, surmounting his grim yellow features" (*House* 374). Nor should we be surprised to find the echoes of this historical violence transcending the limits of the past, for even the unnamed place reading drummer who first unfolds the tale of Sturk's skull is himself similarly disfigured by his service abroad in the British army:

> The old fellow had a rat-like grey eye – the other was hid under a black patch – and there was a deep red scar across his forehead, slanting from the patch that covered his extinguished orb. His face was purplish, the tinge deepening towards the lumpish top of his nose, on the side of which stood a big wart . . . (*House* 6)

By the end of the novel, Chapelizod seems chock-full of similar horrors: "Everything had grown to look repulsive, and every face was sinister now; and the world began to look like a horrible masquerade, full of half-detected murderers, traitors, and miscreants" (*House* 458). In each of these instances, the suddenly racialized appearance of Irish bodies is a function of violence inflicted by the metropole upon the colony. Importantly, those bodies refuse to remain where English violence has disfigured them: they insist upon breaching and returning to Chapelizod, whether in 1746 (the return of Earl Dunoran's coffin), 1767 (the returns of Sturk, comatose, and the identities of the previous murders committed by Dangerfield/Archer), the early 1800s (the return of the drummer from foreign wars and the disinterment of Sturk's skull in de Cresseron's childhood), or 1863 (the return, in the form of the novel itself, of historical Chapelizod, presently obscured by present-day, industrialized Chapelizod). As is so often the case in Irish Gothic, and indeed in Gothic more generally, the novel discloses a violent past that refuses to stay in the past, one that springs eternal from the ground itself to wreak vengeance in the present: "the *present* is the inheritance of evil."

The novel makes this point subtly in its most famous chapter, the "Authentic Narrative of the Ghost of a Hand." Often anthologized as a stand-alone short story, the chapter bears little obvious relation to the rest of the book: its named characters never appear in any other chapter and it is set sometime between 1746 and the resumption of the novel's main plot in 1767. The chapter further stands out because it is the only out-and-out instance of unexplained supernatural happenstance within the novel—it straightforwardly relates the haunting of the Prosser family by a sinister, fat, toad-like disembodied hand. The hand is first spotted gripping the edge of the balcony of the Tiled House (where Mervyn later takes up residence); shortly thereafter, it begins quietly and then violently rapping on windows and doors at all hours of the day and night, as if to

demand admittance, and dragging its palm across dirty windows. The family's terror increases after Mr. Prosser yanks a door open during the knocking, attempting to find the perpetrator.

> Looking, he saw nothing; but his arm was jerked up oddly, as it might be with the hollow of a hand, and something passed under it, with a kind of gentle squeeze . . . [Mr. Prosser] grew, in fact, very uncomfortable, feeling an inward persuasion that when, in answer to the summons, he had opened the hall-door, he had actually given admission to the besieger. (*House* 65)

The hand, once admitted into the house, begins to harass the family in ever-more-frightening ways, softly stroking bed-curtains, knocking from the inside of walls, leaving a clear handprint upon a dusty table and, at the chapter's climaxes, resting upon the pillow of the supine, paralyzed-with-fright Mrs. Prosser and then hovering just above the face of the Prossers' sleeping son (*House* 65-7).

Victor Sage has shown that the hand can belong to no ghost other than Mervyn's vengeful father, the late Earl Dunoran: upon the Earl's death, the house is let to the Prossers, who (understandably) abandon it following the haunting.[clxxxv] The Tiled House then remains unoccupied and shrouded in rumor until its repossession by the last scion of the Dunoran family, Mervyn; it is no coincidence that any and all haunting ceases after Mervyn takes up residence in it. It is of the utmost importance that the Prossers, descendants of Dublin aldermen and upcoming bourgeoisie on-the-make, find themselves haunted by a *dead hand*, for Le Fanu is fiendishly inverting Burke's favorite metaphor for the proper cultural attitude towards history, the *mortmain*. Unlike Burke's past, "grasped as in a kind of mortmain for ever" and thus held safely at arm's length, the disembodied hand of the "Authentic Narrative" insists upon coming too close, upon (literally) breaching the walls of the home and terrorizing the bourgeois representatives of Irish progress within. Dangerfield, a gambler, represents the rapid redistribution of wealth from the ancien regime to a new class, one that Burke had famously decried for being "gamesters" (*Reflections* 194). In the novel's Ireland, at least in the case of Dunoran, this redistribution takes violent form, and the loss of Dunoran's fortune (through the devious machinations of Dangerfield/Archer) goes hand-in-hand with the loss of his social and cultural capital and eventually his life. The "Authentic Narrative" echoes *The Wild Irish Girl* by submitting the bourgeois nuclear family (father, mother, son) to the depredations of an uncanny past, one that refuses not only to die at the hands of the new order but also to remain at a respectable distance from them: if colonial capitalism, represented by adventurers like Dangerfield, has established itself at the violent expense of an ancient Irish identity, then that identity promises to haunt those adventurers' class allies—like the apparently innocent Prossers.

It is too easy to read the "Authentic Narrative" as a straightforward anti-progress screed, for Mervyn's marriage with the niece of General Chattesworth shows his complicity, at least, with the barricading of Chapelizod by a military force that serves a British King. That said, the reconciliation of Irish and British societies—Mervyn restored to his rightful place as the no-longer-disgraced Dunoran heir and married to Gertrude Chattesworth—can only take place after the detection, conviction, and suicide of Dangerfield. The violent depredations of the exploitative colonizer must be addressed and exorcized before "proper" Union can continue. Still, the figure of the disfigured drummer, lingering on and haunting the churchyard forty years or so after the novel's concluding marriage, complicates the picture, and suggests that there remain scores to be settled, within Chapelizod and indeed anywhere the Irish landscape can be read.

Part II:

Acculturating the Reading Nation

"Most writers of romance have been desirous to introduce their narrative to the reader, in some manner which might at once excite interest, and prepare his mind for the species of excitation which it was the author's object to produce."

Walter Scott, "Life of Ann Radcliffe," (1824)

"Every great and original writer, in proportion as he is great and original, must himself create the taste by which he is to be relished."

William Wordsworth, Letter to Lady Beaumont (1807)

"Every great Poet is a Teacher: I wish either to be considered as a Teacher, or as nothing."

William Wordsworth, Letter to George Beaumont (1808)

3.

Walter Scott's Transnational Localism, 1805-1816

> He is "laudator temporis actii"—a "prophesier of things past." The old world is to him a crowded map; the new one a dull, hateful blank.
>
> William Hazlitt, "Sir Walter Scott," *The Spirit of the Age*

I. "The dread voice of other years"

In the autumn of 1804, Britain braced for imminent invasion. The fragile truce enacted by the Treaty of Amiens had disintegrated over a year earlier, Napoleon was about to crown himself Emperor of the French, and rumors abounded that his armies would make landfall at any hour. Responding to the atmosphere of sustained dread, a thirty-three-year-old lawyer and newly minted star in antiquarian publishing named Walter Scott tried his hand at original poetic composition.[clxxxvi] The poem Scott produced on this occasion was "The Bard's Incantation. Written under the Threat of Invasion, Autumn 1804," and while it was not published until 1808, its date of composition makes it a useful snapshot of Scott's transition from lawyer and part-time ballad collector to full-time poet.

As Penny Fielding observes, the poem turns upon an important central ambiguity and makes a curious promise to its readers.[clxxxvii] It focuses on a voice of uncertain and shifting provenance that speaks to the reader of dark days to come, a voice that initially seems to emerge out of the landscape itself.

> There is a voice among the trees,
> That mingles with the groaning oak—
> That mingles with the stormy breeze,
> And the lake-waves dashing against the rock;—
> There is a voice within the wood. ("TBI" 9-13)

Suddenly, it relocates, attaching itself to a human body and becoming "The voice of the Bard in fitful mood . . . As the Bard of Glenmore through the forest *past*" ("TBI" 14; 16; my emphasis). The pun here—passed/past—portrays the forest as a conjunction of space and time, for as the voice of the Bard passes through the trees to the listener so too does it carry from a primeval bardic era (when Glenmore Forest had been merely one part of the massive Caledonian Forest that covered much of Scotland) through the centuries to the poem's present, "Autumn 1804."[clxxxviii] By the end of the poem, however, "the dread voice of other years" melds back into the landscape from which it emerged, trailing off into "strange murmurs" of the "hush'd breeze" and "still . . . lake" ("TBI" 57-8; 60). Listening to the forest enables Scott, and his readers, to recover its hidden history, and to recognize that that history remains latent within its present physical dimensions.

The poem is an early attempt at the kind of poetry that would, beginning the following year, catapult Scott to fabulous wealth, critical adulation, and international fame. Its aim is straightforward: the voice of the British landscape, channeled through the bard, reminds Britons of past glory and thereby steels them to withstand the threatened French onslaught.

By every deed in song enroll'd,
By every chief who fought or fell
For Albion's weal in battle bold . . .
By all their swords, by all their scars,
By all their names, a mighty spell!
By all their wounds, by all their wars,
Arise the mighty strain to tell!
For, fiercer than fierce Hengist's strain,
More impious than the heathen Dane,
More grasping than all grasping Rome,
Gaul's ravening legions hither come! ("TBI" 42-4; 49-56)

At its core, this is the implicit promise of all of Scott's wartime poetry: a glorious and inspiring British history lies in wait just below the surface of the landscape. But retrieving this historically reassuring message necessitates understanding places like Glenmore Forest as more than empty expanses of picturesque beauty: such places, Scott insists, congeal a history that can be retrieved and turned to national account in the present day.

"The Bard's Incantation" is interesting not only because it is the first iteration of a theme that recurs throughout all of Scott's long verse romances, but also because it represents the last time that Scott figures the proper way to learn the history of British places as *listening*, rather than reading. In his mature poetry, Scott discards the "Incantation" poem's project of blending the voices of poet, nature, and national bard, and instead elects to adopt the voice of the learned editor-narrator that had served him so well in the *Minstrelsy*. As a result, the speaker of Scott's mature poetry assumes the role of deictic guide to the reader, pointing out valuable sites in British landscapes and history rather than purporting to intone timeless truths. Beginning with *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805), published a few months after Scott composed the "Incantation," the verse romances privilege place reading as the premier method for rescuing forgotten history, as Mikahil Bakhtin recognizes in his essay "The *Bildungsroman* and Its Significance in the History of Realism." For Bakhtin, Scott's poetry turns upon his "ability to read time in space": "For him each clump of land was saturated with certain events . . . This past [was] read by Walter Scott in the ruins and in various details of the Scottish landscape."[clxxxix]

In this chapter, I will attempt to account for the sudden rise and fall of the verse romances' popularity, paying particular attention to why long poems centered on place reading achieved such pronounced cultural influence during a period (1805-1816) that overlaps almost exactly with the Napoleonic Wars. Scott's verse romances, in their search for a national history that could affirm Britons' self-regard and act as a bulwark against wartime fear, pioneer a new way of theorizing culture, one that is at once materialist and historicist in its methods. Over and against the idealist and autochthonous conceptions of national character espoused by Edmund Burke and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Scott's materialist historicism uses literature as a way to rethink the development of British culture.[cxc] But the characteristics of the verse romances that most appealed to Scott's wartime readership—their detail, relentless historicization of British landscapes, and gleeful willingness to undermine received historical narratives—also combine to cast "national" cultural identities as in fact transnational, contingent, and collectively produced. While this conception of culture was appealing in wartime, it came under suspicion in the increasingly heated class conflict of postwar Britain. Scott's pivot to novel-writing in the post-

Napoleonic era includes a careful re-writing of the efficacy of place reading as a way to reconstruct national culture, and reserves the project of interpreting the historical development of the nation for a more privileged figure: the narrator of the historical novel.

II. Reading "what they were"

Before we begin to examine how Scott uses place reading to sketch a materialist and historicist understanding of British culture, we need to understand why he believed that reading could function as a model for interpreting culture in the first place. To begin with, a variety of eighteenth-century texts, including oft-reprinted works like John Mason's *Essay on Elocution* (1748) and Hugh Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (1783), had figured poetry reading, unlike other forms of reading, as necessitating a certain struggle with form. Poetry's "sense," or meaning, these and other writers argued, was partially obscured by the complications of form, even as the presence of formal devices like meter, rhyme, and alliteration were the structural precondition for poetry being recognized *as* poetry in the first place.[cxci] In other words, the act of reading poetry entailed a paradoxical grappling: sense needed to be extracted from the obfuscations imposed by poetic form, even though poetic sense inhered in the very difficulties that form created. Place reading similarly promised that meaning could be extracted from the literal form (shape) of ruins and other sites in a landscape. By approaching places as if they were poetic matter, Scott transforms seemingly opaque surfaces—a blank wall, a weather-beaten ruin, a smuggler's cave—into sites that contain multiple hidden meanings.

In the months immediately preceding his own poetic debut, Scott was especially interested in a specific kind of poetic reading: romance reading.[cxcii] From 1803 to 1805, he was a regular reviewer of modern editions of medieval romance in the *Edinburgh Review*; his essays offer insight into what kind of "sense" he believed readers could extract from the genre. In an 1803 review of Robert Southey and William Stewart Rose's competing translations of Garci Rodríguez de Montalvo's *Amadís of Gaul* (1508), for example, Scott casts romance as a preserver of cultural practices and values: "The popular romance always reserves, to a certain degree, the manners of the age in which it was written." Just as the carefully detailed novels of Samuel Richardson and Henry Fielding effectively rescue mid-eighteenth-century fashions and social practices from oblivion, so too do older romances from the time "of Cressy and Poitiers" crystallize medieval manners and behaviors.[cxciii] An 1805 review of George Ellis's *Specimens of Early English Romance* (1790) doubles down on the notion that romance preserves a unique kind of insight into the past, one that supplements the kind of information provided by history proper.

> To form a just idea of our ancient history . . . works of fancy should be read along with the labours of the professed historian. The one teaches what our ancestors thought: how they lived, upon what motives they acted, and what language they spoke; and having attained this intimate knowledge of their sentiments, manners, and habits, we are certainly better prepared to learn from the other the actual particulars of their annals. From the romance, we learn what they were; from the history, what they did: and were we to be deprived of one of these two kinds of information, it might well be made a question, which is most useful or most interesting?[cxciv]

The key word here is "intimate": what romance literature provides, in a way that staider historical writing cannot, is an up-close-and-personal understanding of past "sentiments, manners, and habits." Romances offer invaluable and exclusive glimpses into bygone structures of feeling ("what they were"); such insight ought to be combined with "actual particulars of their annals" ("what they did") in order to generate a holistic sense of the past. In another 1805 review (this time of translations of the works of Jean Froissart), as in the review of Rose and Southey, Scott asserts that the kind of cultural reconstruction that romance makes possible is facilitated by the genre's proliferation of detail:

> In Froissart, we hear the gallant knights, of whom he wrote, arrange the terms of combat and the manner of the onset; we hear their soldiers cry their war-cries; we see them strike their horses with the spur; and the liveliness of the narration hurries us along with them into the whirlwind of battle. We have no hesitation to say, that a skirmish before a petty fortress, thus told, interests us more than the general information that twenty thousand Frenchmen bled on the field of Cressy. This must ever be the case, while we prefer a knowledge of mankind to a mere acquaintance with their actions; and so long also must we account Froissart the most entertaining, and perhaps the most valuable, historian of the middle ages.[cxcv]

Again, what romance offers is intimacy, here of a nearly physical kind ("we hear . . . we hear . . . we see"). In order to bring his readers sensorially proximate to these scenes of minor skirmishes, Froissart deploys a mass of detail that generates a fuller understanding of the past than a dry recounting of macrohistorical dates and statistics, like "the general information that twenty thousand Frenchmen bled on the field of Cressy," ever could.

Accordingly, beginning with *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (published in the same year as the two latter reviews), Scott's own romances supplement plots that recount national-historical events with massive blocks of seemingly superfluous detail, detail that serves as a vehicle for re-creating the lived experience of the culture surrounding those events. Scott was forthright about his intentions in this regard, affixing a note to early editions of the *Lay* that explains the poem's formal peculiarities as a means to this specific end.

> The Poem, now offered to the Public, is intended to illustrate the customs and manners which anciently prevailed on the Borders of England and Scotland . . . As the description of scenery and manners was more the object of the Author than a combined and regular narrative, the plan of the Ancient Metrical Romance was adopted, which allows greater latitude, in this respect, than would be consistent with the dignity of a regular Poem. (*Lay* n.p.)

Contemporary reviewers seized on this deployment of detail as something that distinguished Scott from his competitors.[cxcvi] And indeed, it is hard to overstate the degree of distinction that Scott achieved, both commercially and critically, in relation to his peers. For comparison's sake, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth sold a combined 6,000 copies of poetry in the twenty years spanning 1795-1814; these were modestly successful if unspectacular numbers by the standards of the publishing industry. In half the time, by contrast, Scott sold more than 100,000 copies. British publishing had never seen anything remotely like it. Long before he began writing novels (and Scott published more copies of his novels during his lifetime than

every other British novelist combined), Scott was recognized as easily the bestselling *poet* in British history. And while, as Scott would put it, Lord Byron eventually chased him from the field on the back of even stronger sales numbers combined with greater critical appreciation, we ought to remember that Scott was a critical darling as well: his poems, especially *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, *Marmion* (1808), and *The Lady of the Lake* (1810), were near-universally celebrated, even in the most bilious of hack journals.[cxcvii] But just as the poems' abundance of detail initially fueled Scott's meteoric rise, so too did it come under increasing censure in the postwar years, and reviews of Scott's later verse romances singled out this tendency for critique.[cxcviii]

More recently, critics have insisted that Scott's novels' deployment of detail and tangent inaugurates a model of history-writing that sought to establish an affective truth corresponding to the lived experience of the past, one that transcended mere collections of facts.[cxcix] The collective focus of these arguments on Scott's novels merely underscores the degree to which his poetry has languished in a critical blind-spot, for Scott was already using place reading in order to reach for a similar effect in his verse romances—albeit unsteadily and with interesting and unexpected consequences. Beyond their status as important and innovative attempts at re-theorizing culture along historical and material lines, the unrivaled critical and commercial prominence of the verse romances during the period of the Napoleonic Wars makes them invaluable windows into Romantic wartime culture more generally. Given the degree of cultural saturation they attained, we cannot afford to overlook these poems' contributions to Romantic-era ideas of what Britishness was, and of how it came to be.

III. "MAZMORRAS"

Like the models of Richard Llwyd and Sydney Owenson, Scott's place reading combines standardized picturesque landscape description with supplementary historical notes. There are, however, several major differences between Scott's model and those on offer in *Beaumaris Bay* and in Irish Gothic writing. First, Scott is more interested in enlisting the device to boost wartime cultural solidarity than he is in using it to critique the prevailing British order. Second, he prefers endnotes to footnotes and refuses to mark the presence of notes by means of typographical devices in the lines of his poems proper. While Llwyd used such devices to simulate the antiquarian's eye latching onto sites of historical importance, Scott prefers a subtler approach, and is content for first-time readers to proceed through his poems like naïve tourists passing through an unfamiliar landscape, unaware of the histories underlying picturesque beauty-spots. Third, Scott's picturesque description is especially formally innovative. Whereas Llwyd, for example, had been mostly content to replicate the smooth heroic couplets and imperturbable iambic pentameter that eighteenth-century writers had established as the picturesque standard, Scott rightly deduced that readers were bored with such conventional fare, and invented (or stole) an appealingly rough and distressed formal style that matched the rugged and uneven landscapes his verse described.[cc] Finally, Scott's place reading goes beyond earlier instances' characteristic complication of Whig national histories, actively theorizing "British" culture as the contingent product of transnational historical and material processes, rather than merely critiquing prevailing understandings of Britishness as a timeless, essential identity.

Scott's reading of Crichton Castle in the fourth canto of *Marmion* is an especially useful example of these differences.[cci]

At length up that wild dale they wind,
Where Crichtoun-Castle [*sic*] crowns the bank . . .
That Castle rises on the steep
Of that green vale of Tyne;
And far beneath, where slow they creep
From pool to eddy, dark and deep,
Where alders moist, and willows weep,
You hear their streams repine.
The towers in different ages rose;
Their various architecture shows
The builders' various hands. (*M* 4.408-9; 412-20)

This is a classically picturesque blend of competing colors and textures, though Scott underscores the contrasts by deploying a dizzying combination of alliteration, antithesis, assonance, caesura, enjambment, repetition, and syncopated rhyme. The green of "dale," "vale," "alders moist, and willows weep" stands out against the mottled gray of the towers and the inky blue of pools and eddies, the moist and morbid leaves and fens contrast with the ductile willow wands and the rigid stone of the castle itself, and even competing chronologies jostle with one another: timeless water and perennial plants butt up against ancient battlements that betray the passage of various "ages." The whole while, the passage's momentum is alternately checked and unleashed, effluent and restrained, by an uneven punctuation and rhyme scheme, and even as the narration progresses, echoing words, rhymes, and vowel sounds ("that wild dale . . . that castle . . . that green vale"; "various . . . various"; "steep . . . creep . . . deep . . . weep"; "wild . . . rises . . . repine") trap the reader in a kind of loop, simulating a leisurely, purposeless way of looking not totally unlike what Rei Terada has termed "phenomenophilia."[ccii] The combined antithesis and assonance of the phrases "rises on the steep" and "far beneath" reinforce the disorienting panoply, as does the repeated contrast of color (diamond, rope, mire, sheep, roses) and texture and time ("miry court," now home to wooly sheep; "mouldering shields," "stony cord," "ruined stair") later in the same stanza:

Crichtoun! Though now thy miry court
But pens the lazy steers and sheep,
Thy turrets rude, and tottered Keep,
Have been the minstrel's loved resort.
Oft have I traced within thy fort,
Of mouldering shields the mystic sense,
Scutcheons of honour, or pretence,
Quartered in old armorial sort,
Remains of rude magnificence:
Nor wholly yet hath time defaced
Thy lordly gallery fair;
Nor yet the stony cord unbraced,
Whose twisted knots, with roses laced,
Adorn thy ruined stair. (*M* 4.424-37)

At the stanza's end, Scott extends the customary invitation to circumscribe these competing parts into a harmonious picturesque whole: the eye "May trace, in undulating line, The sluggish mazes of the Tyne" (*M* 4.449-50).[cciii]

For all the picturesque criteria that the passage satisfies, however, its saturation with literary devices and its obsessive enumeration of detail ensures that it takes on an almost *textural* difference from the verses surrounding it. The passage's formal density, along with its jarring shift from narration (in the stanzas immediately preceding and succeeding it) to leisurely description, invites the reader to take a closer look at what might initially appear to be mere ornamentation. Just as Scott's eye has "traced" (that is, recovered) the "mystic sense" of Crichton Castle on and from the rugged contours of its ruined surfaces, so too does the passage prompt the reader to attempt to extract sense from the castle's superficial picturesque beauty. The poem furnishes this "sense" in the form of a very long endnote that explains how the castle has taken its present shape.

The note begins by relating a series of historical snapshots that offer insight into the lives of the people who have successively owned and inhabited the castle. This dazzling amalgamation reveals the place, at first presented as of only minor national importance, to be at once the product and partial producer of a collective culture that is both local and international, and that has evolved over the course of millennia. Where Whig historical accounts had tended to focus on Great Men whose private deliberations and momentous actions shaped national history and identity to an outsized degree, Scott's reading of Crichton Castle unearths a much more nuanced and democratic account of history. He begins with an account of a baroque domestic drama that eventually produces large-scale national upheaval. The castle was the place where "King James III . . . dishonored [Lord Crichton's] bed," an insult that spurred Crichton to seduce James's sister Margaret as revenge. As a result, Crichton was forced to garrison himself within the Castle in 1483 in order to resist the enraged James's siege, and then, as a result of the siege, forfeited it (*M* 249). Subsequently, the castle became the property of a succession of owners that stretches from the fifteenth century into the poem's present day.

> From the Crichton family the castle passed to that of the Hepburns, Earls Bothwell; and when the forfeitures of Stewart, the last Earl Bothwell, were divided, the barony and castle of Crichton fell to the share of the Earl of Buccleuch. They were afterwards the property of the Pringles of Clifton, and are now that of Sir John Callander, Baronet. (*M* 249)

Scott's historically informed readers, or those whose curiosity had been piqued, would either know or discover that "Stewart, the last Earl Bothwell" forfeited the castle on account of his complicity in the murder of the first husband of Mary, Queen of Scots in 1567. Just as the castle's changing ownership reflects the byzantine machinations of the Scottish court, where favorites rapidly became traitors, so too does Scott's account make it a measure of the rising and falling fortunes of major border families (like the Earls of Buccleuch and the Pringles).

Importantly, however, Scott does not break off his account of the castle at the moment when nobility no longer inhabit it. As the body of the verse suggests, and the note makes clear, the castle is "at present used as a fold for sheep, and wintering cattle." Present-day agricultural workers thus take their place among the kings, noble women, royal favorites, and border lords who have all shaped the castle: these common people (and animals, for that matter) are all parts of the story that place reading uncovers. There is nothing like this in the idealist and essentialist

accounts of British national character in Whig histories and in Burke's *Reflections*; it should come as little surprise that the depth and range of detail on offer in passages like this one took Romantic audiences' collective breath away. Here is a dynamic account of the development of British history, one reflected in the present shape of the landscape and undiscriminating in its retrieval of the contributions of persons of all classes and genders to the making of historical lived experience. What Scott's place-reading generates, in other words, is a *cultural* history: an account of the convergence of various whole ways of life at a certain site, and an attempt to articulate how they produced and informed one another right up into the present moment.

Nor is his account exclusively national. The castle's dungeon, "called the *Massy More*" (*M* 249; original emphasis) concretizes more than a millennium's worth of international—indeed, transcontinental—cultural exchange. Scott begins by tracing the etymology of the term "Massy More," with help from the Latin works of the seventeenth-century Dutch classicist Jacobus Tollius.

> The epithet, which is not uncommonly applied to the prisons of other old castles in Scotland, is of Saracenic origin. It occurs twice in the "*Epistolæ Itinerariæ*" of Tollius: "*Carcer subterraneus, sive, ut Mauri appellant,* MAZMORRA," p. 147.; and again, "*Coguntur omnes Captivi sub noctem in ergastula subterranean, quæ Turcæ Algezerani vocant* MAZMORRAS," p. 243. The same word applies to the ancient Moorish castles in Spain, and serves to shew from what nation the Gothic stile [*sic.*] of castle-building was originally derived. (*M* 249)

Here the castle becomes much more than a rural outpost that played a minor role in an isolated incident in Scottish national history. Its "Massy More" is the product of centuries of cultural clashes and intersections, which Scott traces through Tollius's seventeenth-century Netherlands to Renaissance Germany, the place where a "stile of castle-building" came to be considered characteristically "Gothic." From there, Scott pursues the origins of the phrase and the architectural feature back through the eighth-century Umayyad conquest of Spain to ancient northern Africa, home of the Moors ("*Mauri*"), and from Africa into Asia, to Turkey and the Arabian peninsula (or perhaps Algeria, depending on how we parse Tollius's "*Turcae Algezerani*").

Crichton Castle, as Scott's place-reading shows, was never just a site of Scottish or even British national importance. It is a place that carries with it traces of foreign lands and centuries-old traditions, and as owners and laborers (its "various architecture shows / The builders' various hands") reshape it through the centuries, it continues to register their contributions and defacements. Read properly, the castle becomes a palimpsest upon which it is possible to read the marks left by men and women, from Europe, Africa, and Asia, alongside those left by animals, royalty, nobility, and laborers, separated by centuries but all visible at once. Reading the present shape of the ruin, Scott shows, opens onto a vertiginous and simultaneous insight into multiple historical moments, each of which concretizes the historical-cultural experiences and contributions of numerous individual actors. The place is more than a picturesque beauty-spot: if looked at in the correct manner, it becomes a text testifying to the accidental contingencies that formed it and the culture surrounding it over time.

The verse romances are chock-full of place reading of this kind: there are at least thirty other instances in *Marmion* alone, and dozens more in each of the other major poems.[cciv] By including so many of these passages, Scott transforms virtually all of Scotland (and, in *Rokeby*

[1813], northern England) into historic ground. Almost anywhere one looks in the poems, one can find a collective cultural history teeming within and beneath the landscape's surface. The experienced reader of Scott's poems learns that intensely textured place-descriptions generally open onto a historical endnote, and upon encountering them, flips to the end of the book even without the prompting of a typographical device. Formal density in landscape description becomes a hint to the reader that a place masks a buried history, and indeed, it is possible that Scott historicizes the picturesque so persistently because he aims to nudge his readers to pursue their own place readings of picturesque landscapes beyond the boundaries of the printed page.

Each of the verse romances, without exception, portrays a Britain at war with itself and highlights feats of military valor and gallant chivalry on both sides of its central conflict. Whether his protagonists or antiheroes are English or Scottish, Roundheads or Cavaliers, nobility or commoners, Scott devotes a great deal of space to praising their bravery, their prowess in combat, and their refusal to surrender. The poems' legible landscapes thus become caches of cultural wealth, congealing evidence of the courage, resilience, and resourcefulness that have distinguished all of the inhabitants of Britain throughout history. The appeal of this message in wartime needs no extrapolation, and Scott's unprecedented commercial success suggests that the message found its mark. In the intense social unrest of the postwar period, however, sales and critical evaluations of Scott's poetry slumped, and Scott carefully re-casts place reading's effectiveness and social purpose in his early novels. These were not unrelated phenomena.

IV. The Curious Case of Sir John Callander, Baronet

Scott's place reading opens onto a theory of culture—materialist, historicist, preoccupied with contingency, eager to track its collective production, unrestricted by the artificial limits of the nation as unit—that can appear quite modern, as writers like Joseph Rezek, Juliet Shields, and Evan Gottlieb among others have recently pointed out.[ccv] Indeed, there are times when Scott's materialist historicism anticipates later critical projects in very direct ways. Take for example Raymond Williams's invitation, in *The Country and the City* (1973), to read English country houses as material testaments to and containers of a vast amount of expropriated labor.

> It is fashionable to admire these extraordinarily numerous houses . . . But stand at any point and look at that land. Look at what those fields, those streams, those woods even today produce. Think it through as labour and see how long and systematic the exploitation and seizure must have been, to rear that many houses, on that scale.[ccvi]

Scott may not share Williams's palpable outrage, but his reading of Crichton Castle is indisputably willing to "think it through as labour": "The towers in different ages rose; Their various architecture shows / The builders' various hands."

In a post-Marx world, the radical political implications of recognizing the possessions of the wealthy as congealing human labor can seem self-evident, and strikingly out of character for a writer as conservative as Scott. But Scott either did not grasp these implications immediately or he decided that what he was after was worth the risk. This is a major difference from Burke's conservatism: as we have seen, Burke disdained antiquarian projects like Scott's on the grounds that they implicitly challenged the established order—an order that, for Burke, was exceedingly fragile and required constant vigilant protection. Burke knew that antiquarianism did not lend

itself to the pose of impartiality assumed by the didactic Whig historiographical tradition he considered integral to the preservation of British cultural identity. Antiquarianism's endemic contentiousness, partisan political tendencies, and fetishization of detail, Burke argued, led inevitably to historical revisionism, and historical revisionism, by definition, threatened the established order.[ccvii] And indeed, for all Scott's political conservatism, his verse romances do open onto revisionist theses that call into question the legitimacy of received national histories and by extension the existing political order. For example, while general consensus held that Crichton Castle had been "totally demolished" in 1440, Scott's note points out pre-fifteenth-century architectural features of the castle that remain visible and explicitly undermines these official historical accounts, insisting that "the present state of the ruin shews [*sic*.] the contrary" (*M* 248). Scott is less willing than, say, Owenson is to use this kind of detail explicitly to call into question the legitimacy of Anglo-British national narratives and by extension of the prevailing Anglo-British state apparatus. But there remains, as Burke foresaw, an insidious radicalism implicit in any history that chips away at people's received understandings of how the present state of things came to be. Despite the risks, Scott permits himself repeated antiquarian quibbles with established history in the poems, thereby suggesting, in keeping with his critical insistence upon the historical value of romance reading, that place reading's recovery of overlooked detail could provide truer insight into the past than received histories did.[ccviii]

The sheer mass of detail that Scott collates played a significant part in the romances' wartime appeal. Mary Favret has argued that "epistemological uncertainty and wavering temporality provide the very texture of . . . wartime meditation, of wartime as meditation," and shows that this epistemological uncertainty suffused wartime Romantic culture.[ccix] Alan Liu, writing of the epistemological uncertainty that characterized another era, has shown that authors use cascades of detail to simulate epiphanic breakthrough, thereby assuaging crises of confidence and despair of ever finding security in knowledge. For Liu, the Romantic period is ground zero for the development of what, following Naomi Schor, he calls "detailism," a rhetorical technique that relies upon amassing a great deal of admittedly fragmentary knowledge that nevertheless attempts, synecdochally, to stand in for wholeness and certainty.[ccx] In Romantic wartime, Favret shows, readers were anxious to the point of exhaustion, tormented by the endless rumors of invasion, by the ever-present possibility that they would learn of the death—perhaps days, weeks, or months in the past—of loved ones abroad, by delayed reports of Napoleon's relentless advance across the Continent. These readers opened Scott's romances and found in them not only the implicit promise that Britain would prevail in the present Wars, but also hundreds of bits of evidence attesting to a material, verifiable history in which Britain had *always* prevailed. Scott's much-discussed "magpie-like" collection and deployment of masses of miscellaneous historical detail enabled him to do more than furnish his readers with historical curiosities and amusing anecdotes—it enabled him to soothe the frayed nerves of the nation with mountains of "proof" that Britishness always had been, and remained, synonymous with courage and triumph.[ccxi]

The retrieval of these all-important details, however, absolutely depended upon places remaining legible in the first place. Following his own self-mythologization, Scott still retains the reputation of having been a breezy versifier who composed fluidly, quickly, and often carelessly. But, as the immense amount of learning on display in the notes suggests, Scott's place descriptions were in reality the product of many hours of careful study. In preparation for writing *Rokeby*, for example, Scott scoured his friend J.B.S. Morritt's estate (the poem's setting), for

ruins, caves, and unique flora, fastidiously describing them in his notebooks. As Scott's biographer Edgar Johnson observes, this attention to detail occasionally puzzled his friends.

> Morritt laughed at the scrupulousness with which Scott noted down the names of wild flowers and herbs growing round the bold crags. He would not be on oath, Morritt exclaimed; "daisies, violets, and primroses would be as poetical." Scott replied that "in nature herself no two scenes were exactly alike, and that whoever copied truly what was before his eyes, would possess the same variety in his descriptions." But "whoever trusted to imagination, would soon find his mind circumscribed, and contracted to a few favorite images," the repetition of which would sooner or later produce a barren monotony.[ccxii]

Scott recognized that if local sites were to be preserved in their locality—if they were to fulfill the promise of romance by serving as authentic windows into the history and culture of the persons who lived in and near them—then any gradual creeping-in of lazy generalization needed to be stamped out. The material and the historical were coeval; betraying the one meant sacrificing the other.

The natural progression of this materialist-historicist logic prompts Scott the poet to take actions that seem inconsistent with his avowed conservative political principles. In the note on Crichton Castle in *Marmion*, for example, Scott ends his account of the castle's owners with an admonishment.

> [T]he castle and barony . . . are now [owned by] Sir John Callander, Baronet. It were to be wished that the present proprietor would take a little pains to preserve these splendid remains of antiquity, which are at present used as a fold for sheep, and wintering cattle; although, perhaps, there are very few ruins in Scotland which display so well the stile and beauty of ancient castle-architecture. (*M* 249)

The first thing to do here, I think, is to pity Sir John Callander, Baronet, the recipient of so spectacular a public scolding. The Baronet's reputation would pay the price: tens of thousands of people purchased *Marmion*, and to them Callander's name would be forever tainted by its association with dereliction of national duty (namely, failure to maintain one of the "very few ruins in Scotland" that congeals such an extensive history). Public criticism of large landowners like Callander is very much not Scott's typical modus operandi, but there is simply too much at stake in maintaining Britain's reading places for him to allow negligence of this kind.[ccxiii] The pedagogical dimension of Scott's place reading—its suggestion that all British places might potentially be read in a manner similar to how his own landscape description opens onto historical explication—and the mass distribution of his poetry mean that his poems effectively imagine the entire British landscape as a kind of public trust, caching invaluable evidence of the formation and nature of a collective British culture that belonged to anyone who knew how to retrieve it (including, potentially, the entire nation). Callander must be censured publicly because his failure is a public one: by allowing Crichton Castle to lapse into illegibility, he risks allowing the cultural history inscribed into it to vanish forever.

If Scott did not recognize the collectivist implications of the poems, and of his willingness to rebuke large landowners who betrayed the nation by failing to keep their property legible, others did. It is not a terribly far leap, after all, from understanding the entirety of the

British landscape as congealing collectively produced *cultural* wealth that belongs to all Britons equally, as Scott's poetry does, to understanding the entirety of the British landscape as congealing collectively produced *economic* wealth that belongs to all Britons equally, a position Scott found abhorrent.[ccxiv] But after the rapid collapse of Napoleon's Empire in the years 1813-1814, and especially following his decisive defeat at Waterloo in 1815, intra-British class warfare began to boil over, and the specter of economic collectivism rapidly started to haunt the fringes of mainstream political discourse. The ideas of the agrarian communist Thomas Spence, who had proposed total land collectivization, enjoyed a resurgence in popularity, and the Welsh textile manufacturer Robert Owen began agitating for humanitarian reforms in industry and eventually for the collective ownership of the means of production.[ccxv] Scott seems not to given much attention to Owen or his ideas, but Owen was a very careful reader of Scott's verse (the novels were still being published anonymously). What he read there encouraged him to think of Scott as a natural ally: on August 15th, 1817, he publicly proposed in the *Times* that Scott serve on a committee for the establishment of one or more of Owen's socialist planned communities.[ccxvi]

Given the charged political atmosphere and the incipient collectivism of the verse romances, it is perhaps no surprise that the poems came under increasing critical suspicion as the Wars wound down. Where once they had captivated critics with their wealth of historical detail, formal freshness, and above all their purportedly healthy and "manly" subject matter, the poems were now reproved as stale, repetitive, and, increasingly, immoral. Critics began to condemn the very features of Scott's poetry that they had once celebrated—for example, his refusal to provide black-and-white accounts of who was at fault in civil conflict, his active heroines, and his alleged endorsement of spontaneous frontier justice. The most consistent formal complaint lodged against the poems was that Scott's place reading had become tired: the same historical detail that critics had welcomed a few years earlier now seemed tedious, and the same careful landscape description that they had once admired now appeared inessential at best and boring at worst.[ccxvii] Scott's place reading, removed from the social and cultural context of wartime, no longer served any evident purpose at all. *Rokeby* and *The Lord of the Isles* (1815) were not flops in any traditional sense of the word—as John Gibson Lockhart points out, their sales numbers would have been miraculous for any poet not named Scott or Byron—but they did not succeed, commercially or critically, on the same scale that the first three romances did.[ccxviii]

Scott, as always, was supremely sensitive to the shifting tides of public opinion, and immediately detected the change. He responded to his poetic decline, of course, by swiftly becoming the most successful novelist in British history. But Scott's pivot to novel-writing was produced by more factors than the reductive ones that critics have generally been content to acknowledge (namely, vaguely defined artistic development that entailed outgrowing the limitations supposedly inherent to narrative poetry on the one hand, and the appearance of Byron as a competitor on the other). The shift to the novel occurs when it does at least in part because it was at this particular historical moment that Scott's signature topos and perhaps *the* defining formal feature of the verse romances—place reading—was no longer critically, commercially, and politically acceptable. Scott understood, as he always did, exactly what he needed to do in order to re-establish himself at the top of British letters. A central part of that project was an extensive and dramatic revision of the social role and historical capacities of place reading.

V. "Prætorian here, Prætorian there . . . ": Scott and Place Reading after Wartime

One striking difference between Scott's novels and his poems lies in their respective portrayals of movement across the British landscape. I have suggested that the seemingly aimless locodescriptive passages that pepper the verse romances give the impression of a landscape that can be wandered around in, and read, at leisure. The midnight ride of Sir William of Deloraine in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* is an interesting example. Spanning ten stanzas, two cantos, and twelve pages in the first edition, Scott's description invites the reader to encounter the landscape at a variety of speeds and in several levels of detail. The passage begins as follows.

> Soon in his saddle sate he fast,
> And soon the steep descent he past;
> Soon crossed the sounding barbican,
> And soon the Teviot side he won.
> Eastward the wooded path he rode;
> Green hazels o'er his basnet nod:
> He passed the Peel of Goldiland,
> And crossed old Borthwick's roaring strand;
> Dimly he viewed the Moat-hill's mound,
> Where Druid shades still flitted round:
> In Hawick twinkled many a light;
> Behind him soon they set in night;
> And soon he spurred his courser keen
> Beneath the tower of Hazeldean. (*Lay* 33)

Spurred by the repetition of "soon" and inescapable bristling "s," "t," "st," and "z/ts" sounds, not to mention the rapidity of the meter (no line reaches the ten syllables of a standard picturesque pentameter, and most swing along in fairly regular—by Scott's standards—octosyllabics), the reader might well rush through these scenes and those similarly enumerated in the following stanzas in an attempt to keep up with the indefatigable Deloraine. But these places, so hurriedly blown past by the knight (to whom, of course, they are all old news), also offer the inexperienced reader the opportunity to know them better: Scott includes a brief footnote explicating "The Peel of Goldiland" (*Lay* 33) as well as unmarked place reading endnotes furnishing more description and historical context for "the Moat-hill's mound" and "the tower of Hazeldean" (*Lay* 231-2). The pattern holds for the rest of the ride: other fleetingly glimpsed reading places like "Minto-crags" (*Lay* 34), "Ancient Riddell's fair domain," (*Lay* 35), "Halidon" (*Lay* 36), "Old Melros'" Abbey (*Lay* 37), and "St. David's ruined pile" (*Lay* 44) can all be revisited and dawdled over in very long endnotes (*Lay* 231-8). These places are more than mere furniture surrounding the poem's central action—they are in effect a library preserving several centuries' worth of Border culture, and if examined carefully, they can restock the landscape with a long and rich history. The passage, in other words, invites and rewards curious and patient re-reading.

This is not the case in the early novels (though of course they invite re-reading in other ways). Take for example the famous address to the reader at the beginning of Volume II of *Waverley* (1814), in which Scott's narrator establishes who is really in charge of the speed at which the narrative will unfold.

> Shall this be a short or a long chapter?—This is a question in which you, gentle reader, have no vote, however much you may be interested in the consequences;

> just as probably you may (like myself) have nothing to do with the imposing of a new tax, excepting the trifling circumstance of being obliged to pay it . . . it lies within my arbitrary power to extend my materials as I think proper[.] (*W* 121)

Or see the likening of the narrative to "a humble English post-chaise" at the end of chapter five.

> Mine is a humble English post-chaise, drawn upon four wheels, and keeping his Majesty's highway. Those who dislike the vehicle may leave it at the next halt, and wait for the conveyance of Prince Hussein's tapestry, or Malek the Weaver's flying sentry-box. (*W* 26)

We are now quite far from the poems' encouragement to readers to browse through dozens of reading places scattered across Britain—and across the properties of many different owners—on their own time. The business of conducting the reader through the narrative has been arrogated by a peremptory narrator, one who insists upon his own "arbitrary power" and, perhaps more strikingly, sniffs that there will be no romantic straying from "his Majesty's highway," at least under his watch.[ccxix] It bears mentioning, too, that there is a much more restrictive sense of Englishness on display here than the transnational Britishness that the verse romances sketched: humble post-chaises belong, but "Hussein" and "Malek" decidedly do not. Overall, the difference is one of *control*: in the poems, the reader was free to wander through a lovingly textured landscape and to recover a collective international history congealed therein; in the novels, the narrator constantly reminds the reader of his presence and supervision.[ccxx]

Another, related difference between the poems and the novels lies in the existence of the reading places that appear in each. The poems read actually existing places and indeed occasionally provide their readers with more or less explicit instructions as to how to find them.[ccxxi] In the novels, however, the reading places are mostly fictional: "the top of the Shinny-heuch" (*W* 62), for example, or "the Kaim of Kinprunes" in *The Antiquary* (1816).[ccxxii] The outward form of the place reading on offer in the novels remains broadly recognizable, as Evan Dhu Maccombich's narration of the history of "the pass of Bally-brough" to Edward Waverley demonstrates.

> "This," said Evan, "is the pass of Bally-Brough, which was kept in former times by ten of the clan Donnochie against a hundred of the low country carls. The graves of the slain are still to be seen in that little corri, or bottom, on the opposite side of the burn—if your eyes are good you may see the green specks among the heather . . . " (*W* 82)

This passage immediately follows a long paragraph of extensive picturesque description and continues to emphasize characteristically picturesque contrasts in color, texture, and time (green graves, heather, and the clear "burn" or stream). It also begins with a deictic focus on easily overlooked detail, and from that detail extracts an initially obscured history: the graves, initially (literally) only bits of picturesque color, in fact tell a story about the bravery and ferocity of a Highland clan. But the fictionality of the reading place arrests the reader's extraction of history from it—there is no explicating footnote here, and because the pass of Bally-Brough does not really exist, what we learn from Evan is all that we can ever glean from the place itself. Its history and its appearance are artificially limited and thus absolutely controlled, and unlike in the

dizzying place reading of Crichton Castle, here we cannot trace the ultimate cause of the place's appearance further back than the lone event, and farther beyond the circumscribed context, that Evan furnishes.

What happens next demonstrates the single greatest difference between place reading in the novels and the poems: Evan, like the novels' other place readers, is made to look foolish.

> "See, there is an earn, which you southrons call an eagle—you have no such bird in England—he is going to fetch his supper from the Laird of Bradwardine's braes, but I'll send a slug after him." He fired his piece accordingly, but missed the superb monarch of the skies, who, without noticing the attempt to annoy him, continued his majestic flight to the southward . . . Evan, a little disconcerted at having missed his mark, when he meant to have displayed peculiar dexterity, covered his confusion by whistling part of a pibroch as he reloaded his piece, and proceeded in silence up the pass. (*W* 82)

Structurally, Evan's identification of the eagle parallels his description of the pass of Bally-Brough: he begins by pointing out and capturing local difference for an outsider, meaning "to have displayed peculiar dexterity" in the process. By "miss[ing] his mark" in the later instance, however, Evan reveals the limits of his local mastery, and any further attempts at place reading, or at sharing other kinds of local information, taper into embarrassed silence.[ccxxiii]

The effect is still more pronounced in the celebrated failed place reading featured in the opening pages of *The Antiquary*. After guiding Lovel to the Kaim of Kinprunes, Jonathan Oldbuck excitedly reads several marks on the landscape as proof that they are standing on the site of the "Prætorium" (general's tent) of Gnaeus Julius Agricola, and by extension in the center of the last Roman fortress in Britain, which Oldbuck believes must be the long-lost site of the final battle between the Romans and the ancient Caledonians (*A* 28-30). His "ecstatic description" is rudely interrupted, however, by the sudden appearance of the wandering beggar Edie Ochiltree, who scoffs at this fanciful history and interjects "Prætorian here, Prætorian there, I mind the bigging o't" (that is, "I remember the building of it"). Flabbergasted, Oldbuck attempts to dispute Edie's alternative history of the "bit bourock" (Edie insists it was built "just for a bield [shelter] at auld Aiken Drum's bridal") before lapsing into a sullen silence very much like Evan Dhu's after missing the eagle.

> [G]entle Reader, if thou hast ever beheld the visage of a damsel of sixteen, whose romance of true love has been blown up by some untimely discovery, or of a child of ten years, whose castle of cards has been blown down by a malicious companion, I can safely aver to you, that Jonathan Oldbuck of Monkbarns looked neither more wise nor less disconcerted. (*A* 31)

Unmanned by his own overly ambitious place reading, Oldbuck, like Evan, eventually slinks away, the target of the narrator's derision and recipient of the reader's laughter.

It is quite beside the point to quibble about which place history—Oldbuck's or Edie's—is actually true: the narrator certainly does not intervene to tell us. Scott's point is that place reading is a pseudohistorical activity whose epistemological authority is peculiarly vulnerable, even to men of Edie's social class: as Edie points out, Oldbuck is so convinced of his recovery of the past that he sees "Prætorians" (or praetoria) "here . . . there" and everywhere, regardless of

whether they ever really existed. Oldbuck's vulnerability to Edie's counter-history reveals place reading as a dangerous activity, one in which large landowners can be made to look foolish by beggars. This kind of humor carries a sharper edge in 1816—with lower-class unrest on the rise and the Spencean-led Spa Fields riots on their way—than it did even in 1808, when Scott was comfortable chastising Sir John Callander in public.

The incident, of course, is based on a variety of similar experiences in Scott's and his friends' private lives as well as more publicly known instances of antiquarian bathos.[ccxxiv] But Scott's self-mockery is more directed at the seriousness with which he treated place reading in the poems than critics have yet realized. Oldbuck's greatest professional ambition, if he can be said to have such a thing, is to furnish "historical and critical notes" full of "local information" for a "grand old-fashioned historical poem" which he hopes Lovel will versify for him (*A* 107). The poem, Oldbuck is certain, "will suit the present taste" because it will describe the ancient Caledonians' defeat of the invading Romans and so appeal to a national audience that is currently uneasy about the prospect of an invasion by Revolutionary France (indeed, the novel ends with a false-alarm invasion scare).[ccxxv] In other words, Oldbuck wishes to help write a wartime place reading poem very much like the verse romances that Scott produced ten to fifteen years after the period in which the novel is set, the mid-1790s. The twist here, of course, is that unlike in the poems, where place reading facilitated the authentic recovery of real historical cultures, Scott is here retroactively claiming that his verse romances were built upon quicksand: though they purported to recover hidden histories from the present landscape, in actuality these acts of recovery were always as epistemologically uncertain—and as politically risky—as Oldbuck's.

What we are left with in the novels is a hollowed-out shell of place reading, capable of identifying fatuous characters, but *not* real (and further explorable) cultural histories. Beyond merely removing reading places from the material world, Scott's novels recast place reading as a deeply unserious and hobbyhorsical pastime, rather than a way of tracing the formation of the present status quo and gleaning serious insight into the historical development of British culture. Emptied of its theoretical ambition and its political potential, the place reading that survives in the novels performs a purely formal function, flagging specific characters as overly ambitious—if lovable—fools. Scott has so thoroughly recast the device in his novels that hardly a trace of its radical history remains.

Scott needed to make his place readers fools, and to cast place reading as a dubious method for interpreting the past, so that he could replace the implicit collectivism and transnational materialist historicism of the verse romances with the more carefully controlled exposition facilitated by his "arbitrary" authorial persona. If we were to form our impressions of place reading now based on how it appears in Scott's novels, which have become probably the most famous instances of the device, then we would see it not as it once was, but as the older Scott wanted it to appear: neutered and purged of the very characteristics that once made it so appealing to wartime audiences. A careful reading of the poems, however, reveals that there is more to the topos than initially meets the eye. Like the initially blank reading places that appear in the body of his poems, places he insisted on re-filling with historical context and content, Scott's novelistic place readings are only empty and ornamental if we refuse to recover the history—materialist, contingent, and transnational—that their form both conceals and congeals.

4.

The Global Parish: Localism, Anglicanism, Empire

> I see around me here
> Things which you cannot see . . .
>
> William Wordsworth, *The Excursion*, Book I

> what I felt in *Marmion* I feel still more in *The Lady of the Lake*—viz.—that a man accustomed to cast words in metre, and familiar with descriptive Poets and Tourists, himself a Picturesque Tourist, must be troubled with a mental strangury, if he could not lift up his leg six times at six different corners, and each time p— a canto . . .
>
> Samuel Taylor Coleridge to Wordsworth, September 1810

The end of the Napoleonic Wars signaled the dawn of a new era of British global hegemony, and catalyzed a rush of writing eager to re-examine the past, present, and future of national cultural identity. Among the many competing accounts of why Britain had acceded to its position as queen among the nations, and of how it could sustain its preeminence, William Wordsworth's has often been overlooked. Wordsworth's postwar poem *The Excursion* (1814) has been the subject of steady scholarly attention in recent years, but its influence within the Romantic period, and the nineteenth century more generally, remains underestimated.[ccxxvi] *The Excursion* imagines a global British society acculturated by a joint project of literacy training and place reading, overseen by a secularized Church of England. As the nineteenth century progressed, writers like Samuel Taylor Coleridge and John Ruskin were both intrigued and repelled by elements of the poem's vision, and their crypto-feudal utopian writings disavow the materialist underpinnings of Romantic place reading even as they enthusiastically embrace Wordsworth's vision of the structural advantages the Church offered for educating the masses. It is with this turn away from place reading's materialist historicism that my dissertation ends: Coleridge reclaimed the Romantic localist tradition under the banner of a reactionary Anglican idealism, and his Tory socialism snuffed out the transnational conception of place that had emerged across the British Isles around the turn of the nineteenth century.

I. "A plague upon your industrious Antiquarianism": Wordsworth, Scott, and Place Reading

While Wordsworth and others in his circle—especially Coleridge—sneered at its supposed lack of sophistication, Scott's poetry was an important and underexamined influence on Wordsworth (along with virtually every other poet active in Britain) in the years between 1807 and 1814. By the time *The Excursion* was published in 1814, Scott's influence on the British poetic scene was waning but still considerable—critics had begun to complain about his repetitiveness, but the verse romances continued to sell by the tens of thousands and he had just refused the post of Poet Laureate in 1813. Beyond paying mutually pleasing visits to one another in 1803 and 1805 and corresponding about one another's published poems, Wordsworth asked for and received Scott's help with *The White Doe of Rylstone* (begun in 1807; published 1815), a place reading romance that quite clearly rips off *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805) and *Marmion* (1808) in subject matter and style. This is not to say, of course, that the two agreed on all the finer points of poetry

writing. In their correspondence about *The White Doe*, for example, Scott pointed out that Wordsworth's plot was historically inaccurate: the real-life Nortons were not, as Wordsworth had it, killed for their part in the 1569 Rising of the North, but had instead escaped to the Continent. Wordsworth wrote back exasperatedly, wishing "a plague upon your industrious Antiquarianism, which has put my fine story to confusion," and refused to rewrite the poem, a decision which Scott remarked upon archly in a letter to Robert Southey.[ccxxvii] Much later in life, and more seriously, Wordsworth took aim at Scott's fastidious note-taking and insistence upon exact fidelity in landscape description:

> Nature does not permit an inventory to be made of her charms! He should have left his pencil and notebook at home; fixed his eye, as he walked, with a reverent attention on all that surrounded him, and taken all into a heart that could understand and enjoy. Then, after several days had passed by, he should have interrogated his memory as to the scene. He would have discovered that while much of what he admired was preserved to him, much was also wisely obliterated.[ccxxviii]

There is much here that characterizes the differing poetic theories and practices of Scott and Wordsworth: since writing the "Preface" to *Lyrical Ballads* (1800), for example, Wordsworth had stressed that a good poet needed to distance himself from immediate stimuli and extolled the unconscious editorial power of the reflecting mind.[ccxxix] It is also an exceptionally useful starting point for distinguishing Wordsworth's model of place reading from Scott's.

Wordsworth's enduring interest in place reading is well established. More than half a century ago, Geoffrey Hartman observed of the poems he called Wordsworth's "nature inscriptions" "the poet *reads* the landscape as if it were a monument or grave"; much more recently, Alan Bewell has argued that Wordsworth "learned from [William] Bartram how to read the life of human beings in the natures that they left behind."[ccxxx] Wordsworth tends to use place reading in one of three ways. First, as in poems like "Lines left upon a Seat in a Yew-Tree" (1798), the device retrieves a didactic message from a picturesque landscape; poems of this class demonstrate Wordsworth's debts to the eighteenth-century locodescriptive poetic tradition most clearly. Second, in works like "Poems On the Naming of Places" (1795-1800), the wrinkled and broken surfaces of specific sites prompt Wordsworth to recall "little Incidents . . . or feelings" that "have given to such places a private and peculiar interest."[ccxxxi] Third, in poems like "The Brothers" (1800), "Hart-Leap Well" (1800), "Michael" (1800), *The White Doe*, and *The Excursion*, Wordsworth recovers what he calls in "Michael" "passions that were not my own": specific cultural memories that belong to a community of which the speaker is not a part.[ccxxxii] This latter class of place reading poems is the one that is closest to Scott's model: both writers are interested in rescuing vanishing or vanished ways of life from freshly depopulated—and, in the age of picturesque tourism, newly commercialized—landscapes.

Importantly, all of Wordsworth's place reading poems share an interest in reconstructing the past from a position that, from the beginning, forfeits claims to holism. While Scott had attempted to use antiquarian-historical and geographical precision to help conjure an immersive, "romantic" experience of past ways of life in almost immediate sensory immediacy, Wordsworth is less confident that the past can ever really be recovered, and more interested in putting isolated fragments of bygone ways of life to use in the present.[ccxxxiii] Wordsworth shares Scott's early interest in the democratic potential inherent to the device, but, as was the case in the poets'

respective attitudes towards landscape description, rejects Scott's exacting historical precision altogether, recognizing implicitly that any attempt to read the past is really an attempt to write the future.

This pattern emerges most clearly in "Michael." The poem begins with an extended passage of deixis whose repeated prepositions and cliched scenery combine to create the effect of a picturesque tour in miniature. "If *from* the public way you turn your steps . . . *up* . . . Green-head Gill," continue "*beside* that boisterous Brook," into "a hidden valley" or "Dell," and then, once again, look "*beside* the brook," you will find, amongst "a few sheep, and rocks and stones, and kites / That overhead are sailing in the sky," a properly picturesque "straggling heap of unhewn stones" (1-15; added emphasis). A preponderance of countable nouns—"sheep, and rocks and stones, and kites"—suggests not Scott's fastidiously detailed landscapes, but rather the "simple parts, infinitely varied" recombinatory logic of William Gilpin's picturesque theory.[ccxxxiv] As in other models of Romantic place reading, however, this picturesque scene soon evaporates, revealing an underlying history. Wordsworth's metaphors for excavating this history are explicitly literary: the poem's "green Valleys, and the Streams and Rocks . . . *like a book* preserv'd the memory" (63; 70; added emphasis) of Michael's actions among and upon them; of the "straggling heap of unhewn stones," Wordsworth declares "to that place a *story* appertains" (18; added emphasis).

While Wordsworth's personification and litotes ("straggling . . . unhewn") hint at an absent human presence subtly suffusing what at first appears to be pure picturesque ornamentation, the recovery of this hidden history occupies the majority of the poem, and it is only after more than three hundred lines that the heap of stones finally becomes legible as "a Sheep-fold" (334).[ccxxxv] As would become the case in Scott's romances, reading the history of this seemingly remote place reveals it to be shot through with traces of the wider nation and world. A nearby chapel, for example, has been floored with "Marble . . . sent from foreign lands" by a local boy who "had grown wond'rous rich" managing his wealthy London master's "merchandise / Beyond the seas" (273-80). Likewise, the sheep-fold remains in its unfinished present shape because of distant events: caught in an increasingly global network of credit, Michael's fields "had been bound / In surety for his Brother's Son" (220-1), a businessman whose "unforeseen misfortunes" (223) necessitate Luke's removal to London to learn how to be a merchant and, by extension, his subsequent dissolution and escape to "a hiding-place beyond the seas" (440-56). To tell the story of this place, Wordsworth insists, one needs to understand it as a node in national and global networks of cultural and financial exchange. If, as Saree Makdisi argues, the younger Wordsworth characteristically seeks *loci amoeni* in which to ensconce himself and so stave off the incursions of an increasingly menacing global empire, then part of the pathetic force of "Michael" derives from its merciless revelations that the local is always riven with, and susceptible to, the corrupting influence of the outside world.[ccxxxvi] For all its interest in recovering a rapidly vanishing way of life (and Wordsworth was quite clear about this interest in an 1801 letter to Charles James Fox), "Michael" is less interested in antiquarian resurrection of bygone structures of feeling than it is in protecting residual cultures in the present and the future.[ccxxxvii] The half-finished sheep-fold, unlike Scott's reading places, emblematizes the necessarily fragmented and circumscribed endurance of such residual cultures in the present day.

In 1800, Wordsworth was still working on a scale smaller than that which Scott would eventually take up. Wordsworth's letter to Fox makes clear that Michael, Isabel, and Luke are meant to represent the experiences of a whole vanishing "class of men," but they nevertheless

remain a single family. Scott's transnational subject matter in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* showed Wordsworth that place reading could recapture—or perhaps actively instantiate—the workings of larger communities. Wordsworth's interest was evidently piqued, for in 1807 he took up national-historical subject matter and Scottian place reading in *The White Doe of Rylstone*. In that poem, however, domestic drama and a love story soon supersede The Rising of the North in narrative importance, and Wordsworth's early interest in the culture and society of sixteenth-century Yorkshire quickly dribbles away.[ccxxxviii]

It took the abdication of Napoleon, the subsequent flooding of Britain with war-weary veterans, bereft widows, and dazed refugees, the looming prospect of global hegemony, and increasingly violent lower-class unrest to prompt Wordsworth to recognize that Britain was confronting a crisis of cultural identity whose severity had been masked by wartime solidarity.[ccxxxix] Without the eerie calm imposed by an external existential threat, postwar British society threatened to come apart at the seams. Like Scott, Wordsworth recognized that a common culture that respected individual differences needed to be *produced* out of heterogeneous and often conflicting elements. Unlike Scott, who in the postwar moment hastened to distance himself from the democratic undertones of his materialist and historicist reconstruction of British culture in the place reading romances, Wordsworth at this moment reaches *for* place reading as a tool for forging British cultural identity.

II. Producing Paradise in the Common Day

Wordsworth is straightforward about the goals and purpose of *The Excursion* in his "Prospectus to *The Recluse*," a short prefatory poem that lays out the stakes of his never completed magnum opus.

> Paradise, and groves
> Elysian, Fortunate Fields—like those of old
> Sought in the Atlantic Main, why should they be
> A history only of departed things,
> Or a mere fiction of what never was?
> For the discerning intellect of Man,
> When wedded to this goodly universe
> In love and holy passion, shall find these
> A simple produce of the common day.[ccxl]

These lines have often been taken to synecdochize the overarching project of Wordsworth's poetic corpus—or, in the immensely influential case of M.H. Abrams's *Natural Supernaturalism* (1971), European Romanticism more generally—and as such it is easy to forget that they first appeared in print in the opening pages of *The Excursion*.[ccxli] To a reader in 1814, they would have pertained to the poem to which they were affixed, more immediately than they would a broadly conceived spirit of the age, and it is important that we recall the freshness and limitedness of their historical context. Wordsworth's prose "Preface" to *The Excursion*, which opens directly onto the "Prospectus," declares the poem to be the second of *The Recluse*'s three parts, and thus structurally central to what was understood, by he and his contemporaries, to be his most important work.[ccxlii] It is significant, then, that Books V-VII of *The Excursion*—the central part of the central part of *The Recluse*, itself the declared centerpiece of Wordsworth's

poetic career—comprise thousands of lines of place reading: Wordsworth makes the topos integral to his explication of how "Paradise" can become "a simple produce of the common day."

Wordsworth's curious diction in this phrase deserves some comment. What *The Recluse* (and by extension *The Excursion*) is after is not one specific finished "Paradise," but rather a continuous process. "Paradise" will prove to be "*a* simple produce of the common day," rather than *the* result of very specific actions. Reserving as it does some of the ongoing open-endedness of the infinitive "to produce," "produce," rather than the also metrically appropriate "product," likewise suggests that the paradise that Wordsworth is after is contingent, mutable, and in need of continual (re)production; its potential to emerge within the timeframe of "the common day" insists both upon its status as a tentative and never-to-be-finished project and upon the potential for such a limited utopia to be instantiated now, in *this* "common day," rather than in some distant future.[ccxliii]

And yet, for all this utopian promise, all that *The Excursion* really produces is talk—much of it, as critics have lamented for over two centuries, excruciatingly boring. *The Excursion* is, in the most basic sense, a long poem about four men's conversations and disagreements during a three-day walking tour through the Lake District; there are few readers who have found this portrayal of paradise particularly appealing.[ccxliv] But what is important about the poem is less *what* its speakers say than how and why they say it, and any reader expecting to find the secret to producing paradise in the words or beliefs of any of the poem's very flawed main characters will be disappointed. Indeed, Wordsworth is at pains to point out his characters' intellectual shortcomings, mistaken assumptions, and obnoxious interpersonal habits. The scorn that Wordsworth directs at the moping misanthropy of the Solitary has not escaped notice, but his insistent subtle mockery of the Wanderer—who critics since Francis Jeffrey have persistently mistaken for Wordsworth's "true" voice in the poem—has too often been overlooked, as have the interpretive missteps and ideological limitations of the Poet and the Pastor.[ccxlv]

The poem's characters, then, do not explain or outline what a future paradise will look like so much as they *model* how it might be produced, tentatively and conditionally, in the common day. The poem's conception of utopia might be glossed, somewhat reductively, as a community produced out of a dialogue among diverse equals, though Wordsworth bakes several important caveats into that dialogic model. David Simpson points out that while liberalism vaunts dialogic community, such models tend to put cart before horse, wrongly assuming that structurally unequal stakeholders could ever enter into a truly equal dialogue in the first place.

> The dialogic ethic presupposes as already in existence an equivalence of confidence, habit, fluency and opportunity to a degree that would have already done away with (or have never experienced) those most intransigent forms of conflict that it purports to be resolving. In other words when dialogue works, most of the hard work has already been done.[ccxlvi]

The Excursion anticipates this objection and is at some pains to demonstrate the inadequacies of improperly grounded dialogic exchange. The Solitary and the Wanderer, for example, quarrel to recurrent stalemates when discussing politics, religion, the moral tendency of humankind, and the ultimate import of the French Revolution, among other topics (e.g., 4.505-914; 4.1075-1271; 5.231-625). Tiresome as it is, Wordsworth's exhaustive repetition of these fruitless discussions underscores his point: namely, that arguments from mutually incompatible first principles can never resolve themselves in compromise, as the Wanderer finally comes to accept after a

disagreement about the quality of life of the rural working poor. "That which we feel we utter," he grumbles, "as we think / So we have argued; reaping for our pains / No visible recompense" (5.626-8).

The Excursion turns to place reading to resolve this impasse, and comes to the conclusion that the fittest grounds upon which to construct a truly egalitarian dialogic community are the literal, physical grounds beneath the feet of the speakers. In the poem, the endless dialogic reproduction of a place's historical and cultural significance unlocks the possibility of communal harmony: while Wordsworth refuses to allow open political and religious disputation to resolve itself satisfactorily, the seemingly intractable differences between the poem's central characters mellow and fade in their shared endeavors to read the surrounding landscape. The Wanderer's frustration in the aforementioned passage comes at the end of a carefully staged scene: standing in the middle of a country churchyard, *locus classicus* for eighteenth-century didactic literature, the party conspicuously fails to come to any agreement on a coherent moral message to be drawn from the landscape. Immediately following his frustrated complaint, the Wanderer implores the Pastor to lead the group in reading the places surrounding the churchyard, and in so doing, to help them extract "gold" (a coherent moral; consensus more generally) from them.

> May I entreat
> Your further help? The mine of real life
> Dig for us; and present us, in the shape
> Of virgin ore, that gold which we by pains
> Fruitless as those of aery Alchemists
> Seek from the torturing crucible. There lies
> Around us a Domain where You have long
> Held spiritual sway . . .
> Give us, for our abstractions, solid facts;
> For our disputes, plain pictures. (5.630-7; 639-40)

This plea launches the poem's experimental, georgic-inflected historiography, as the Pastor responds by promptly guiding the party's attention to a reading place.[ccxlvii]

As in "Michael," this place reading begins with an act of deixis that sketches a picturesque landscape before teasing out its appertaining history: "You behold, / High on the breast of yon dark mountain—dark / With stony barrenness, a shining speck" (5.672-4). This speck, which initially appears as a mere bit of chiaroscuro embellishment within a "dark . . . dark" pictorial scene, proves upon closer inspection to be "a plot of cultivated ground" (5.678). Read correctly, the place yields the story of "a wedded Pair, in childless solitude" (5.694) whose shared life of quiet industry serves as an aspirational model for the whole parish, as well as the Wanderer (5.730-841), and even wrests from the recalcitrant Solitary "a smile / That seemed to break from an expanding heart" (5.842-3). This, after thousands of lines of bickering, is the first scene in the poem in which the party mutually agrees upon the moral import of a scenario or story, and whereas the Wanderer's and the Solitary's earlier philosophical squabbles yielded "no visible recompense," the wedded pair both receive from heaven and offer to the party "abundant recompense" (5.723): an indisputable portrait of life lived well.[ccxlviii] Wordsworth also smuggles into the passage an homage to Scott, popularizer of the idea that reading places like the farm encode the raw material for the construction of shared cultural identities. The couple's house,

like their story, serves as a refuge amidst the wilderness: it is "an abode / Such as in unsafe times of *Border war* / Might have been wished for and contrived" (5.699-701; added emphasis).[ccxlix]

What follows is a more or less uninterrupted string of no fewer than twenty additional place readings, spread across three of the poem's nine Books—a span of over 2500 lines.[ccl] These readings consistently produce moments in which the party gradually and collectively forms consensus beliefs about both the cultural history of the parish and the moral import of the stories the Pastor shares. After the Pastor finishes the story of the "wedded Pair," for example, the Wanderer relates his own experiences with them, experiences that confirm the Pastor's judgment of their inherent goodness and, in narrative order, directly precede the Solitary's smiling approbation (5.730-841). The Solitary's placid acceptance of the Pastor and the Wanderer's suggestion that the couple are morally exemplary is especially striking because both the Pastor and the Wanderer argue that the pair represent the virtues of rural poverty (5.832-41)—the very same saccharine didactic message that the Solitary scorned in the argument immediately preceding the Pastor's intercession (5.603-22)!

This pattern of mutual agreement persists throughout the poem's place reading Books. The Pastor points out and describes a specific site, the rest of the party run their eyes over its surface, and then, collectively, the group meditates upon the history of the spot and the moral significance of the lives of the parishioners associated with it. The tale of the Jacobite and the Hanoverian and the party's subsequent discussion of them (6.420-689) thematizes the consensus-forming potential of place reading most explicitly. In the course of his place readings, the Pastor eventually comes to the story of two men, one a Jacobite and one a supporter of the Hanoverian succession, who met in the parish sometime around the middle of the eighteenth century. The two were, predictably, zealous disputants: "they filled, / Daily, [the] Bowling-green with harmless strife; / Plagued with uncharitable thoughts the Church; / And vexed the Market-place" (6.481-4). And yet, while they spent their days walking through the parish and arguing, they always gave over their disagreements upon reaching the same churchyard that the party presently occupies, where they spent many afternoons "in sympathy and . . . social converse" (6.493-4). Eventually, the pair became so fond of one another that they shared the costs of erecting an ornate sundial on the site of their favorite resting-spot, in the hopes both that it might "stand / For public use; and also might survive / As their own private monument" (6.513-5). This dial is the place that launches the Pastor's reading of the pair's history, and in a rather ham-handed underscoring of his point, Wordsworth makes his party agree to set aside their own differences and praise the example of these conspicuously chosen forebears (6.543-85).

The tale of the Jacobite and the Hanoverian exhibits two distinguishing characteristics of the model of place reading on offer in *The Excursion*. First, in the happy afterglow of mutual contentment that this story produces, the Pastor acknowledges that he could extract less morally salubrious examples from the countryside but chooses instead to use what he calls "Our system" to retrieve didactic messages like that furnished by this tale; The Wanderer, the Solitary, and the Poet in turn hastily agree with this decision (6.582-661). This would have been anathema to place readers like Scott and Richard Llwyd, who insist upon retrieving even historically discordant and socially disturbing information from their respective landscapes. Again, Wordsworth's model of place reading inclines towards the omission of irrelevant or otherwise harmful detail: like Scott's "industrious antiquarianism" and his detestable note-taking, the inclusion of unpleasant or challenging histories threaten "to put [Wordsworth's] fine story to confusion," and so they are excised.

Second, in this as in other instances, the party *communally* forges meaning out of the raw historical content they extract from the place. That meaning comprises both the mundane data of local history (who lived here, where did they come from, what were they like, and so on) and an agreed-upon determination of what that history will mean for the interpretive community moving forward. In this sense, place reading serves as a process enabling joint acculturation: it is a collective endeavor of retrieving the past, exploring how it has (literally) shaped the present, and determining how it can be put to moral and social use in the future. This is something that is always at least implicit in Scott, but Wordsworth actually shows what a democratic process of cultural recovery (and construction) would look like in real time. If the party's dialogue can seem tedious and plodding, then perhaps it is because the poem wants to emphasize that the project of producing paradise is neither easy nor ever truly finished; paradise, it implies, must be worked for, again and again, in the space of each common day.[ccli]

The painstaking pace of the party's collective acculturation is also a byproduct of what, for lack of a better term, we must be content to call the diversity of the persons constituting it. To put it bluntly, the poem is not democratic by twenty-first-century standards. Its four main characters are all cis-gendered heterosexual Protestant white men who are rich enough to leave off work for a several-days-long walking trip through the Lake District; they cannot fairly be taken as a synecdoche for any truly equitable conception of community, even by the standards of nineteenth-century Cumbria. Nevertheless, Wordsworth ensures that his party is as ideologically heterodox as their relatively privileged positions permit: the Solitary is a democrat and one-time Presbyterian who embraced Unitarianism before becoming a skeptic; the Wanderer, raised within the Calvinist traditions of Scottish Dissent, has come to embrace a kind of natural piety; the Pastor is a rather severe Pietistic Anglican; the Poet alternately sympathizes with the positions of the Wanderer and the Pastor. They are also, at least by nineteenth-century British standards, from a wide variety of different places: the Poet's origins are murky, though he is a native of the Lake District; the Pastor has come from southern England to take up pastoral duties in the Lakes; the Wanderer is a Scot by birth but, in his occupation as a peddler, traveled widely throughout northern England and southern Scotland; the Solitary, also Scottish by birth, embraced the cosmopolitanism of the French Revolution, moved to the south of England, and then to the cities and eventually the backcountry of America before finally retreating to a vale near Blea Tarn. The differing class backgrounds of the party's constituents generated considerable contemporary outrage: Francis Jeffrey and Coleridge among others objected to didactic truths being placed in the mouths of personages like an old peddler and a disgraced former Radical preacher.[cclii]

In post-wartime, Wordsworth is both aware of and intent upon addressing the difficulty of constructing communities out of displaced and uprooted persons who possess very different worldviews and value systems: the Wars had mass-produced migrants and refugees, and these gaunt, silent figures drift through much of Wordsworth's earlier poetry, as they continue to haunt the stories turned up by place reading in *The Excursion*.[ccliii] The Solitary is the poem's only such speaking character, but the rest of the party remains as widely acquainted with various creeds and ways of life as could reasonably be expected of wealthy men wandering through the Lake District on a summer day. This is why they disagree so strongly when debating from *a priori* principles, and why their eventual agreement is meant to be such a monumental accomplishment. *The Excursion*, in its quest to "show how . . . Paradise" can be "a simple produce of the common day," makes place reading the *only* mode of dialogue that consistently generates common ground between the kinds of uprooted and ideologically disparate interlocutors that were, in 1814,

flooding parishes throughout Britain (and, in a wider sense, re-settling in new or newly mangled communities across Europe and indeed the globe).

The poem nevertheless insists, however, that this kind of dialogue is not a panacea and indeed can only succeed if certain conditions are met. Comparing its most successful and its most spectacularly unsuccessful place readings reveals what those conditions are. The poem effectively begins with the tale of Margaret, first drafted in 1797 under the title "The Ruined Cottage." The Poet happens upon the Wanderer at the site of a ruined house that displays all the hallmarks of a classically picturesque composition: "a plot / Of garden-ground run wild," "gooseberry trees that shot in long lank slips," a "broken wall," "two tall hedge-rows of thick alder boughs / Joined in a cold damp nook," and "a Well / Shrouded with willow-flowers and plumy fern" (1.485-94). Here is contrast in color, in shape, in texture, and in age, and yet, amidst the carefully detailed setting, the Wanderer's first spoken lines insist that there is even more to the scene than meets the eye: "I see around me here / Things which you cannot see" (1.501-2).

Although he has been relishing the beauties of the place, the Poet has failed to spot the site that unravels its history. In "Michael," Wordsworth warns that, amidst the picturesque beauties of the hidden valley, the unfinished sheep-fold is "an object which you might pass by, / Might see but notice not" (15-6), and the Poet, here too enraptured by Gilpinian aesthetics, makes a similar mistake. The Wanderer does not:

> As I stooped to drink, [he says,]
> Upon the slimy foot-stone I espied
> The useless fragment of a wooden bowl,
> Green with the moss of years; a pensive sight
> That moved my heart! – recalling former days . . . (1.523-7)

Here, as in the case of Michael's sheepfold, Wordsworth figures the reading place as a kind of human haunting of the natural world: like the "heap of unhewn stones," which encodes human labor within a scene even as it cancels it (*un*-hewn), the "fragment of a wooden bowl" is "use-*less*": without utility, but calling to mind a time when it had been useful. Just as the heap of stones all but blends in with the "rocks and stones" surrounding it, so too does the bowl (wood covered with moss, leaning against a stone well full of weeds and water) threaten to sink back into nature and illegibility. It is the ruined edge of this fragment, formally echoed in the comma-endstop of "bowl," placed between two enjambed lines, that gives the Wanderer and the reader pause, and that sticks out amidst the softer edges of the otherwise naturalized scene. This careful way of looking—of seeing what the Poet cannot—launches the Wanderer's narrative of Margaret's life. Spellbound by the story and in awe of the Wanderer ("I turn'd aside in weakness, nor had power / To thank him for the Tale which he had told" [1.954-5]), the Poet decides to accompany him on a walking tour that promises to be replete with similar captivating historicizations of what initially appeared to be a merely superficial picturesque landscape, and so the poem's travelling party—and its first community—is formed.

And yet, the very next place reading in the poem fizzles into bathetic failure. The scene begins auspiciously enough: Searching for the Solitary in a remote glen, the Poet and the Wanderer come across several children's play-fortresses, erected, significantly, "sheepfold-wise" (2.434). The allusions to "Michael" continue in another passage of careful picturesque deixis (2.423-30), when the Poet finds a potential reading place.

I exclaimed,
"Lo, what is here?" and, stooping down, drew forth
A Book, that, in the midst of stones and moss
And wreck of party-coloured earthen-ware,
Aptly disposed, had lent its help to raise
One of those petty structures. (2.454-9)

In "Michael," a landscape had become "like a book" and so transcended a merely pictorial existence; here a book has become immured within and initially indistinguishable from a landscape. Located in the midst of rock and moss and muddy pottery shards, the book has become "swoln / With searching damp" (2.462-3) and, like the fragment of Margaret's wooden bowl, nearly totally naturalized and incorporated into its locale. It remains only barely legible, and its witty, neoclassical cosmopolitanism—it is a copy of Voltaire's *Candide*—has been corrupted by and bloated with the very local details (wet, dirt) its author affected to despise.[cccliv] All the pieces are in place for another revelatory place reading, and the Wanderer delivers it solemnly: the *Candide* can belong only to the Solitary, who would never allow its destruction; thus he must be dead (2.459-61; 2.486-93). The gravitas of this proclamation evaporates spectacularly upon the Solitary's emergence, alive and well, shortly thereafter (2.519-527). Under these extraordinary circumstances, the Poet cannot help but steal a glance at the stunned Wanderer: "Glad was my Comrade now, though he at first, / I doubt not, had been more surprized than glad" (2.538-9).

This is the closest thing to humor that *The Excursion* can muster, but there are also important things at stake here: if he can be this spectacularly wrong, then the Wanderer can no longer be revered as the sort of oracle he appeared to be in the golden sunset after the reading of Margaret's cottage. The poem's first interpretive community, featuring the Wanderer as sage and the Poet (and by extension the reader) as student, has been exploded, and as Richard Gravil points out, the poem hereafter invites both the Poet and the reader to reconsider the Wanderer's moral as well as historical authority.[cclv] The Solitary, upon joining the group, immediately changes its dynamics as well, openly and repeatedly challenging the Wanderer's *ex cathedra* declarations about the nature and meaning of life.

Why, then, the dramatic reversal? Why does place reading successfully establish community in Books I and V-VII, but destroy it in Book II? It seems to me that Wordsworth is clarifying that reading the landscape can only be successful if the reader has firsthand experience with the history he purports to be retelling. The reading of Margaret's cottage succeeds because the Wanderer personally witnessed its decay, just as the veracity of the Pastor's place readings is underwritten by his own experiences (or, importantly, the experiences of the rector who preceded him) with the persons in question. This is the most important way in which Wordsworth's model of place reading differs from the model on offer in Scott's verse romances. Scott's poems suggest that any self-taught antiquarian with a careful eye could retrieve a collective history from all the landscapes of Britain. After the Wars, of course, the levelling implications of this suggestion were newly uncomfortable, and Scott the novelist hastily re-casts amateur place reading as baseless, if amusing, speculation. Similarly, *The Excursion* is careful to underscore the interpretive risks of guessing at place histories: indeed, we might well read Evan Dhu's mortified silenced in the Pass of Bally-Brough in *Waverley* (1814) and Jonathan Oldbuck's humiliated fumbling in the Kaim of Kinprunes in *The Antiquary* (1816) as echoes of the

Wanderer's embarrassing botching of the *Candide*.[cclvi] Improperly grounded or overly speculative place reading always risks being proven spectacularly wrong.

Wordsworth and Scott thus share the conviction that the retrieval and reconstruction of cultural history in post-wartime must be conducted under the watchful control of a trustworthy authority. Where Scott, however, reserves this task for the historical novelist, Wordsworth looks in another direction, one that still makes room for place reading as something more than a hobbyhorsical pastime. Wordsworth's preferred authority is the Church of England, and it is no accident that the ultimate overseer of the party's place reading is a pastor.

III. Acculturation, Literacy, and the Church

The Excursion, then, demonstrates how place reading might produce paradise in the common day. Because it enables a diverse community to work together to produce an agreed-upon history and set of moral values using nothing more than the landscape that they jointly inhabit, place reading can play an integral role in building a common culture in a nation and continent struggling to rebuild after world war. But even if, as I have been arguing throughout this dissertation, place reading played an important and underappreciated role in Romantic literary culture, we might be surprised to find it playing so central a role in Wordsworth's idea of utopia. Ultimately, Wordsworth's conviction of efficacy of place reading as an acculturative force derives from, and is buttressed by, his contemporaneous beliefs in the potential of Andrew Bell's "Madras System" of peer-led literacy pedagogy, on the one hand, and in the structural capacities of the Church of England as a secular institution, on the other.

In the wake of the Napoleonic Wars, British society was in a state of crisis: the postwar years were, in E.P. Thompson's memorable phrase, "the heroic age of popular Radicalism," and working-class unrest threatened to fracture the Empire from within before it could consolidate its newfound global hegemony. Literacy training was frequently mooted as a means to quell dissent and produce cultural harmony. The working classes, though perhaps two-thirds at most could read and considerably fewer could write, nevertheless possessed a highly literate culture of their own, and it was generally felt that if morally salubrious reading material could be disseminated amongst them, the fever of sedition would pass away and inter-class tensions would fade. As it stood, the periodicals of William Cobbett and other Radical writers, to say nothing of cheap and dangerously immoral Gothic novels, anthologies of the feats and the degenerate profligacies of notorious criminals, and licentious ballad collections, among other material, were constantly read aloud in workplaces and in pubs, and those who could not read nevertheless eagerly participated in arguments and debates about the issues of the day. Charitable organizations like the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and the Society for the Suppression of Vice attempted, with some success, to introduce didactic literature into this ecosystem, and so to stamp out dissipation and social unrest. One educator, a Scot named Andrew Bell, sought to address the problem of instructing the masses and reconciling them to an imperialist monoculture by recourse to the logic of industrialization, promoting his "Madras System" of monitorial literacy pedagogy by calling it the "STEAM ENGINE of the MORAL WORLD."[cclvii]

As the name implies, the Madras System was one of the cultural spoils of British imperialism in India. Gauri Viswanathan has pointed out that the academic discipline named "English" was invented to serve British imperialist objectives in India; it is a similarly bitter irony that nineteenth-century British literacy education was structurally remade in the image of Indian pedagogical innovation.[cclviii] Bell was a servant of the empire in the grand eighteenth-

century Scottish tradition: he lived and worked as a tutor in America from 1774 to 1781 before fleeing back home as the American War of Independence took a turn for the worse. After a few years serving as a deacon in Leith, he obtained a position as chaplain for a British regiment stationed in India in 1787 and was appointed director of an orphanage in Madras (modern Chennai) shortly thereafter, in 1789. Happening, the story goes, upon a group of young Malabar children in Kerala teaching one another to write by using sticks to draw letters in the sand, Bell immediately instituted a similar program in the orphanage. In the fully-fledged System, an explication of which Bell published to much fanfare upon his return to Britain in 1797, a schoolmaster would teach his quickest learners a basic lesson. These "monitors" would then each assume the lead instructor role and teach the same lesson to their own groups of students, who could, in large enough schools, proceed to teach their own groups, and so on. In this way, huge amounts of pupils could be instructed without having to pay many professional teachers. The original schoolmaster played a primarily supervisory role, only intervening when absolutely needed; otherwise, the established chain of command among the students sufficed to address most issues. Beyond achieving spectacular educational goals—instructing more students at a faster and cheaper rate than any preceding pedagogical model—the System also, Bell claimed, nourished community at the orphanage. United by the shared goal of learning together, and collectively dedicated to policing one another, bullying and laziness among the orphans declined and their morale—along with their morality—improved at a miraculous rate.[cclix]

The System was greeted rapturously by the British press and public, not least by the circle of poets and writers surrounding Wordsworth in the Lakes. Wordsworth himself was so enthused by its potential that he taught lessons twice daily at a school organized on the System in Grasmere, hosted Bell for a two-week-long visit in 1811, wrote twenty pages of lessons for use in Bell's schools nationwide in 1812, and even agreed, alongside Robert Southey, to write Bell's biography (in the event, Wordsworth dropped out of the project). In a letter dated March 28th, 1812, Wordsworth's wife Mary relates "Wm. says this new method of teaching and the establishment of these Schools is, with the exception of the abolition of the Slave trade, the most happy event of our times." These are the years in which Wordsworth was deep into the cut and thrust of writing *The Excursion*, and his enthusiasm for Bell's System repeatedly filters into the poem. In a letter to his sister-in-law Priscilla dated February 27th, 1815, Wordsworth is quite explicit about the influence.

> If you have read my Poem, the 'Excursion', you will see there what importance I attach to the Madras System. Next to the art of Printing it is the noblest invention for the improvement of the human species. Our population in this neighbourhood is not sufficient to apply it on a large scale; but great benefit has been derived from it even on a small one.[cclx]

Ultimately, Mary Moorman notes, Wordsworth called for the System to be implemented "not only . . . in every parish, under the auspices of the Established Church, but in the public schools and universities as well," and came to consider it, alongside the Parliamentary interest of the great landowning families, as one of two bulwarks defending British culture and nationhood from any and all external and internal threats.

The appeal of a peer-to-peer system of mutual moral education and community formation centered on a shared project of learning to *read*, especially one that literally had its roots in deciphering marks left on the landscape (traces in the sand), is of course easy to spot in *The*

Excursion: the Madras System provides the structural model for the party at the center of the poem. Likewise, amidst the social uproar of the postwar milieu, it is understandable that Wordsworth and other enthusiastic supporters of Bell would like to see the System introduced universally ("in every parish") throughout the British Isles. But why place these activities, as Moorman has it, "under the auspices of the Established Church"? It is tempting to ascribe this impulse to a growing religiosity on the part of Wordsworth, but biographical evidence does not really support such a narrative. It is true that Wordsworth became very religious late in life, even installing a wooden crucifix above his bed so that it would be the first thing he saw every morning. It is also true that he had been attending church at least semi-regularly since settling down with Mary Hutchinson in the first years of the nineteenth century and went even more frequently in the wake of the deaths of his children Thomas and Catherine in 1812. But the Wordsworth of 1814 was not yet a zealot, and in letters written during the years he was also writing *The Excursion* he repeatedly sneers at sermons and sermonizing, and claims that he attends church mostly for the sake of communal prayer, song, and ritual. Indeed, as late as 1812, he still delighted in horrifying the relatively free-thinking Henry Crabb Robinson with blasphemous proclamations that he had no need for Christ as a personal Redeemer.[cclxi]

There are two primary reasons that Wordsworth insists on the importance of the Established Church to his vision of acculturation—why, in other words, the schoolmaster-equivalent of the Madras System-inspired place reading community in *The Excursion*, the Pastor, is an Anglican rector. The first of these has to do with a contemporary controversy involving the System itself. In the early years of the nineteenth century, Bell found that he had a rival in pedagogy: a Quaker named Joseph Lancaster who claimed to have invented monitorial learning at the same time as—or perhaps even before—Bell himself. What began as a personal dispute rapidly transformed into a heated battleground in the culture war between the Established Church and Dissent, centered around the morality and religiosity of the competing Systems. Lancaster refused to incorporate deference to the Church of England within his system, arguing that only Christian precepts with a Biblical basis should be inculcated. He also claimed that he would not countenance the teaching of controversial doctrine—a position, Bell's supporters countered, that practically ruled out teaching any doctrine at all. In the years between 1808 and 1811, lines were drawn in the sand (figuratively as well as literally), and prominent supporters of each pedagogue thereafter excoriated one another with some regularity. Bell's supporters charged Lancaster's system with inculcating utilitarianism, greed, and cruelty, while Lancaster's supporters associated the Madras System with popery, prelacy, and Old Corruption. Coleridge was an especially heated disputant: in a controversial and much-deplored 1808 supernumerary lecture at the Royal Society, as Frances Ferguson observes, he portrayed Bell's System as "compatible with English custom, English liberty, and the values of the established church" and insisted that Lancaster's model was "perilously close to the models of Abbe Barruel and Professor Robinson—in short, with all that was French and radical."[cclxii]

The second reason is associated with the first. Since the seventeenth century, thousands of sermons had been delivered across Britain stressing the Church's role as the ultimate guardian of local identity in a globalizing world, and throughout the Romantic period the cultural association of the Church with localism remained quite strong. Carl B. Estabrook establishes the universality of the theme between 1660 and 1780.

> Anglican sermons printed throughout our period took localism as a theme and stressed conformity to the established religion was a requirement not only of

> membership in a community but of the very order on which community itself depended.[cclxiii]

In a refrain that has recurred throughout this dissertation, however, Romantic localism is not merely or exclusively local. In this case, it is also national: the Church of England, being *of England*, was of course a centralized body that submitted to the ultimate authority of a single figure—the monarch. This, too, was felt in the period: as E.P. Thompson observes, radical resistance to established power, even when that resistance congealed around shared local identities, sought to repel "the magistrate, the employer, *the parson*, or the spy" equally; the constellation of these figures underscores how the localism on offer at the parish church was nevertheless felt to be complicit in the centripetal consolidation of power in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[cclxiv]

If there is contradiction here, there is also opportunity. Because the Church is simultaneously local *and* national, it can inculcate cultural harmony both within and between various parishes. The Church had, at least theoretically, been established for generations as a site of moral instruction in every parish. Therefore, each parish and churchman was equipped with centuries' worth of accumulated knowledge necessary to address the specific needs of individual parishioners and small communities. The Church's message, and the styles in which it was spread and preached, could thus be tweaked to suit the needs of each locale. Still, the overarching national organization of the Church nevertheless ensured that local difference was always circumscribed within permissible bounds: cultural and doctrinal differences between individual parishes were licensed to a point, but the Church would intervene to maintain fluency in moral and doctrinal matters between and across parishes. Sneered at by Dissenters who alleged that the Church facilitated heterodoxy, its early nineteenth-century supporters were forced to defend the practical and pragmatic advantages of licensing *some* doctrinal diversity. The Church, they argued, was the world's only religious institution that could make room for, and in fact mediate between, competing orthodoxies. This was, of course, a somewhat embarrassing argumentative position—should religious truth really be made subordinate to practical, mundane considerations? —but its appeal for a poet preoccupied with how to produce community out of dissenting and diverse members needs no extrapolation.

And indeed, these characteristics of the Church of England are also analogous to many of the advertised benefits of Bell's System: each monitor, after receiving general instruction from the schoolmaster, was free to cater his or her own pedagogy according to the needs of the students under his or her supervision.[cclxv] This, too, is the unspoken structural logic of the place reading model of acculturation at the center of *The Excursion*: wherever there are parishes to be read, so too, the poem suggests, there ought to be Pastors. Importantly, the Pastor's role in the poem is largely supervisory. He serves as an authority of last resort if his fractious pupils (the Poet, the Wanderer, and the Solitary) cannot agree upon the historical or moral import of their chosen text. The Pastor speaks from a position of personal and institutional authority: either he or his forebears in the rectory are personal custodians of hundreds of years of parish history, history carefully recorded and upkept by the local (and national) church. When the interpretive community threatens to fall apart, as in the country churchyard in Book V, the Pastor intervenes to provide them with firm guidance. Importantly, while Wordsworth repeatedly highlights the shortcomings of the Pastor's restrictive religious views, his interpretations of parish history are always allowed to remain authoritative. In *The Excursion*, in other words, the Church's secular

authority as an archive of local knowledge is more important than its sacred authority as a medium of doctrine.[cclxvi]

The Wanderer's exuberant vision of a national program of literacy education in Book IX (explicitly modeled on Bell's System and to be instituted under the supervision and within the buildings of the Established Church) has been the subject of considerable critical discussion.[cclxvii] The poem's efforts to position place reading as a project parallel and complementary to the Wanderer's proposal, on the other hand, have remained mostly unnoticed. But *The Excursion* insists that just as national community and cultural identity depend upon literacy training, so too does local harmony depend upon a collective, dialogic, never-to-be-finished project of producing a common culture. The evidence is clear: the Church is the body best equipped, structurally, to oversee both projects and to ensure that local difference never threatens national cohesion.

It is important to note, however, that Wordsworth's vision does not stop at the ends of the British Isles. The Church had its origins as a Protestant rival to Catholicism's transnational status as "the one holy catholic and apostolic Church."[cclxviii] The project of creating new parishes, that is to say, had roots in the Church as well as in the machinery of the British Empire. The Wanderer's speech on the necessity of literacy training and acculturation makes the international scope of Wordsworth's vision quite clear.

> When, prizing knowledge as her noblest wealth
> And best protection, this Imperial Realm,
> While she exacts allegiance, shall admit
> An obligation, on her part, to *teach*
> Them who are born to serve her and obey;
> Binding herself by Statute to secure
> For all the Children whom her soil maintains
> The rudiments of Letters, and to inform
> The mind with moral and religious truth,
> Both understood, and practiced,—so that none,
> However destitute, be left to droop
> By timely culture unsustained . . . (*E* 9.293-304; original emphasis)

There are phrases here that I suspect are designed to give pause and to be read critically—the insistence on the importance of religious education, for example, rang quite hollow in the ears of contemporary evangelical readers, who eviscerated the poem for its supposed irreligion.[cclxix] But the Wanderer's chauvinistic and paternalistic rendering of colonized peoples as "Children" who are "born to serve" the Empire does more than explicitly yoke literacy instruction with a mandate to expand the project of British acculturation—it also establishes Wordsworth's imagined utopian community as an unapologetically imperialist vision. The poem's localism is thus global: transnational in its origins, in its methodological implementation, and in its ultimate scope.

IV. From "Strains of power" to "pure eloquence"

The Excursion thus comprises an important shift in Wordsworth's poetic priorities—away from explorations of the interconnections of nature and the individual imagination and towards examinations of community, education, and social being. What happens, then, to the old Wordsworth, the Wordsworth of "Tintern Abbey," the Intimations Ode, and *The Prelude*, who

saw in the fog swirling below the summit of Snowdon "the perfect image of a mighty mind"?[cclxx] The answer to these questions is that *The Excursion* kills him off, bluntly in the poem's "Preface" and then again, more eloquently, in the opening lines of its final place reading book, Book VII.

In the "Preface" to *The Excursion,* Wordsworth announces that he has embarked upon a large-scale reorganization of his poetic corpus. *The Excursion*, the "intermediate part" of his magnum opus *The Recluse*, is the section of that poem which "was designed to refer more to passing events, and to an existing state of things, than the others were meant to do." While it is meant to model the production of utopia within the postwar moment, "It is not the author's intention formally to announce a system." Wordsworth is nevertheless certain that "the Reader will have no difficulty in extracting the system for himself"; this system (what the Pastor in the Book VI passage mentioned above calls "Our system") is what we have been tracking throughout this chapter. The poem that came to be titled *The Prelude*, Wordsworth continues, "has long been finished" and, when published, will bear a relation to *The Recluse* analogous to the relation "the Anti-chapel [*sic*] has to the body of a gothic Church." All of his already-published poems are "minor Pieces" that ought to be understood as chiefly illustrative in function: they "have such connection with the main Work as may give them claim to be likened to the little Cells, Oratories, and sepulchral Recesses, ordinarily included in those Edifices [i.e., gothic Churches]." In other words, all of his existing poetry—all of the work we consider most typically Wordsworthian—is to be understood as mere preparation for and ornamentation of the great task upon which he has now embarked.[cclxxi]

The reasons underlying this shift are left vague. *The Recluse*, it is to be hoped, will be "a literary Work that might live," whatever that means, and Wordsworth wishes that *The Excursion* will both "please" and "benefit his countrymen." But there is neither an explication of why Wordsworth's earlier poems do not "live" in the way he hopes *The Recluse* will nor any indication as to how *The Excursion* will "please" and "benefit his countrymen" any differently than his previous works have. Happily, the poem itself later offers some clues.

At the beginning of Book VII, the party reclines happily in the refreshing shade of the parish churchyard. The Pastor has been transforming the landscape surrounding the churchyard into a virtual library and ensuring that no matter which direction the party faces, they will find reading places and the histories embedded in them. The rest of the group has been working cooperatively to make moral sense of the life stories of the parishioners and of the history of the place more generally. Book VI, comprising more than 1300 lines of place reading, is behind us, but there remain more than a half-dozen places to be read. At this moment, the Poet senses a serious shift in his own artistic priorities: the Pastor's place reading, and the party's community-building, seem to him much more important than his previous preoccupations. His soliloquy on this topic is one of the most arresting aesthetic recantations and reorientations in British Romanticism.

The passage begins with an allusive return to the "Anti-chapel" of *The Prelude*:

> WHILE thus from theme to theme the Historian [i.e., the Pastor] passed,
> The words he uttered, and the scene that lay
> Before our eyes, awakened in my mind
> Vivid remembrance of those long-past hours;
> When, in the hollow of some shadowy Vale,
> (What time the splendour of the setting sun

Lay beautiful on Snowdon's craggy top,
On Cader Idris, or huge Penmanmaur)
A wandering youth, I listened with delight
To pastoral melody or warlike air,
Drawn from the chords of the ancient British harp
By some accomplished master . . .
Strains of power
Were they, to seize and occupy the sense[.] (7.1-12; 22-3)

This invocation of famous north Welsh mountains is not a casual and offhand reference to the younger Wordsworth's exploits in Wales with Robert Jones.[cclxxii] The mountains of north Wales in general, and Snowdon in particular, are the traditional setting of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century treatments of a primitive, bardic, Welsh poetry that purportedly exercised control over the earth itself. Hence Thomas Gray, in the era's most famous treatment of ancient British bardism, writes of "Cadwallo's tongue, / That hush'd the stormy main" and "Modred, whose magic song / Made Plinlimmon bow his cloud-top'd head."[cclxxiii] Snowdon is also, of course, the setting of Wordsworth's ecstatic epiphany in Book XIII of the 1805 *Prelude*—the site that opens onto his declaration that "the mind of man becomes / A Thousand times more beautiful than the earth / On which he dwells."[cclxxiv] If it is a step too far to suggest that the famous ascent of Snowdon in *Prelude* XIII finds Wordsworth actually controlling Nature in a bardic sense, it is certainly not difficult to believe that he chooses Snowdon as the setting of that poem's climax in order to stake his claim to the inheritance of a Welsh ("ancient British") bardic tradition, one capable of producing poetry that can "seize and occupy the sense" of its audience.[cclxxv]

Now, however, in awe of the Pastor's place reading, the Poet abandons his crypto-republican bardic ambitions in favor of a softer, more historical, less-Welsh poetic model.[cclxxvi]

But to a higher mark than song can reach
Rose this pure eloquence. And, when the stream
Which overflowed the soul was passed away,
A consciousness remained that it had left,
Deposited upon the silent shore
Of memory, images and precious thoughts;
That shall not die, and cannot be destroyed. (7.24-30)

No longer striving to take his place amongst world-forming Welsh bards, the Poet's mind and memory are now formed from without, as if by a slow, steady retreat of waters, the gentleness of the receding stream emphasized in repeated sibilants and a regular, rhythmic comma pattern that contrasts sharply with the herky-jerky enjambment, caesura, and military imagery of the passage recalling Welsh bardic "strains of power."[cclxxvii] More striking still, the "reach / Rose" enjambment signals a turn from a bardic-pagan to a recognizably Christian worldview ([over-]reaching, we fall, in order that we may rise again).[cclxxviii]

The "stream" of place reading that the Pastor has been channeling leaves in its wake, "Deposited upon the silent shore / Of memory, images and precious thoughts; / That shall not die, and cannot be destroyed." Here, perhaps, is the sort of poetry that can "live," in the sense alluded to in the "Preface." Wordsworth persistently associates water imagery with life and immortality throughout his oeuvre, but the most immediate echo of this passage occurs earlier in

The Excursion.[cclxxix] In Book V, the travelers, still squabbling, pause after cresting a hill above Little Langdale valley, and catch their first glimpse of the landscape they will spend much of the rest of the poem reading:

> And, tow'rds a chrystal Mere, that lay beyond
> Among steep hills and woods embosomed, flowed
> A copious Stream with boldly winding course;
> Here traceable, there hidden–there again
> To sight restored, and glittering in the Sun.
> On the Stream's bank, and every where, appeared
> Fair Dwellings, single or in social knots;
> Some scattered o'er the level, others perched
> On the hill sides, a cheerful quiet scene,
> Now in its morning purity arrayed. (5.81-90)

Here is another landscape that at first seems to bend itself to meet the parameters of a classically picturesque composition: woods and hills frame a final receptacle for the eye, a winding stream leads the viewer's gaze from foreground to background, and John Barrell's all-important preposition—"o'er"—mimics a sort of painterly "snatching" of the reader's eye across the scene.[cclxxx] There is, however, a crucial inversion of the standard order of picturesque looking at work: here we *begin* at the resting point or end of the typical picturesque composition: an all-receiving "chrystal Mere" that occupies a top-central place in the composition and marks the termination of the Poet's gaze (it lies "beyond" all that he sees; nothing lies beyond it).[cclxxxi]

As we trace our way back (and, speaking in regards to the appearance of the words on the page they were printed, down) from the heaven-water-sky of the "chrystal Mere," the landscape slowly peoples itself, first with hills and woods, then with dwellings and villages. Only at the end of this inverted picturesque meditation do these minute particulars resolve themselves into a "cheerful quiet scene [of] morning purity." The metaphor here is one of time, on both a personal and historical scale: the stream (an all-encompassing history) progresses towards (if we privilege the metaphor of the stream) and from (if we privilege the order of narration) a termination point, an extreme boundary beyond which the eye cannot penetrate.[cclxxxii] The twists and turns of history are not all discernible, but at times its products—"Dwellings, single or in social knots"—become visible. The stream guides the eye to these dwellings and deposits it upon them just as, in its dual function as literal stream and metaphor for local and universal history, it has carried and deposited the constitutive elements of the community comprising those dwellings. Literally, alluvium suspended in the stream both constitutes the ground upon which these rural communities stand and encases the mineral and organic materials that sustain them by means of facilitating crop growth and animal grazing. Figuratively, the microhistorical debris (personal and familial histories) carried by and suspended within the great stream of an overarching history erects the "Dwellings, single or in social knots" on top of the literal (littoral) alluvial deposits.[cclxxxiii]

The sedimentary metaphor takes on a more personal dimension in the Book VII passage, where the "stream" is place reading, a narration of excavated microhistories—newly dislodged local biographies—that comes to rest upon "the silent shore / Of memory." Keen to underscore his point, Wordsworth reinforces the sense of alluviation by means of enjambment: the reader's eye, like the narrative debris stirred up by place reading, sinks past the enjambed end of the line

"Deposited upon the silent shore" and comes to rest, finally, on the receptive ground "Of memory." If we read these metaphors together, then we can understand place reading, with its excavation of local histories, as fulfilling a peculiar promise. As the "Stream" of history creates and sustains communities along its "banks," so a "stream" of place reading can *re*-create those same communities along the "shore / Of memory." The Poet, the rest of the party, and the poem's readers all become repositories of the communal history transmitted by the Pastor: the community both sinks into the party's memory and solidifies the ground they stand upon, giving it a historical dimension that deepens its superficial picturesque appearance. Thus the party as a whole can come to understand, enter into, and indeed become a part of the parish community.

While this model of community formation might initially appear puzzling, it becomes clearer when we recall that it is a *pastor* who is introducing new members into the parish. For what is the Pastor's place reading, "the stream / Which overflowed the soul" and then receded, inaugurating the overwhelmed Poet into a new community in its recession, if not a kind of baptismal water? The Pastor's recital, a ritual baptism of the Poet, welcomes him (and by extension, the rest of the party and the readership they stand in for) into a community of water and word, leaving in him, them, and us "images and precious thoughts; That shall not die, and cannot be destroyed."[cclxxxiv] *The Excursion* thus figures place reading not only as the grounds for understanding a local community historically, but also of internalizing that community and of entering, sacramentally, into it.

While Francis Jeffrey read *The Excursion* as marking Wordsworth's retreat from humanity into a personal playground, a privileged nook exempt from the evils of the outside world, the generality of the stream-and-chrystal-mere emblem, coupled with its structural correspondence with the stream of place reading and the imperialist infrastructure of the Madras System and the Church of England, suggests that Wordsworth's model of community formation through place reading is not as geographically limited as Jeffrey believed.[cclxxxv] Wordsworth reads the places of the Lake District because he knows how to excavate the sedimented agglomerations of individual and familial histories that jostle and combine and spread into one another therein. But the model of community-entry and formation by stream of history/stream of place reading remains exportable: all parishes across the world possess the raw material necessary for the never-to-be-finished construction of paradisal community within the space of the common day.

In the event, of course, Wordsworth's vision was not adopted on a wide scale, and the confused initial reception of *The Excursion* sapped what remained of Wordsworth's desire to write the rest of *The Recluse*.[cclxxxvi] There are several reasons why the poem's model of utopia did not ignite the public imagination. One of these, if contemporary critical reviews were indeed representative of popular taste, is that it was felt to be tediously written. Wordsworth's reluctance to spell out "a System" in his "Preface" led critics like Jeffrey to look for its message in the mouths of its individual characters, rather than recognizing the party as a whole as the poem's real protagonist. Another is that, under the increasingly rigid demands of the modern working day, it was simply not possible to construct real community by walking around a parish for hours at a time: as the nineteenth century progressed, the vast majority of stakeholders in any given community needed to work increasingly long hours in increasingly sequestered quarters. A third is that the sorts of people who *did* have the leisure time for such activity were coming to recognize internationalism as a threat to the consolidation of imperial capital. As the working classes groped towards an inchoate internationalism, tracing the transnational production of British culture began to threaten a sanitized version of national identity that could be put to use

in projects of imperial mythmaking.[cclxxxvii] Depopulated landscapes were increasingly fetishized and re-imagined as symbolic repositories of this simplified and exclusive Britishness as the century rolled on; as a result, their transnational histories were of less and less concern to neo-pastoralists intent upon idealizing both the countryside and the past.

All that being said, the poem did exert more influence on public discussion than any of Wordsworth's other poems: it was indeed considered his definitive accomplishment for nearly a century.[cclxxxviii] Its vision of a national education program was immensely influential throughout the rest of the Romantic and Victorian periods. What was most attractive about the poem to Victorians like John Ruskin, though, was not its transnational place reading but rather its portrayal of a few heavenly days in the not-yet-industrialized Lake District, along with the pietistic sentiments of the Pastor and the Wanderer. Among the most influential of the nineteenth-century propagandists who adapted its message, championing the acculturative force of the Church of England and the morally and spiritually refreshing character of its rural setting, was the older Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

V. "not an intense Union but an Absolute Unity": Coleridge and the Fate of Romantic Localism

Coleridge's last work, the now little-read 1829 treatise *On the Constitution of the Church and State* is, according to a modern editor, "a brief but brilliant synthesis of the political and theological thinking of a lifetime." While the essay "became [Coleridge's] most immediately influential work," inspiring a generation of Victorian thinkers including John Stuart Mill, John Ruskin, Matthew Arnold, F.D. Maurice, and William Gladstone, among others, it is at present "generally relegated to the tomb of intellectual history, a victim of concise paraphrase."[cclxxxix] For Raymond Williams, the piece was a cornerstone of early British cultural theory and a major influence on the development of socialist thought. "It is from the time of Coleridge on," Williams writes in *Culture and Society* (1958), "that the idea of Culture enters decisively into English social thinking," and *On the Constitution of the Church and State* represents the first systematic thinking-through of culture as a bulwark against the dissolving effects of global capitalism.[ccxc] The piece is also, to a degree not previously remarked upon, a return to and a rethinking of many of the same ideas that preoccupied Wordsworth in *The Excursion* and Scott in the verse romances and early novels. Indeed, it might be read as an attempt to exorcize Scott's influence out of Wordsworth's thinking—to separate what Coleridge would come to think of as "Aristotelian" thought from the properly "Platonic" project of acculturating the nation.

Before we get to that, though, we must attempt to unpack what *Church and State* is about. Put simply, the book is an extended treatment of how the culture and society of Britain ought, ideally, to have been organized and nurtured. Such works typically evince little regard for the present state of things, and *Church and State* is no exception: one of its primary argumentative threads is a scathing critique of utilitarianism, political economy, and capitalist society along Burkean lines. Burke, in *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), had lamented the arrival of an age "of sophisters, oeconomists, and calculators" in which affairs of state were entrusted to "a set of licentious, bold, crafty, factious, flattering wretches"; the state, he insisted, "ought not to be considered as nothing better than a partnership agreement in a trade of pepper and coffee, callico or tobacco, or some other such low concern, to be taken up for a little temporary interest, and to be dissolved by the fancy of the parties."[ccxci] Coleridge deplores the consequences of the rise of capitalism in similar terms, lamenting the arrival and enfranchisement of "Talents without genius: a swarm of clever, well-informed men" who have

imposed "Despotism of finance in government and legislation . . . vanity and sciolism in the intercourse of life [and] presumption, temerity, and hardness of heart, in political economy."[ccxcii] The rule of these clever men has produced a raft of social ills:

> Game Laws, Corn Laws, Cotton Factories, Spitalfields, the tillers of the land paid by poor-rates, and the remainder of the population mechanized into engines for the manufactory of new rich men—yea, the machinery of the wealth of the nation now made up of the wretchedness, disease and depravity of those who should constitute the strength of the nation! Disease, I say, and vice, while the wheels are in full motion; but at the first stop the magic wealth-machine is converted into an intolerable weight of pauperism! (*C&S* 63)

Burke's horror at potential rule by the bourgeoisie is mostly prospective; Coleridge, by contrast, is keen to emphasize that the philistines have not just overrun the gates, but successfully seized power and pillaged the nation as a whole. *The Excursion* features several similar critiques of industrial capitalism, but Coleridge sharpens the focus and the force of the attack.[ccxciii]

Another main thread of *Church and State* is an insistence that the only way to combat the pernicious effects of industrialization, capitalism, and globalization is through a national (*not* international) project of acculturation. Coleridge insists that all great historical nations (including the Scandinavian, Gothic, Semitic, and, taking his cue from Iolo Morganwg, the "Celtic") reserve a portion of national wealth (the "Nationalty") for the acculturation of their people, because they recognize that "continuing and progressive civilization . . . is but a mixed good, if not far more a corrupting influence, [when] this civilization is not grounded in *cultivation*, in the harmonious development of those qualities and faculties that characterise our *humanity*" (*C&S* 42-3; original emphasis). Here is Williams's "culture," emerging from the primordial ooze. The "*idea*" of a National Church, in Coleridge's idiosyncratic vocabulary, refers not necessarily to the Church of England as it is or indeed ever was, but to an imagined body that ought to safeguard the Nationalty and in turn use it to humanize the nation's constituent people.[ccxciv] Without this body's cultivating work, "the nation could be neither permanent nor progressive" (*C&S* 46). In other words, the present state of affairs in late-Romantic Britain is the lamentable result of a lack of national culture, a lack that could only have been prevented had the nation instituted an acculturating National Church.

The machinery Coleridge proposes as a means of fulfilling this idea of a National Church—his celebrated "clerisy"—owes more to Wordsworth and *The Excursion* than has generally been recognized. Structurally, the clerisy functions quite similarly to the model of acculturation sketched in *The Excursion*.

> The Nationalty, therefore, was reserved for the support and maintenance of a permanent class or order, with the following duties. A certain smaller number were to remain at the fountain heads of the humanities, in cultivating and enlarging the knowledge already possessed . . . [the] latter and far more numerous part of the body were to be distributed throughout the country, so as not to leave even the smallest integral part or division without a resident guide, guardian, and instructor; the objects and final intention of the whole order being these—to preserve the stores, to guard the treasures, of past civilization, to thus bind the present with the past; to perfect and add to the same, and thus to connect the

> present with the future; but especially to diffuse through the whole community, and to every native entitled to its laws and rights, that quantity and quality of knowledge which was indispensable both for the understanding of those rights, and for the performance of the duties correspondent. (*C&S* 43-4)

Here, as in Wordsworth, is a model of the diffusion of culture based on the Madras System (men "at the fountain heads of the humanities" instruct instructors), installed in every parish under the auspices of a Pastor analogue ("so as not to leave even the smallest integral part or division without a resident guide, guardian, and instructor"), focused on forming community by means of a shared project of preserving the past and so linking it to the present and the future.[ccxcv] Coleridge's model, however, is much more Burkean, insofar as it reserves for Church hierarchy the task of determining and maintaining a consistent national character.

"THE CLERISY of the nation," Coleridge continues, "comprehended the learned of all denominations;—the sages and professors of . . . all the so called liberal arts and sciences" (*C&S* 46). His properly Anglican conviction that the clerisy ought to include men of diverse religious creeds ("the learned of all denominations") overlaps with Wordsworth's conception of the Church of England as permitting, albeit always within certain acceptable boundaries, ideological diversity.[ccxcvi] Indeed, in order for clerics like "a pastor, presbyter, or parson in every parish" to fulfill their communities' respective needs, Coleridge avers, they *must* be diverse: they must serve as "the representative and exemplar of the *personal* character of the community or parish" (*C&S* 52-3; 53n.). This insistence upon local diversity is also of the utmost importance for Coleridge's conception of culture as chiefly national rather than international.

The ostensible occasion for the writing of *Church and State* was the Catholic Relief Act of 1829. At issue was whether Roman Catholics, with their purported loyalty to the Pope, could ever be trusted as stakeholders in the British state. Coleridge's position, after much protestation that no one cared more about Catholics than he, was that they emphatically could not (it is a historical irony that the Act had already passed by the time *Church and State* was published). His reasons are relatively straightforward: the idea of a National State is coeval with and codependent on the idea of a National Church. A State without an acculturative Church will slide into utilitarian hell (this is the risk Britain is facing in 1829); a Church without the strong support and incentive towards the kinds of practical knowledge that Coleridge calls "civilization"—the kind of support and incentive properly provided by a State, which seeks the material betterment and military protection of its people—will collapse into overly luxuriant superstition and decadent and useless ritual (this was the historical fate of the Roman Catholic Church and of Catholic nations more generally). The Constitution of Britain, which has thus far facilitated the cooperation of Church and State, has enabled it to accede to its current position of international dominance (*C&S* 19-20).

With this nationalism comes proto-fascistic language, comprising not only assertions that only the "*native*" has a claim on the nation's culture, "laws and rights," but also unsettling organicist metaphors.

> [T]he great constructive principles of our representative system . . . [are those upon] which it can alone be ascertained what are excrescences, symptoms of distemperature and marks of degeneration; and what are native growths, or changes naturally attendant on the progressive development of the original germ, symptoms of immaturity perhaps, but not of disease; or at worst, modifications of

> the growth by the defective or faulty, but remediless, or only gradually remediable, qualities of the soil and surrounding elements. (*C&S* 20)

Coleridge begins with the conviction that Britain has proven its greatness—a position much easier to take in 1829 than it was in 1789, or 1808, or even 1814. From this position, he can then declare that the British Constitution has secured British greatness by recognizing whom to exclude from the nation—which differences within the body politic are merely "symptoms of immaturity" and which are "excrescences" tending towards the "degeneration" of the whole.[ccxcvii] This kind of language casts British locales not as the complex agglomeration of transnational historical detritus, but rather as growths from the same national "soil," growths that require a periodic weeding-out or pruning of parasitic, invasive, and corrupting elements. The violence that this sort of diction implicitly licenses ultimately derives from Coleridge's conviction that what ails British society in the early nineteenth century can only successfully or properly be addressed at the level of the *ideal*, rather than the material. In order to keep the history of Britain on track, Coleridge insists, what is needed is a return to first principles, a reconsideration not of what has happened in the past, but rather of whether the present corresponds to an ideal state that Britain has strayed from.

This is a return to didactic history of the kind embraced by Burke and, in a much odder way, by Iolo Morganwg.[ccxcviii] It is also necessarily opposed to the omnivorous detailism on offer in Scott's verse romances and, in a more muted way, in *The Excursion*. Coleridge is much more conciliatory towards Scott's novels in *Church and State* than he had been in his evaluation of the merits of Scott's poetry, both in *Biographia Literaria* (1817) and more savagely in his personal correspondence. Nevertheless, he insists that Scott's writing is not, properly speaking, historical.

> [N]o great principle was ever invaded or trampled on, that did not sooner or later avenge itself on the country, and even on the governing classes themselves, by the consequence of the precedent. The statesman who has not learnt this from history, has missed its most valuable result, and might in my opinion as profitably, and far more delightfully have devoted his hours of study to Sir Walter Scott's Novels. (*C&S* 100)

In a note to the latter sentence, Coleridge presses the point: "This would not be the first time, that these fascinating volumes had been recommended as a substitute for History—a ground of recommendation, to which I could not conscientiously accede . . . " (*C&S* 100n.). Scott's novels fail as capital-H "History" because they prioritize entertainment over revealing didactic truth: too caught up in historical particulars, they miss the forest for the trees. This is Burke and the antiquarians all over again, and echoes Coleridge's sneering 1810 declaration to Wordsworth that Scott's poetry was little more than the pissing of picturesque and historical detail onto the printed page.

The Excursion met with Coleridge's disapprobation on the grounds that it was tainted with too much Scottian detail and too little attention to the idealist questions that ought to have preoccupied "a lofty didactick poem": it is, he writes in *Biographia Literaria*, hobbled by too much "*matter-of-factness*," comprising on the one hand a very Scottian "laborious minuteness and fidelity in the representation of objects, and their positions, as they appeared to the poet himself" and on the other a "superfluous" enumeration of "accidental circumstances" in order to explain what the reader was already "willing to believe for his own sake."[ccxcix] In an 1815 letter

to Wordsworth, Coleridge was even more explicit: *The Excursion* should have been "a *philosophical poem*" that ought "to have sprung up as the tree" out of "the poem on the growth of your own mind," and to have incorporated not only a refutation of "the sandy sophisms of Locke and the Mechanic dogmatists" but also "a grand didactic swell on the necessary identity of true philosophy with true religion."[ccc] It ought to have been organic and pure; what Wordsworth had produced instead was hardly an improvement on the Scottian model of place reading at all.

Romantic place reading literature always includes some enumeration of miscellaneous detail, a formal holdover from its roots in the eighteenth-century discourses of locodescriptive poetry and antiquarian history. Coleridge was persistently annoyed by this sort of thing. Upon moving to the Lakes, he shared Wordsworth's enthusiasm for the inhabitants' sense of the historical dimensions of their physical surroundings, writing approvingly in his notebook: "In the North every Brook, every Crag, almost every Field has a name." But he immediately converts this widespread place reading into a symptom of an underlying *ideal* cause—namely, northerners' spiritual superiority to other Englishmen: their naming of things merely evinces "a proof of greater Independence & a society more approaching in their Laws & Habits to Nature."[ccci] Coleridge's interest in the spiritual or essential differences between locales and their inhabitants only deepened in later life, as he came to believe that the world was divided between "Aristotelians" like Scott and "Platonists" like himself. The project of acculturating the nation and the empire, as he makes clear in *Church and State*, ought to be carried out on Platonic rather than Aristotelian grounds. In 1799, Coleridge had longed to "find the Man who could explain to me there can be *oneness*, there be infinite Perceptions—yet there must be *one*ness, not an intense Union but an Absolute Unity."[cccii] It should thus come as no surprise that he was so disappointed by *The Excursion*: Scott and Wordsworth, after the Wars, were interested in how to gather separate persons and seemingly incompatible parts into a resolute Union; Coleridge had patience only for Unity. In William Hazlitt's "My First Acquaintance with Poets" (1823), recounting a visit to Wordsworth and Coleridge in Nether Stowey in 1798, Coleridge is already complaining that "Wordsworth was not prone enough to believe in the traditional superstitions of the places, and that there was something corporeal, a *matter-of-factness*, a clinging to the petty, in his poetry, in consequence."[ccciii] In other words, the ideal, incorporeal elements of local identity (like superstitions) are to be celebrated, and the mundane accidents of their physical appearances and minute microhistories are not.

This is the Romantic localism that we have become familiar with: one that is diametrically opposed to political economy and "materialism," one that hopes to transcend the bad world of the sophisters and the calculators and to tap into something sacred and timeless humming beneath the surface of the mundane. One of the chief promulgaters of this narrative was Raymond Williams, who has haunted this dissertation from first to last. Williams traces a more or less unbroken line of arch-Tory idealist cultural theory from Burke through Coleridge to Ruskin, a tradition whose conception of British culture is inextricable from the (undifferentiated) sun-dappled lanes and quiet churchyards of Little England. Their visions of harmonious society, for Williams, rest upon a recognition of an older, more humane residual culture enduring into, but rapidly decaying within, the increasingly industrialized present. But such visions always, ultimately, resolve into a reactionary and neo-pastoral longing for a past that never truly existed. For Williams, the societies envisioned by Coleridge and Ruskin, featuring a clerisy acculturating a grateful and increasingly intelligent underclass, fed and kept by a refreshed guild system and an aristocracy that understood its obligations to them, exemplify the sort of socialisms that Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels would later dismiss, sneeringly, as "Romantic."

But perhaps Romantic localism and cultural theory were more diverse and complex than this simplistic formulation has enabled us to see. Perhaps there also existed another Romantic tradition, one less preoccupied with idealism and natural supernaturalism and more interested in considering the relationship between history and the physical world, and how new cultures and societies might be forged out of innovative attempts to think historically and materially at once. That is, of course, what I have been arguing throughout this dissertation. The time has now come to look beyond Romanticism's materialist historicisms, and to examine their fate in the wake of Marx's scientific systematization of historical materialism.

Coda: From materialist historicisms to historical materialism

> The paths of glory lead but to the grave.
>
> Thomas Gray, "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" (1751)

> What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.
>
> Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (1848)

Karl Marx begins the first volume of *Capital* (1867) by examining the basic unit of the capitalist mode of production, the commodity. He ends his peroration with a literary allusion that mocks economists for fundamentally misunderstanding the nature of value.

> The economists who have discovered [exchange value], and who lay special claim to critical acumen, nevertheless find that the use-value of material objects belongs to them independently of their material properties, while their value, on the other hand, forms a part of them as objects . . . Who would not call to mind at this point the advice given by the good Dogberry to the night-watchman Seacole?
> 'To be a well-favoured man is the gift of fortune; but reading and writing comes by nature.'[ccciv]

Marx's critique of the economists is straightforward enough, even if his invocation of *Much Ado About Nothing* may puzzle. The economists, as usual, have it all backwards: they believe that a commodity's use-value is extrinsic to it and that exchange-value (which Marx tends to refer to simply as "value") is intrinsic to it. Marx, of course, has been at pains to show that exchange-value is determined by congealed socially necessary labor-time (*festgeronnener Arbeitszeit*), and that this labor-time is deposited, as it were, into the commodity by the worker; use-value, on the other hand, is a direct function of the physical characteristics of the commodity itself.

So far so good. But what does Dogberry have to do with anything? Dogberry, of course, is one of the more famous malaprops of Shakespeare's canon, a man who persistently says the opposite both of what he means and what is really true, and in this sense he is a fitting counterpart for the bumbling economists that Marx derides. But there is perhaps more to Marx's slight misquotation than initially meets the eye. "To be a well-favoured man is the gift of fortune" means that being handsome is a matter of luck. At first glance, Dogberry's subsequent declaration, "but reading and writing comes by nature," is a joke in two directions at once: first, Dogberry believes wrongly that saying that something comes "by nature" means something different from saying that it is "a gift of fortune" (that is, he is trying to draw a contrast but inadvertently makes a distinction without a difference); secondly, he fails to understand that "reading and writing" are learned skills, not things which come to one naturally, as if by fortune.

But "nature," as Raymond Williams reminds us in *Keywords* (1983), "is perhaps the most complex word in the [English] language," and comprises three distinct, if somewhat overlapping, meanings:

> (i) the essential quality and character *of* something; (ii) the inherent force which directs either the world or human beings or both; (iii) the material world itself, taken as including or not including human beings.[cccv]

Again, at its most basic level, the joke embedded in Dogberry's comment is that he both does and does not understand usage (ii). But given the multiple meanings of "nature," the comment bears a destabilizing plurality of meanings. If, for example, we read "comes by nature" in the sense of meaning (i), then Dogberry is not making a mistake at all: unlike good looks, which are a matter of luck, reading is something that comes, if somewhat indirectly, from within: it is a fruit of the "nature" of the person who has trained himself to read; he is literate because he is disciplined, astute, hardworking, etc. *by nature*, and so has learned how to read and write. Of course, the latter reading of the passage also necessitates the inclusion of sense (iii): unlike being well-favored, literacy is not something that comes purely out of the self or that can be imposed by an impersonal external force; it is a skill to be learned by recourse to the external "material world itself," to books and pens and papers and so on.

Dogberry, then, has spoken himself into a welter of confusing and competing meanings, some of which are true, some half-true, and some not true at all—which is precisely why Marx casts him as a counterpart to capitalist economists. In the nightmarish upside-down world of the capitalist mode of production, it is impossible to tell what "is natural," in part because nature itself has taken on a destabilizing multiplicity of definitions. Marx first explores how we have arrived at such a bewildering state in *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, in which he attempts to articulate how the natural world comes to feel so foreign and hostile to the worker.

> The worker puts his life into the object; but now his life no longer belongs to him but to the object . . . The alienation of the worker in his product means not only that his labor becomes an object, an external existence, but that it exists outside him, independently, as something alien to him, and that it becomes a power on its own confronting him. It means that the life he has conferred on the object confronts him as something hostile and alien.[cccvi]

Capitalism has mechanized the worker, has converted him into something whose Pavlovian response to any non- "animal function" is to cringe. The worker cringes because he cannot look at anything—a pile of stones, a lake, a pound of cotton—without seeing material that he must work upon. All things become things that require an expenditure of labor—even, presumably, things like trees, which the worker bestows labor upon insofar as he recognizes and identifies them as trees. This latter sense is implicit in Marx's declaration, earlier in the *Manuscripts*, that "the *forming* of the five senses is a labor of the entire history of the world down to the present": all sense experience—all ways of seeing, hearing, and so on—is historically determined.[cccvii] For the worker under capitalism, the act of seeing itself entails a profound alienation: everything the eye alights upon acts like a vampiric receptacle draining away the worker's life-force. The alienation of labor means, in psychological terms, that the worker has been trained to conceive of mere looking as exhausting.

The solution to this hellish state of affairs is the reconciliation of the worker with his estranged labor. A switch must be thrown, polarity must be reversed: the worker must be taught

to find that the draining act of looking around at his surroundings is draining only because he has been conditioned to view his labor as something external to him, as something that demands his energy, rather than a manifestation of his energy itself. His alienation can only be interrupted and eventually dispelled when he learns how to recognize his own labor congealed in the object he has expended it upon, whether that object is a loaf of bread he has baked, a yard of linen that he has produced, or a tree that he has recognized and identified as a tree.

But with that reclamation, Marx's eschatology insists, will come a necessary overthrow of capitalism as a whole way of life. Once the workers can be made to recognize that the world is theirs to be reclaimed, "to win," they will seize the means of production, install a dictatorship of the proletariat, and gradually, owing to a moral and social code forged out of centuries of material privation, institute communism, in which the maxim of the day will be "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." All of this *will* happen; there is no possible alternative. The task of all workers, then, is to read in and liberate from each commodity, and indeed from every site upon which their eyes alight, the same congealed socially necessary labor time, and by extension the same letters of the great apocalypse. Here is a turn, *avant la lettre*, away from Romantic place reading and back to an Enlightenment pattern of tracing in the physical world evidence of one universal teleological history. There is, once again, only one correct way to read nature, and to read naturally.

We are now in quite different terrain from that we have been covering in the chapters above. The plural materialist historicisms of the Romantic place reading tradition had insisted upon the openness of the "material world" (however they chose to understand that concept) to historical reinterpretation. Indeed some writers, whether implicitly or explicitly, insisted upon using place reading to challenge the possibility of univocal history altogether: Richard Llwyd, for example, finds it necessary both to include and exclude mutually contradictory bits of evidence in order to produce a coherent historical narrative, while the necromantic antiquaries of Ireland insist that Whig progressivist histories fail to paper over the egregious violence enacted upon Ireland—violence that promises to break forth in the future and unmake the teleological promises such histories are built upon. Even Scott and Wordsworth, deeply invested in forging a cohesive national and imperial culture, use place reading to recover a variety of experiences that have not yet found a place in the existing historical record.

Historical materialism—singular, not plural—represents something of a return to Enlightenment historiography, though with a properly dialectical difference. Like much eighteenth-century locodescriptive poetry, it finds in all commodities and indeed in all places only plural iterations of the same universal progressive history. Louis Althusser long ago pointed out that historical materialism is scientific in its progressive self-refinement: it contains its own internal methods of proof and its own internal mechanisms of purification.[cccviii] Romantic materialist historicisms, by contrast, lack any such rigorous systematization: place reading is almost exclusively a collection of fictions of convenience, a way of seizing upon available evidence in order to tell a particular kind of story, whether that story is the inevitable collapse of the British Empire or the inevitable triumph of the British nation in the face of external and internal threats. Place reading, in other words, is as much about writing the present and the future as it is about reading the past.

This is not to say, however, that historical materialism represents a decisive epistemic break from the earlier tradition. For one thing, as I have been at pains to show throughout this dissertation, many of the raw materials—ideas, hunches, associations, suspicions—that would eventually be refined and organized into historical materialism are already being put to use,

tentatively and uncertainly, within Romantic materialist historicisms. In the earlier tradition, there is a growing conviction that history and matter needed to be thought together if they were going to be thought at all: history was in part determined by material needs, like the need for defense from military invasion, or to secure the safety of sheep and the economic security of a Lake District family, or to obliterate any record of alternative cultural formations. Concomitantly, Romantic place reading insists that these materially conditioned decisions and actions leave traces in the physical landscape: all matter has a history, one that it can be made to disclose, at least to a degree.

Indeed, following the recent work of Alberto Toscano, historical materialism itself might well be understood as a more refined method of reading places. In his remarkable essay "Materialism without matter" (2013), Toscano returns to Marx's suggestion that "not one atom of matter enters" into the "categories of capitalism," and discounts new materialisms that posit "the anteriority of matter to thought."[cccix] Among the essay's arguments is a suggestion (following Althusser's theorization of a "problematic") that everyday life under capitalism is dominated by "real social abstractions" that determine thought and sense experience.[cccx] "The spontaneous materialism of the political economists," accepted uncritically by much of the Western tradition of metaphysical philosophy, and especially by the new materialists, fails to understand that "matter as such" is itself a deadened, reified, and frozen abstraction, an isolation from processes of dynamic social interaction. Only a capitalist philosophy, Toscano argues, could see matter as something having nothing to do with human labor.[cccxi] Romantic place reading, as we have seen, is frequently at pains to retrieve in all reading places evidence of bygone human labor: to read places like Crichton Castle, which for Scott "shows / The builders' various hands," properly is to recognize all of them as palimpsests encoding the labor of generations.[cccxii]

Toscano turns to Althusser's essay "Cremonini, Painter of the Abstract" (1966), in which Althusser praises the works of Leonardo Cremonini as facilitating a way to "*read* the traces of an absent presence" (1233, my emphasis) left upon the material world.

> I do not mean – it would be *meaningless* – that it is possible to 'paint' 'living conditions,' to paint social relations or the forms of the class struggle in a given society. But it is possible, through their objects, to 'paint' visible connexions that depict by their disposition, the *determinate absence* which governs them. The structure which controls the *concrete* existence of men, i.e. which *informs the lived ideology* of the relations between men and objects and between objects and men, this structure, *as a structure*, can never be depicted by its presence, *in person*, but only by traces and effects, negatively, by indices of absence, *in intaglio* (*en creux*).[cccxiii]

What Cremonini's paintings make possible, for Althusser, is a peeking-around of the "problematic," a way to see the effects of the structure that conditions and determines what kinds of sight are possible. Such a structure does not come into view itself (indeed it could not, since it is an abstraction), but it leaves marks and traces, as if "*en creux*," that testify to its dominating influence. To look at the world in the manner of Cremonini is to see neither " 'objects' . . . nor 'places' . . . nor 'times' or moments," but "the *relations* which bind the objects, places, and times."[cccxiv] Here, perhaps, is the dialectical advancement of place reading, a form of looking at the world that retrieves the connections between eras and things, making possible not just the

resistance or consolidation of national and imperial cultural identity, but a new form of being entirely, one liberated from the structuring abstractions of capital and gazing towards the prospect of true freedom.

We end, then, with a return. Romantic models of reading places are thus displaced by a painterly model of looking at the world, one similar to the eighteenth-century pattern traced by John Barrell in his studies of the picturesque. In both the picturesque tradition and the historical materialist tradition, landscapes are seen in particular ways because of the determining forces of ideology; they can thus be made to yield the same universal lessons and to open onto the same teleological histories. What has been gained in the transition from the former to the latter, of course, is a sense that the world belongs to all the people who can look upon it, rather than merely those who claim to own it. What has been lost is a certain anarchic heterodoxy that prioritized a literary approach to specific sites and that operated on the principle that cohesive, cooperative cultures could be made of much the same stuff as good stories.

NOTES

[i] *Gentleman's Magazine* vol. 72, part I, page 270 (1802).
[ii] Michael Allan, *In the Shadow of World Literature: Sites of Reading in Colonial Egypt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 47. My emphasis.
[iii] *Ibid.*, 53.
[iv] Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 5.
[v] Dix, *After Raymond Williams*, 1.
[vi] Kevis Goodman, *Georgic Modernity and British Romanticism: Poetry and the Mediation of History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 111. See also *ibid*., 112 on the necessary "partiality of the compensatory drive" in Wordsworth's *The Excursion*, and, on Williams and historical experience "in solution," *passim*, and especially 3-9.
[vii] "Williams does not appear to recognize black as anything other than the subordinate moment in an ideology of racial supremacy . . . Where racism demands repatriation and pivots on the exclusion of certain groups from the imagined community of the nation . . . Where racial oppression is practiced with the connivance of legal institutions – the police and the courts – national and legal subjectivity will also become the focus of political antagonism. Williams's discussion of 'race' and nation does not address these issues and is notable for its refusal to examine the concept of racism which has its own historic relationship with ideologies of Englishness, Britishness, and national belonging." Paul Gilroy, '*There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack': The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 50.
[viii] Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (New York: Verso, 1993), 3-4.
[ix] Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), 14, 41.
[x] Williams, *Politics and Letters*, 295-6.
[xi] *Ibid*., 296.
[xii] For a contemporaneous critique of nationalism from a New Left perspective, see Tom Nairn, *The Break-Up of Britain: Crisis and Neonationalism* (London: New Left Books, 1977).
[xiii] Anderson would embrace Trotsky's thought most spectacularly in "Trotsky's Interpretation of Stalinism," *New Left Review* no. 139 (May-June 1983), 49-58.
[xiv] Fred Inglis, *Raymond Williams* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 223.
[xv] *Ibid*., 257ff.
[xvi] "There is the more surprising case of Raymond Williams, whose *Culture and Society* does not deal with the imperial experience at all. (When in an interview Williams was challenged about this massive absence . . . he replied that his Welsh experience, which ought to have enabled him to think about the imperial experience, was 'very much in abeyance' at the time he wrote *Culture and Society*.)" Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 65.
[xvii] Raymond Williams, *Towards 2000* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1984), 20. On "the Yookay," see *ibid*., 182 and 191ff. Many of Williams's late writings on Wales are usefully collated in *idem*., *Who Speaks for Wales? Nation, Culture, Identity*, ed Daniel Williams (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003).
[xviii] *Idem.*, *The Fight for Manod* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1979), 36. The passage is a callback to an incident portrayed in Williams's debut novel *Border Country* (Williams, *Border Country* [New York: Horizon Press, 1962], 292-3).
[xix] *Idem*., "Black Mountains" (1981), reprinted in *Who Speaks for Wales?*, 74.
[xx] Williams, *Politics and Letters*, 302. See also Williams's related thoughts in a 1977 interview with *Poetry Wales* titled "Marxism, Poetry, Wales" and reprinted in *Who Speaks for Wales?*, 81-94 "I do in fact have an attitude to land, to physical land, which is in one way very material, because what always interests me is how it was made. I have a very strong sense of people making landscape, and this is even after growing up in an area in which an important part is clearly not man-made although man-affected. And I do find that when I think about this, tracing these old hollow roads for example or looking at old barrows or even simply old fields, it feels like an experience or interest that other people call mystical or religious. It doesn't feel like common-sense although at another level I feel it is the most immediate common-sense. I know what happens when you cut a ditch, and I know the really extraordinary thing which still absolutely amazes me, that a man cutting a ditch four thousand years ago—his mark is still there; and I've seen it described, when it appears in other people's thinking, as a religious feeling. But it is a very strong feeling, that's all I can say" (92).
[xxi] Raymond Williams, *People of the Black Mountains*, vol. I, *The Beginning* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1989), 1-2.
[xxii] Raymond Williams, "Decentralism and the Politics of Places," reprinted in *Who Speaks for Wales*, 208.

[xxiii] Raymond Williams, "People of the Black Mountains" (1987), Interview, reprinted in *Who Speaks for Wales*, 174.
[xxiv] The phrase appears in Robbins, "Reading Bad," *Los Angeles Review of Books*, January 21, 2018, online at <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/reading-bad/#!.> (accessed 4 March 2018). Wolff analyzes the recent materialist turn in cultural theory in "Romantic Stone Speech and the Appeal of the Inorganic," *ELH* 84.3 (Fall 2017), 617-40, though, following Ernst Cassirer, he opposes "materialist" and "Romantic" theories of culture. Geoff Dyer calls for a return to Williams's thought and writing in "Raymond Williams was one of the left's great thinkers—he deserves to be rediscovered," *The New Statesman*, 12 March 2015, online at <https://www.newstatesman.com/culture/2015/03/raymond-williams-was-one-lefts-great-thinkers-he-deserves-be-rediscovered> (accessed 16 April 2019).
[xxv] E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage Books, 1966), 318. For evidence of Scott's nightly tea habit, see *The Journal of Sir Walter Scott, 1825-1832, from the Original Manuscript at Abbotsford* (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1891), 97, 166, 209, 210, 211, 227, 228, 235, 256, 335, 344, 388, 419, 437, 480, 482, 587, 625, 664, 677, 685, 691, 755, 763, 792, 841; for the Wordsworth's predilection for tea, see Pamela Woof, ed., Dorothy Wordsworth, *The Grasmere and Alfoxden Journals* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 179-180n.
[xxvi] Lisa Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 79ff.
[xxvii] Andrew Davies, "Uncontaminated with Human Gore: Iolo Morganwg, Slavery and the Jamaican Inheritance," in *A Rattleskull Genius: The Many Faces of Iolo Morganwg*, ed. Geraint H. Jenkins (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2009), 293-314.
[xxviii] Robert Bloomfield, *The Banks of Wye: A Poem in Four Books* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1811), 78-83, 103-5; Tim Burke, "Colonial Spaces and National Identities in *The Banks of Wye*," in Simon White, John Goodridge and Bridget Keegan, eds., *Robert Bloomfield: Lyric, Class, and the Romantic Canon* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2006), 89-112; T.D. Fosbroke, *The Wye Tour, or Gilpin on the Wye, with Picturesque, Historical, and Archaeological Additions* (Ross: W. Farror, 1822), 2-3; Michael J. Franklin, "The Colony Writes Back: Brutus, Britanus, and the Advantages of an Oriental Ancestry," in eds. Damian Walford Davies and Lynda Pratt, *Wales and the Romantic Imagination* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007), 13-42; Gilpin, *Observations*, 7-8, 31, 82; J[ohn] G[ibson] Lockhart, *Peter's Letters to His Kinsfolk* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood, 1819), vol. I, 261; Iolo Morganwg, *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral*, 2 vols. (London: J. Nichols, 1794), vol. II, 37; Jim Shanahan, "'The Fostering Aid of a Sister Country': Wales in Irish Novels, 1796-1810," in Davies and Pratt, eds., *Wales and the Romantic Imagination*, 122-140; Walter Scott, *The Bridal of Triermain, or, the Vale of St. John* (Edinburgh: James Ballantyne & Co., 1813), Canto Third, stanzas XX-XXXV, 160-88; Sydney Owenson, Lady Morgan, *The Wild Irish Girl: A National Tale*, ed. Kathryn Kirkpatrick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 13, 15, 16-9, 22, 34, 36, 39n., 45n., 91, 98, 99, 105-6, 133, 134, 140, 143, 145, 146, 153, 156, 182n., 183-4; Wordsworth, "Michael," reprinted in Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads*, eds. R.L. Brett and A.R. Jones (New York: Routledge, 2005), ll. 280; 456.
[xxix] Alan Bewell, *Natures in Translation: Romanticism and Colonial Natural History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017), 9; 70ff.
[xxx] *Ibid*., 43; 137.
[xxxi] *Ibid*., 215, 231, 232, 15-18.
[xxxii] Mason observes that it is often the case in poetry that "the Author, by a constant attention to his Measure and Rhime, and the Exaltation of his Language, is often very apt to obscure his Sense; which therefore requires the more Care in the Reader to discover and distinguish it" (John Mason, *An Essay on Elocution, or, Pronunciation. Intended chiefly for the Assistance of Those who instruct Others in the Art of Reading. And those who are often called to speak in Publick*. [London: Mary Cooper, 1748], 33). The ubiquity of this essay in reprints and collections in the following six or seven decades is remarkable: I count nearly fifty instances of re-publication in the *ECCO* archive, suggesting that it exercised considerable influence. Blair similarly comments on "a sort of struggle between the sense and the sound" that attends all attempts to read poetry, and notes "When we are reading or reciting verse, there is a peculiar difficulty in making the pauses justly. The difficulty arises from the melody of verse, which dictates to the ear pauses or rests of its own; and to adjust and compound these properly with the pauses of the sense, so as neither to hurt the ear, nor to offend the understanding, is so very nice a matter, that it is no wonder that we so seldom meet with good readers of poetry" (Hugh Blair, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, third ed. [London: A. Strahan, 1787], vol. II, 443). See *ibid*., 442-6 for a more extended meditation on the same topic.
[xxxiii] Cf. Bewell: "Training his readers to appreciate the material, historical, and aesthetic dimensions of this landscape was essential to" Wordsworth's ecological project (*Natures in Translation*, 263).

[xxxiv] For historical and phenomenological accounts of the idea of "place," see Yi-Fu Tuan, *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974); Edward S. Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); J. Nicholas Entrikin, *The Betweenness of Place: Towards a Geography of Modernity* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991); J.E. Malpas, *Place and Experience: A Philosophical Topography* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994). See also David Harvey's very useful "From space to place and back again: Reflections on the condition of postmodernity," in John Bird, Barry Curtis, Tim Putnam, Lisa Tickner, eds., *Mapping the Futures: Local Cultures, Global Change* (New York: Routledge, 1993).
[xxxv] Wordsworth, *The Excursion*, eds. Sally Bushell, James A. Butler, and Michael C. Jaye, with the assistance of David García (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007), 2.459-493; "Michael," in *Lyrical Ballads*, eds. Brett and Jones, ll. 63; 70, my emphasis.
[xxxvi] M.H. Abrams, *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1971).
[xxxvii] Fiona Stafford, *Local Attachments: The Province of Poetry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 1-30. For a critique of Stafford's conception of the relationship between Romanticism and localism, see e.g. Simon J. White, *Romanticism and the Rural Community* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 12.
[xxxviii] James Thomson, *Spring* (1728/46), reprinted in David Fairer and Christine Gerrard, eds., *Eighteenth-Century Poetry, An Annotated Anthology*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 212-38; ll. 34-40; 272-307; 1113-1125.
[xxxix] Thomas Gray, "Ode on the Spring," (1748), in *ibid*., 347-9; ll. 11-12; 18-20.
[xl] John Dyer, "Grongar Hill" (1726), in *ibid*., 239-43, ll. 15; 23; 87-8.
[xli] Samuel Johnson, *The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia* (1759), reprinted in Frank Brady and W.K. Wimsatt, eds., *Samuel Johnson: Selected Poetry and Prose* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 90. On the transition from eighteenth-century locodescriptive poetry to Romantic "nature poetry," see Alan D. McKillop, "Local Attachment and Cosmopolitanism—The Eighteenth Century Pattern," Geoffrey H. Hartman, "Wordsworth, Inscriptions, and Romantic Nature Poetry," Martin Price, "The Picturesque Moment," and M.H. Abrams, "Structure and Style in the Greater Romantic Lyric," all initially printed in Frederick W. Hilles and Harold Bloom, eds., *From Sensibility to Romanticism: Essays Presented to Frederick A. Pottle* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 191-218, 259-92, 389-413, and 527-60; see also Marshall Brown, *Preromanticism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 1-10 *et passim*.
[xlii] Alexander Pope, "Windsor-Forest" (1713), reprinted in *Eighteenth-Century Poetry*, eds. Fairer and Gerrard, 103-13; ll. 33-9; 383-90.
[xliii] Bewell, *Natures in Translation*, 20-2; Theresa M. Kelley, *Clandestine Marriage: Botany and Romantic Culture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), 1-2, *et passim*.
[xliv] Charlotte Smith, *Beachy Head* (1807) in *The Poems of Charlotte Smith*, ed. Stuart Curran (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 219, 222, 234; ll. 51n.; 126; 414.
[xlv] I advance a very rough version of this argument in "'Mass of Ruin': Deconstructing Empiricism in Charlotte Smith's *Beachy Head*," *Romanticism and Knowledge, Selected Papers from the Munich Joint Conference of the German Society for English Romanticism and the North American Society for the Study of Romanticism* (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2015), 177-88. Better articulations of many of the same points can be found in Kevis Goodman, "Conjectures on Beachy Head: Charlotte Smith's Geological Poetics and the Grounds of the Present," *ELH* 81 (2014), 983-1006; Theresa M. Kelley, "Romantic Histories: Charlotte Smith and *Beachy Head*," *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 59.3 (Dec. 2004), 281-314; and Christoph Bode, "The Subject of *Beachy Head*," *Charlotte Smith in British Romanticism*, ed. Jacqueline Labbe (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2008), 51-65.
[xlvi] Saree Makdisi, *Romantic Imperialism: Universal Empire and the Culture of Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 1-22, 23-44, *et passim*; esp. 2-3.
[xlvii] Manu Samriti Chander, *Brown Romantics: Poetry and Nationalism in the Global Nineteenth Century* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2017), esp. 1-18.
[xlviii] *Ibid*., 2; 6.
[xlix] Katie Trumpener, *Bardic Nationalism: The Romantic Novel and the British Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 78.
[l] *Ibid*., 164; 166-7. Here Trumpener follows Ina Ferris's pioneering work defining the genre of the national tale in Ferris, *The Achievement of Literary Authority: Gender, History, and the Waverley Novels* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), esp. 134-72.

[li] Michael J. Franklin, "The Colony Writes Back: Brutus, Britanus, and the Advantages of an Oriental Ancestry," in Damian Walford Davies and Lynda Pratt, eds., *Wales and the Romantic Imagination* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007), 13-42.
[lii] Alberto Toscano, "Materialism without matter: abstraction, absence and social form," in *Textual Practice* 28.7 (2014), 1221-1240; Marjorie Levinson, *Thinking through Poetry: Field Reports on the Romantic Lyric* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 108. I thank Kevis Goodman for drawing my attention to these commentaries.
[liii] Walter Scott, *Rokeby; A Poem.* (Edinburgh: James Ballantyne & Co., 1813), xxvi.
[liv] Richard Llwyd, *Beaumaris Bay, A Poem: With Notes, Descriptive and Explanatory; Particulars of the Druids, Founders of Some of the Fifteen Tribes of North Wales, The Families Descended from Them, and Quotations from the Bards, with an Appendix: Containing an Account of the Battle of Beaumaris in 1648, and the Taking of the Castle*, (Chester: J. Fletcher, 1800), l. 69n.
[lv] This is more or less the central thesis of the following works; as such, I have limited page citations to exceptionally clear formulations of the concept: Peter Fritzsche, *Stranded in the Present: Modern Time and the Melancholy of History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 1-10; Mark Salber Philips, *Society and Sentiment: Genres of Historical Writing in Britain, 1740-1820* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 3-30; James Chandler, *England in 1819: The Politics of Literary Culture and the Case of Romantic Historicism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), xiv-xv.
[lvi] One excellent account of the development of antiquarianism over the course of the long eighteenth century is Noah Heringman, *Sciences of Antiquity: Romantic Antiquarianism, Natural History, and Knowledge Work* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013). See also Heringman and Crystal B. Lake, eds., *Romantic Antiquarianism: A* Romantic Circles *PRAXIS Volume* (June 2014), at <https://romantic-circles.org/praxis/antiquarianism/index.html>; especially Heringman and Lake, "Introduction," and Jonathan Sachs, "Poetical Geography: The Place of the Antiquarian and the Situatedness of Literature" therein.
[lvii] William Godwin, *Essay on Sepulchres; Or, a proposal for erecting some memorial of the illustrious dead of all ages on the spot where their remains have been interred* (1809), reprinted in Mark Philp, ed., *The Political and Philosophical Writings of William Godwin*, vol. VI, 71; 112. See the excellent discussion of these and other passages from the *Essay* in Mark Salber Phillips, *Society and Sentiment: Genres of Historical Writing in Britain, 1740-1820* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 322-7.
[lviii] *Idem*., "Of History and Romance," in Philp, ed., *Writings of William Godwin*, vol. V, 291.
[lix] Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, ed. Leslie Mitchell (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 142. See also Chapter 2 Section I, below.
[lx] Smith, *Beachy Head*, ll. 408-19.
[lxi] For one such example, see Thomas Stackhouse, *An History of the Holy Bible, from the beginning of the world, to the establishment of Christianity: with answers to most of the controverted questions, dissertations upon the most remarkable passages, and a connection of profane history throughout, to which are added, notes, explaining difficult texts, rectifying mis-translations, and reconciling seeming contradictions*, 2nd ed. (London: I. Garner, 1788), vol. I, 105.
[lxii] For a good, if very brief, discussion of "*lusus naturae*," see Goodman, "Conjectures on Beachy Head," 1003-4n.30.
[lxiii] For fossils in chalk cliffs, see Smith, *Beachy Head*, ll. 377-89; for the Scottish-Arabic dungeon, see Scott, *Marmion*, ed. Ainsley McIntosh (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), 249; for Carthaginian swords in Irish bogs, see Owenson, *Wild Irish Girl*, 105-6.

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[lxiv] John Davies, *A History of Wales* (New York: Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 1993), 320.
[lxv] All figures taken from Davies, *History of Wales*, 319-335. For the claim that Wales threatened English economic hegemony, see A.H. Dodd, *The Industrial Revolution in North Wales* (London: Bridge Books, 1990), 18.
[lxvi] See Prys Morgan, "From Death to a View: The Hunt for the Welsh Past in the Romantic Period," in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 43-53; and Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 13-17, 300-303.
[lxvii] Gwyn A. Williams, *When Was Wales? A History of the Welsh* (London: Black Raven Press, 1985), 145.
[lxviii] For a loving Romantic-era retrieval of those customs that endured from the age of Owain Glyndŵr to the eighteenth century, see T.J. Llewelyn Prichard's remarkable and understudied novel *The Adventures and Vagaries of Twm Shon Catti, Descriptive of Life in Wales* (John Cox: Aberystwyth, 1828).

[lxix] John Davies, *A History of Wales*, (London: Penguin, 1993), 318, 326, 332, 334, 347.
[lxx] Davies, *History*, 320-321, 328-329, 351; Gwyn A. Williams, *The Merthyr Rising* (London: Croom Helm, 1978), 18-25.
[lxxi] Davies, *History*, 327, 352-355, 359; Williams, *Merthyr Rising*, 24, 26, 42.
[lxxii] On this transformation, see Shawna Lichtenwalner, *Claiming Cambria: Invoking the Welsh in the Romantic Era* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008), 14-21; 94-5.
[lxxiii] On the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century hegemony of the picturesque as a mode of looking, see John Barrell, *The Idea of Landscape and the Sense of Place, 1730-1840: An Approach to the Poetry of John Clare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 4-6, *et passim*; Anne Janowitz, "The Chartist Picturesque," in Stephen Copley and Peter Garside, eds., *The Politics of the Picturesque: Literature, landscape, and aesthetics since 1770* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 263; Peter de Bolla, *The Education of the Eye: Painting, Landscape, and Architecture in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2003), 119.
[lxxiv] William Gilpin, *Observations upon the River Wye, and several parts of South Wales, &c., relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty, made in the Summer of the Year 1770* (London: R. Blamire, 1782), iii. Hereafter cited parenthetically by abbreviated title and page number.
[lxxv] Robert Bloomfield, *The Banks of Wye: A Poem in Four Books* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1811), 78-83, 103-5; Tim Burke, "Colonial Spaces and National Identities in *The Banks of Wye*," in Simon White, John Goodridge and Bridget Keegan, eds., *Robert Bloomfield: Lyric, Class, and the Romantic Canon* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2006), 89-112; T.D. Fosbroke, *The Wye Tour, or Gilpin on the Wye, with Picturesque, Historical, and Archaeological Additions* (Ross: W. Farror, 1822), 2-3; Michael J. Franklin, "The Colony Writes Back: Brutus, Britanus, and the Advantages of an Oriental Ancestry," in eds. Damian Walford Davies and Lynda Pratt, *Wales and the Romantic Imagination* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007), 13-42; Gilpin, *Observations*, 7-8, 31, 82; J[ohn] G[ibson] Lockhart, *Peter's Letters to His Kinsfolk* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood, 1819), vol. I, 261; Iolo Morganwg, *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral*, 2 vols. (London: J. Nichols, 1794), vol. II, 37; Jim Shanahan, "'The Fostering Aid of a Sister Country': Wales in Irish Novels, 1796-1810," in Davies and Pratt, eds., *Wales and the Romantic Imagination*, 122-140.
[lxxvi] Esther Moir, *The Discovery of Britain: The English Tourists, from 1540 to 1840* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964), 123-38.
[lxxvii] C.P. Barbier, *William Gilpin* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), 71.
[lxxviii] The question of whether the Picturesque is a bourgeois ideology or an ideology of small land-owners has produced considerable controversy among critics. Liu, Barrell, de Bolla, and Goodridge maintain that the aesthetic serves the ideological prerogatives of the bourgeoisie, while Michasiw, Bermingham, and David Worrall (in Worrall, "Agrarians against the Picturesque: ultra-radicalism and the revolutionary politics of land," in Copley and Garside, eds., *The Politics of the Picturesque*, 240-60) argue the opposite position. On the picturesque as an imperialist activity, see Finola O'Kane, *Ireland and the Picturesque: Design, Landscape Painting and Tourism 1700-1840* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 1-7 *et passim*. While I agree with O'Kane's argument that the picturesque entailed a colonialist practice of extracting wealth from subjugated colonies, I disagree with her decision to downplay the colonial status of Wales, where the picturesque was invented. In very rare cases, such as that of Goodrich Castle on the River Wye, Gilpin was content to label scenes as they presently existed "correctly picturesque," without any further viewerly manipulation (see *Observations* 18). This is the only such instance of a "correctly picturesque" scene existing in *Observations on the River Wye*; examples of such scenes are even rarer in Gilpin's later productions.
[lxxix] Alexander Pope, "An Epistle to Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington," ll. 57-70, as reprinted in Pope, *The Major Works*, ed. Pat Rogers (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 245. Barrell mentions the poem in this context in his *The Idea of Landscape and the Sense of Place, 1730-1840: An Approach to the Poetry of John Clare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 24, 37.
[lxxx] Gilpin, *Observations, relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty, made in the year 1772, on several parts of England; particularly the Mountains and Lakes of Cumberland, and Westmoreland*, 2nd ed. (London: R. Blamire, 1788), vol. I, xxvi-xxviii. Original emphasis.
[lxxxi] It is worth noting that Gilpin's sense of material resistance latent within the Welsh landscape harmonizes not only with Newtonian laws, but also with several more recent conceptions of materiality. Hannah Arendt, for example, writes of the "durability" of the world: "It is this durability which gives the things of the world their relative independence from men who produced and use them, their 'objectivity' which makes them withstand, 'stand against' and endure, at least for a time, the voracious needs and wants of their living makers and users" (Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 2nd ed. [Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998], 137). Something like this "durability," this resistance to "the voracious needs and wants" of idealizing humans, likewise emerges in Diana

Coole and Samantha Frost's efforts to disentangle matter from various idealizing projections (Diana Coole and Samantha Frost, "Introduction," from Coole and Frost, eds., *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics* [Durham: Duke University Press, 2010], 1-15). Indeed, the etymology of the word "object" itself connotes a similar stubbornness: taken from the Latin *objectum*, material objects (as opposed to idealizing subjects) are literally those things the subjective mind is "thrown against" in the act of its idealizing perception. It is something like this same stubbornness that produces Gilpin's yearning for a judicious mallet to tear down Tintern Abbey: though the picturesque aesthetic gives him license to make minor changes to the scene, the highly arbitrary rules of picturesque play deny him the right to make the sort of large-scale changes necessary to render the Abbey "properly" picturesque. On the resilience or resistance of matter on a theoretical level, I am indebted to the suggestions of Andrew Barbour, whose unpublished essay "Matter Resistant: The Politics of Materialism in *Don Juan*" guides my argument here.

[lxxxii] This passage is the *locus classicus* of critical engagement with the Picturesque. I have found Andrews's and Michasiw's accounts most helpful in formulating my own argument (cf. Andrews, *Search for the Picturesque*, 94-105; Michasiw, "Nine Revisionist Theses," 94). Importantly, as Andrews notes, this is not the last passage Gilpin writes in which he fantasizes about tearing down/materially "revising" a ruined Welsh abbey; see Andrews, *Search for the Picturesque*, 118.

[lxxxiii] For Liu, the picturesque eye longs to do violence to a scene, but finds itself restrained by picturesque rules; the picturesque "as an experience… is both motivated and immobilized"; as a result, "the full experience of the picturesque… must arise from the lamination of eroticism and sadism, intricacy and roughness" (Liu, *Wordsworth*, 63-4). Michasiw highlights the arbitrariness of the rules of Gilpin's picturesque play and the class implications of these rules in his essay "Nine Revisionist Theses on the Picturesque," *Representations* 38 (Spring 1992), 82-5.

[lxxxiv] There were not many Welsh tourists on the Wye, and indeed many tourists, like Gilpin, complained of the dispossessed and homeless Welsh persons cluttering up Tintern Abbey (e.g., *Observations* 35-7).

[lxxxv] William Godwin, *An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice, and its Influence on General Virtue and Happiness* (Dublin: Luke White, 1793), vol. II, 413, 424.

[lxxxvi] On the political stakes and difficulty of performatively rejecting the whole of French history during the Revolution, see Simon Schama, *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989), 771-777. On perfectibility more generally, see Jenny Davidson, *Breeding: A Partial History of the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 199-205.

[lxxxvii] E.g., in Anahid Nersessian, *Utopia, Limited: Romanticism and Adjustment* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015). For a more thorough account of my sympathies with and differences from Nersessian's argument, see below, Chapter 3.

[lxxxviii] For Iolo as "one-man Welsh Romanticism," see Damian Walford Davies and Lynda Pratt, "Introduction: Devolving Romanticism," in eds. Davies and Pratt, *Wales and the Romantic Imagination*, 2.

[lxxxix] For a fuller account of this remarkable story, see Geraint H. Jenkins, *Bard of Liberty: The Political Radicalism of Iolo Morganwg* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012), 111-2; 120, and Marion Löffler, *The Literary and Historical Legacy of Iolo Morganwg, 1826-1926* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008), 30-1; 36.

[xc] Iolo Morganwg, National Library of Wales Manuscript 13089E, p. 288, as cited in Geraint H. Jenkins, *Bard of Liberty: The Political Radicalism of Iolo Morganwg* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012), 180.

[xci] On evolving attitudes towards history as something both ever-present and impossible to know with epistemological certainty, see among others Mark Salber Philips, *Society and Sentiment: Genres of Historical Writing in Britain, 1740-1820* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), and Peter Fritzsche, *Stranded in the Present: Modern Time and the Melancholy of History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).

[xcii] Edward Williams (Iolo Morganwg), *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral, in two volumes* (London: J. Nichols, 1794), xviii. Original emphasis. Hereafter cited parenthetically by the abbreviation *PLP*, with volume and page number. Iolo was born Edward Williams near Llancarfon in Glamorgan in 1747, but assumed the bardic name and identity "Iolo Morganwg" in London in the late 1780s and early 1790s. He was better known by his bardic pseudonym in his own day and the vast majority of recent literary criticism refers to him as "Iolo." In deference to established custom, I refer to him as Iolo throughout this dissertation.

[xciii] For "Goth" as a word Iolo used to denigrate persons of English descent on the basis of their ultimately Continental ancestry, see Cathryn Charnell-White, *Barbarism and Bardism: North Wales versus South Wales in the Bardic Vision of Iolo Morganwg* (Aberystwyth: University of Wales Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies, 2004).

[xciv] It is worth noting that Gray himself did not believe the longstanding myth of Edward I's purported massacre of the Welsh bards, although many of Iolo's contemporaries—including much of the Welsh literary establishment—did believe it to be historically accurate.

[xcv] *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg*, eds. Geraint H. Jenkins, Ffion Mair Jones, and David Ceri Jones (Cardiff: Univerity of Wales Press, 2007), vol. I, 688; vol. III, 379; vol. II, 865. Hereafter cited by the abbreviation *CIM*, with volume and page number.

[xcvi] Iolo Morganwg, "Bardism," in William Owen [Pughe], *The Heroic Elegies and Other Pieces of Llywarç Hen, Prince of the Cumbrian Britons, with a literal translation* (London: J. Owen, 1792), xlvi. It is important to note that Cathryn Charnell-White believes this introduction to be the work of Pughe, rather than Iolo, although hers is a minority position – most critics believe that this section of Pughe's introduction has Iolo's fingerprints all over it, and that Pughe either revised an original essay of Iolo's, or that Iolo ghostwrote the section entirely (Cathryn Charnell-White, *Bardic Circles: National, Regional and Personal Identity in the Bardic Vision of Iolo Morganwg* [University of Wales Press: Cardiff, 2007], 24). For my own part, it seems difficult to deny that the passage is written in Iolo's voice, especially since several long passages of the essay appear, unaltered, in *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral* (which Iolo was writing at the same time the *Elegies* appeared). In any case, it is a matter of general critical consensus, Charnell-White included, that Iolo was Pughe's source on all matters pertaining to bardism, and that it was Iolo, not Pughe, who was the primary creative force behind the bardic "system." For these reasons, I have chosen to treat the "Bardism" essay as the work of Iolo, and believe that whether Pughe revised the essay or not, it reflects Iolo's own beliefs. Iolo's critique of Rowlands's supposed partiality to his own locale is especially rich, since Iolo went to great lengths to invent a properly heroic history for his own native swath of Glamorgan.

[xcvii] See, e.g., Ffion Mair Jones, *'The Bard is a Very Singular Character': Iolo Morganwg, Marginalia, and Print Culture* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2010), *passim*; Iolo Morganwg, "Preface to the History of the Bards – hints," National Library of Wales Manuscript 13121B, p. 445 (as reproduced in Charnell-White, *Bardic Circles*, 171), and *idem*., "A Short Account of the Ancient British Bards," National Library of Wales Manuscript 13097B, 125 (as reproduced in Charnell-White, *Bardic Circles*, 183).

[xcviii] On Iolo's Anglophobia and its purported manifestation as opposition to all historical narratives that treat English supremacy within Britain with anything but bitterness and contempt, see Helen Braithwaite, "From the See of St. David's to St. Paul's Churchyard: Joseph Johnson's Cross-Border Connections," in Davies and Pratt, eds., *Wales and the Romantic Imagination*, 55-56; Michael J. Franklin, "The Colony Writes Back: Brutus, Britanus, and the Advantages of an Oriental Ancestry," in Damian Walford Davies and Lynda Pratt, eds., *Wales and the Romantic Imagination* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007), 30-34; Prys Morgan, "Iolo Morganwg and Welsh Historical Traditions," in ed. Jenkins, *Rattleskull Genius*, 252, 262, 264, 267; Gwyn A. Williams, "Romanticism in Wales," in Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich, eds., *Romanticism in National Context* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 30. The best source on Iolo's forgery is Mary-Ann Constantine's excellent *The Truth Against the World: Iolo Morganwg and Romantic Forgery* (Cardiff: University of Wales, 2007).

[xcix] For examples of this critical trend, see, for example, David Ceri Jones, who writes "To approach [Iolo's] writings in the expectation of finding a logical and internally consistent presentation of his thoughts on any subject may . . . be unrealistic" (Jones, Iolo Morganwg and the Welsh Rural Landscape," in Geraint H. Jenkins, ed., *A Rattleskull Genius: The Many Faces of Iolo Morganwg* [Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2009], 227). Other examples may be found in *ibid*., 234-235 and Charnell-White, *Barbarism and Bardism*, 3, *inter pares*.

[c] James Mulholland, *Sounding Imperial: Poetic Voice and the Politics of Empire, 1730-1820* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), 75-82. Mulholland is especially perceptive in his account of the alarming racist and imperialist dimensions of Iolo's performed utopian vision.

[ci] Joseph Priestley, *Experiments and Observations on Different Kinds of Air, and Other Branches of Natural Philosophy, Connected with the Subject. In Three Volumes; Being the former Six Volumes abridged and methodized, with many Additions* (Birmingham: Thomas Pearson, 1790), vol. I, xv-xliv. See especially Priestley's insistence that the number of witnesses of Jesus Christ's miracles alone testifies to the actual existence of such miracles (*ibid*., xxxvi-xl). Iolo's understanding of science is in keeping with eighteenth-century conceptions of that word as integrally caught up in connotations of knowledge; see especially "Science," in Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society, Revised Edition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 276-80. On Iolo's friendship with Priestley, and his claim to have accompanied Priestley to Gravesend on his final departure from England in 1793, see ed. Jenkins, *Rattleskull Genius*, 149, 274, 361, and Elijah Waring, *Recollections and Anecdotes of Edward Williams, the Bard of Glamorgan; or, Iolo Morganwg, B.B.D.* (London: Charles Gilpin, 1850), 134.

[cii] See Constantine, "'A Subject of Conversation': Iolo Morganwg, Hannah More and Ann Yearsley," in Davies and Pratt, eds., *Wales and the Romantic Imagination*, 65-85, esp. 81. Iolo's subscription list, published in the opening pages of *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral* and also including the names of Anna Letitia Barbauld, James Boswell, Fanny Burney, William Cowper, Joseph Johnson, the radical bookseller, Sir William Jones, the Orientalist, Thomas Pennant, Hester Thrale Piozzi, Joseph Priestley, Samuel Rogers, Anna Seward, Granville Sharpe, William

Wilberforce, and Ann Yearsley, among others, is discussed in nearly all contemporary critical accounts of Iolo's life and work (*PLP* I, xxv-xxxix).

[ciii] Iolo Morganwg, "A Short Account of the Ancient British Bards," National Library of Wales Manuscript 13097B, 125 (as reproduced in Charnell-White, *Bardic Circles*, 183).

[civ] Constantine, *The Truth Against the World*, 131 *et passim*. Formally, the "triad" consists of a poetic mnemonic device whereby fragments of Welsh folklore, historical figures, and historical events are aggregated in groups of three. Hundreds of authentic triads are still extant, and many of these were included in the *Archaiology*'s first two volumes, each published in 1801. See Rachel Bromwich, ed., *Trioedd Ynys Prydein*, 3rd. ed. (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2006).

[cv] Michael J. Franklin, "The Colony Writes Back: Brutus, Britanus, and the Advantages of an Oriental Ancestry," in Davies and Pratt, eds., *Wales and the Romantic Imagination*, 30.

[cvi] Iolo Morganwg, *CIM* I, 570.

[cvii] Iolo had, from his very first self-introduction to the world of Anglophone letters, maintained that he was the last of two representatives of a dying bardic tradition. See, for example, *Gentleman's Magazine*, LIX, part 2 (1789), 976-977; *PLP* II, 194.

[cviii] For a good discussion of Williams in the context of 1790s radicalism, see Davies, *Presences that Disturb*, esp. 8-54.

[cix] Iolo Morganwg, *CIM* II, 147.

[cx] *Ibid*., 460.

[cxi] Iolo Morganwg, "Schools of Welsh Poetry," National Library of Wales Manuscript 13138A, p. 62, as reprinted in Charnell-White, *Bardic Circles*, 257-258.

[cxii] Iolo, "Bardism," in Pughe, *Heroic Elegies*, lxvii-lxviii.

[cxiii] Iolo, "Schools of Welsh Poetry," 92; reprinted in Charnell-White, *Bardic Circles*, 270.

[cxiv] Iolo, "Bardism," in Pughe, *Heroic Elegies*, xliv.

[cxv] The universal scope and universalist aims of Iolo's bardic politics are a critical commonplace. For examples of this argument, see Ceri W. Lewis, "Iolo Morganwg," in Branwen Jarvis, ed., *A Guide to Welsh Literature, c. 1700-1800*, Vol. IV (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), 137ff., and Gwyn A. Williams, "Romanticism in Wales," 15ff.

[cxvi] Jenkins, *Bard of Liberty*, 40-41.

[cxvii] Gwyn A. Williams, "Romanticism in Wales," 30. It goes without saying, I think, that I object to Williams's suggestion that Iolo's bardism is mere "Romantic delusion."

[cxviii] For an account of Iolo's practices and methods as a forger, see Constantine, *The Truth Against the World*, and below.

[cxix] For skepticism regarding Iolo's historical research during his own lifetime, see Prys Morgan, "From a Death to a View," 65. For the reception of his ideas after his death, culminating at last in the revelation that he had forged a massive amount of material around the time of the First World War, see Marion Löffler, *The Literary and Historical Legacy of Iolo Morganwg, 1826-1926* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008).

[cxx] As it turned out, the spread of the British Empire was fortuitous in other senses, as well: its spread into India revealed "proof" that bardism shared ancient beliefs with what Iolo called "our sister nation the Hindoos" (see Franklin, "The Colony Writes Back"). In his brief remarks on the "Gwyddoniaid," the supposed precursors of the bards, Iolo reveals that recently discovered similarities between "the most ancient theologies in the world" (discoveries, it should be noted, that the expansion of the British Empire facilitated) attest to the divine revelation that underlies bardism. "The Chinese, the Buddhism [*sic*.], the Brahmin, the Persian, the Egyptian and Druidic theologies &c, not excepting the Abrahamic or Jewish system," Iolo maintains, all share basic similarities (National Library of Wales Manuscript 13158A, p. 194, as reprinted in Charnell-White, *Bardic Circles*, 164).

[cxxi] Iolo Morganwg, "Bardism," in Pughe, *Heroic Elegies*, xxi.

[cxxii] For a comparison of Iolo and Herder, see, for example, Jenkins, *Bard of Liberty*, 169-170, 186.

[cxxiii] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works 1864-1868, Volume 43* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1988), 515-516, as cited in Jenkins, *Bard of Liberty*, 206.

[cxxiv] Sir William Llewelyn Davies, "Llwyd, Richard ('Bard of Snowdon'; 1752-1835," in *Welsh Biography Online, Dictionary of Welsh Biography*, ed. The Honourable Society of the Cymmrodorion, http://wbo.llgc.org.uk/en/s-LLWY-RIC-1752.html (accessed May 2014); Edward Parry, "Memoir," in *The Poetical Works of Richard Llwyd, the Bard of Snowdon* (London: Whittaker & Co., 1837); D. L. Thomas, "Llwyd, Richard (1752–1835)," rev. M. Clare Loughlin-Chow, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/16870 (accessed

May 2014). These sources, along with the biographical sketch affixed to the posthumous 1837 edition of his complete poems, are the only extant biographies of Llwyd.

[cxxv] Richard Llwyd, *Beaumaris Bay, A Poem: With Notes, Descriptive and Explanatory; Particulars of the Druids, Founders of Some of the Fifteen Tribes of North Wales, The Families Descended from Them, and Quotations from the Bards, with an Appendix: Containing an Account of the Battle of Beaumaris in 1648, and the Taking of the Castle*, (Chester: J. Fletcher, 1800); Llwyd, *Gayton Wake, or Mary Dod; and Her List of Merits. A Poem in Four Parts*, (Chester: J. Fletcher, 1804); Llwyd, *Poems, Tales Odes, Sonnets, Translations from the British, &c. &c. in Two Volumes* (Chester, J. Fletcher, 1804); Llwyd, *Poetical Works* (1837). *Beaumaris Bay* (1800) hereafter cited parenthetically by the abbreviation *BB*.

[cxxvi] For Llwyd's popularity and influence within Welsh literary circles of the Romantic era, see especially Davies, "Llwyd, Richard." For Llwyd's familiarity with Iolo's mythology, see especially Llwyd, "Ode on the Months" (l. 6n.), "Owen of Llangoed" (l. 142n.), in *Poems* (1804). For the acquaintance of Iolo and Llwyd, see *CIM* II, 867; III, 102, 111.

[cxxvii] See the list of subscribers appended to Llwyd, *Poetical Works* (1837), v-xvi. As William St. Clair has shown, a press run of 350 copies (the number of printed copies of *Poetical Works*) was a respectable figure for a collection of poetry, if not indicative of overwhelming popularity: see St. Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), esp. pp. 551-571; 578-664. With the exception of Iolo Morganwg, whose *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral* (1794) received an unheard-of (for a debut) initial print run of 1000 copies, I have not found any other Welsh poet whose English verse enjoyed a print run similar to Llwyd's. Indeed, given the number of books Llwyd published, it is almost certain that he was either the second- or third-most published Welsh author of the first half of the nineteenth century, trailing only Felicia Hemans and possibly Iolo himself.

[cxxviii] Jane Aaron, "Haunted by History: Welsh Gothic 1780-1800," in Stewart Mottram and Sarah Prescott, eds., *Writing Wales, from the Renaissance to Romanticism* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), 185. The passage is reprinted in Aaron, *Welsh Gothic* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013), 45-46.

[cxxix] Barrell, *Idea of Landscape*, 22.

[cxxx] See Edwards, ""Footnotes to a Nation," in Fowler and Ingram, eds., *Voice and Context*, 133-151; Jane Aaron, "Haunted by History: Welsh Gothic 1780-1800," in Stewart Mottram and Sarah Prescott, eds., *Writing Wales, from the Renaissance to Romanticism* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), 185; *eadem*., *Welsh Gothic* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013), 45-46.

[cxxxi] Llwyd, "The Castle of Harlech," ll. 17-32 (note omitted), in Llwyd, *Poems… in Two Vols*., II, 149-150. Hereafter cited parenthetically by the abbreviated title "Harlech" and line number[s].

[cxxxii] Cf. Eric Gidal's account of "stratigraphic" reading in the Ossian poems (Gidal, *Ossianic Unconformities: Bardic Poetry in the Industrial Age* [Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2015], 5-6; 125-30).

2. A Tale of Two Skulls: Irish Gothic and the Incorporation of Colonial History, 1790-1863

[cxxxiii] Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, ed. Leslie Mitchell (New York: Oxford University Press,

2009), 33-4. Hereafter cited parenthetically by the abbreviated title *Reflections* and page number.

[cxxxiv] See e.g. E.J. Clery, *The Rise of Supernatural Fiction, 1762-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 61, 176n.4.

[cxxxv] Burke, "A Speech at Bristol Previous to the Election" (1780), as reprinted in Edmund Burke, *The Works and Correspondence of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke* (London: F. and J. Rivington, 1852), vol. III, 423.

[cxxxvi] Seamus Deane, *Strange Country: Modernity and Nationhood in Irish Writing since 1790* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 6-7.

[cxxxvii] Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language* . . . (London: W. Strahan, 1755), vol. II, 829.

[cxxxviii] *Ibid*., 830.

[cxxxix] Burke here alludes, approvingly, to Enlightenment/earlier eighteenth-century conjectural histories that subordinated local and national particularities to universal stadial progress.

[cxl] This is more or less the central thesis of the following works; as such, I have limited page citations to exceptionally clear formulations of the concept: Peter Fritzsche, *Stranded in the Present: Modern Time and the Melancholy of History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 1-10; Mark Salber Philips, *Society and Sentiment: Genres of Historical Writing in Britain, 1740-1820* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 3-30; James Chandler, *England in 1819: The Politics of Literary Culture and the Case of Romantic Historicism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), xiv-xv.

[cxli] David Bromwich, *A Choice of Inheritance: Self and Community from Edmund Burke to Robert Frost* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 43-56.
[cxlii] Luke Gibbons, *Edmund Burke and Ireland: Aesthetics, Politics, and the Colonial Sublime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 10-17.
[cxliii] Clare O'Halloran, *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations: Antiquarian Debate and Cultural Politics in Ireland, c. 1750-1800* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004), 148-157.
[cxliv] Edward Ledwich, *The Antiquities of Ireland. The Second Edition, with additions and corrections. To which is added, A Collection of Miscellaneous Antiquities* (Dublin: John Jones, 1804), 466.
[cxlv] Francis Grose, *The Antiquities of Ireland. The Second Volume.* (London: M. Hooper, 1795), 7-8.
[cxlvi] Jane Aaron, *Welsh Gothic* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013), 13-49.
[cxlvii] Burke, "Speech on Economical Reform," as reprinted in Edmund Burke, *The Works and Correspondence of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke* (London: F. and J. Rivington, 1852), vol. III., 368.
[cxlviii] Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein, or, The Modern Prometheus. The 1818 Text.* Ed. Marilyn Butler (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 36. Continuing the theme, Burke acidly wonders in the *Reflections* whether the revolutionaries "mean to imitate some of their predecessors, who dragged the bodies of our ancient sovereigns out of the quiet of their tombs" (*Reflections* 23); similarly, in his "Letter to a Noble Lord" (1796), he laments "They unplumb the dead for bullets to assassinate the living" (Burke, "Letter to a Noble Lord," in *Selected Writings of Edmund Burke*, ed. W.J. Bate [New York: Random House, 1960], 487). For a discussion of these passages, see Bromwich, *A Choice of Inheritance*, 53ff.
[cxlix] Cf. Luke Gibbons: "For Burke, to rekindle [the] smouldering resentments of the past in this triumphalist manner is to risk a conflagration in the present, giving rise to a different, incendiary sublime, a transport out of oneself which results in collective contagion and incessant popular insurgency" (Gibbons, *Gaelic Gothic*, 59).
[cl] See most prominently Diane Long Hoeveler, *The Gothic Ideology: Religious Hysteria and Anti-Catholicism in British Popular Fiction, 1780-1880* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2014).
[cli] James Hardiman, *The History of the Town and County of the Town of Galway, From the Earliest Period to the Present Time, Embellished with several Engravings. To which is added a Copious Index, containing the principal charters and other original documents* (Dublin: W. Folds and Sons, 1820), v. On Ireland as a colony, see *ibid*., vii-viii.
[clii] *Ibid*., vi.
[cliii] *Ibid*., ix; my emphasis.
[cliv] *Ibid*.
[clv] Deane, *Strange Country*, 41-3; 105-8.
[clvi] James Hardiman, *Irish Minstrelsy, or, Bardic Remains of Ireland; with English Poetical Translations* (London: Joseph Robins, 1831), vol. I, lxv-lxvi. Hereafter cited parenthetically by the abbreviated title *IM* and page number.
[clvii] *Ibid*., lxvi.
[clviii] On the epistemological stakes of supplementing absent voice with writing, see of course Jacques Derrida, ". . . That Dangerous Supplement . . . ," trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, in Derrida, *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), 141-164.
[clix] *Ibid*., 3.
[clx] *Ibid*., lxvi. For an alternative reading of this passage, see Deane, *Strange Country*, 41-3.
[clxi] See, e.g., Claire Connolly, *A Cultural History of the Irish Novel, 1790–1829* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 96.
[clxii] Sydney Owenson, Lady Morgan, *The Wild Irish Girl: A National Tale*, ed. Kathryn Kirkpatrick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 250. Hereafter cited parenthetically by page number.
[clxiii] Deane, *Strange Country*, 20, 126-7; Luke Gibbons, *Gaelic Gothic*: *Race, Colonization, and Irish Culture* (Galway: Arlen House, 2004), 10, 19, *et passim*.
[clxiv] Christina Morin, *Charles Robert Maturin and the Haunting of Irish Romantic Fiction* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), 9.
[clxv] Katarzyna Bartoszyńska, "Adam Smith's Problems: Sympathy in Owenson's 'Wild Irish Girl' and Edgeworth's 'Ennui,'" *New Hibernia Review* 17.3 (Autumn 2013), 135.
[clxvi] *Ibid*., 135n.21
[clxvii] Kevin Whelan is onto something similar when he writes that in much Irish landscape writing, "treatment of ruins is politically explicit: they are the materializations of the colonized's defeat, the presence of absence, in which the long-term effects of historical trauma have become fixed in place. Colonial guilt would then establish the gulf which traverses these multiple layers of time sedimented in space: ruins become mausolea of memory, the site of rupture rather than aesthetic rapture, where the uncanny oozes out of a living landscape . . . not the dead but the

living weight of history." Whelan, "Writing Ireland: Reading England," in *Ireland in the Nineteenth Century: Regional Identity*, eds. Leon Litvack and Glenn Hooper (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 195.
[clxviii] Gibbons, *Gaelic Gothic*, 50.
[clxix] This conception of Scottish Romantic literature and culture emerges throughout Deane, *Strange Country*; see esp. 108ff.
[clxx] The fact that Clendinning remains unpunished at novel's end suggests that we are to take his personal enrichment as a disgraceful but inevitable fact of life; the fear and loathing he spawns among the nobly-minded Irish will evidently have to suffice as its own punishment. In other words, the novel does not prophesy the failure of capitalist improvement in general, but it does reject it as unsuitable for Irish culture in particular. For an alternative portrayal of the improving Scottish land agent, one that casts the figure as the key to Ireland attaining national maturity, see *inter pares* Maria Edgeworth's McLeod, in *Ennui* (1804).
[clxxi] This pattern is even more pronounced in Letters 13-15, in which Irish and Greek cultural similarities are continuously enlisted as authenticating evidence that legitimizes Irish nationalist aspirations. See *WIG* 116-130.
[clxxii] See below, chapter three.
[clxxiii] To an extent, the novel's primary setting (a fictional peninsula) precludes place reading's retrieval "authentic" local and national history, and so unlike, for example, Scott's contemporaneous *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805), *The Wild Irish Girl* cannot point to specific historical events that had previously occurred on the sites of various scenes.
[clxxiv] On the supposed racial characteristics of "Celtic" peoples and the cultural racialization of the figure of the Celt in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see *inter pares* Deane, *Strange Country*, 50-1, 77-8, 88-99, 110; Gibbons, *Gaelic Gothic*, 33-76.
[clxxv] Victor Sage, *Le Fanu's Gothic: The Rhetoric of Darkness* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 47.
[clxxvi] Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, *The House by the Churchyard* (London: Anthony Blond, 1968), 1-3. Hereafter cited parenthetically by the abbreviated title *House* and page number.
[clxxvii] On the novel's first chapters effectively establishing the central mysteries of the novel, see George O'Brien, *The Irish Novel, 1800-1910* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2015), 87.
[clxxviii] W.J. McCormack, *Sheridan Le Fanu and Victorian Ireland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), 36. On the formal diffuseness of the novel see Elizabeth Bowen, "Introduction," in Le Fanu, *House*, vii-xi; O'Brien, *Irish Novel*, 87; David Gates, "'A Dish of Village Chat': Narrative Technique in Sheridan Le Fanu's *The House by the Churchyard*," *The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* 10.1 (June, 1984), 64. In the passage quoted above, "blue books" refers to the statistical surveys of Ireland undertaken by the British government.
[clxxix] I thus disagree with James M. Cahalan, who argues "In retreating to Gothicism, [Le Fanu] abandoned history" (Cahalan, *Great History, Little Room: The Irish Historical Novel* [Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1983], 74, as cited in Sage, *Le Fanu's Gothic*, 3).
[clxxx] Sage, *Le Fanu's Gothic*, 48; 71.
[clxxxi] Le Fanu, *A Lost Name* (London: Richard Bentley, 1868), vol. I, 243; cited in James Walton, *Vision and Vacancy:*

The Fictions of J.S. Le Fanu (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2007), 75. Original emphasis.
[clxxxii] Ivan Melada, *Sheridan Le Fanu* (Boston, MA: Twayne Publishers, 1987), 35.
[clxxxiii] Gibbons, *Gaelic Gothic*, 41-76, esp. 45.
[clxxxiv] On the importance of the fictional and poetic portrayals of Britain as shot through with traces of global empire, see Lisa Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015) and Alan Bewell, *Natures in Translation: Romanticism and Colonial Natural History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 2017).
[clxxxv] Sage, *Le Fanu's Gothic*, 53-60.

3. Walter Scott's Transnational Localism, 1805-1816

[clxxxvi] While Scott's anthology of folk poetry *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* had sold in record numbers over the previous two years, he was not yet in the habit of producing creative work in his own right. That said, "The Bard's Incantation" is not his first creative work: he had greatly expanded and even created a number of the Border ballads in the *Minstrelsy*, executed some translations of German works in the 1790s, and contributed a few Gothic pieces to Matthew Lewis's *Tales of Wonder* (1801). On sales of the *Minstrelsy*, see William St. Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Era* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 189, 663.
[clxxxvii] It is worth observing that the poem is quite bad. It begins with the regrettable lines "The Forest of Glenmore is drear, It is all of black pine, and the dark oak-tree," and, improbably, worsens from there. Penny Fielding, *Writing*

and Orality: Nationality, Culture, and Nineteenth-Century Fiction (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 46, 49. Following Fielding, I am using Scott's own edition of his poetry as my reading text (*The Poetical Works of Walter Scott, Bart.* [Edinburgh: Robert Cadell, 1834], vol. viii, 357-60). Hereafter cited parenthetically by the abbreviated title "TBI" and line number.

[clxxxviii] The image of an important message or idea flowing through time and space simultaneously is a favorite metaphor for Scott; he returns to it in the "Introduction to Canto I" of *Marmion* (1808) as well as in the celebrated history-as-stream metaphor in *Waverley* (Scott, *Marmion*, ed. Ainsley McIntosh [Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018], 9-10, hereafter cited parenthetically by the abbreviation *M* and canto and line number, in case of verse, and by page number in case of note; *idem*., *Waverley*, ed. Peter Garside [New York: Penguin, 2011], 363, hereafter cited parenthetically by the abbreviated title *W* and page number). For a discussion of the *Waverley* passage, see Saree Makdisi, *Romantic Imperialism: Universal Empire and the Culture of Modernity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 74-6.

[clxxxix] Mikhail Bakhtin, "The *Bildungsroman* and Its Significance in the History of Realism (Toward a Historical Typology of the Novel)," in *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, trans. Vern W. McGee, ed. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), 53. Bakhtin is speaking exclusively of Scott as a poet here.

[cxc] On Burke, see the first section of Chapter 2, above; on Coleridge, see the final section of Chapter 4, below.

[cxci] Mason observes that it is often the case in poetry that "the Author, by a constant attention to his Measure and Rhime, and the Exaltation of his Language, is often very apt to obscure his Sense; which therefore requires the more Care in the Reader to discover and distinguish it" (John Mason, *An Essay on Elocution, or, Pronunciation. Intended chiefly for the Assistance of Those who instruct Others in the Art of Reading. And those who are often called to speak in Publick*. [London: Mary Cooper, 1748], 33). The ubiquity of this essay in reprints and collections in the following six or seven decades is remarkable: I count nearly fifty instances of re-publication in the *ECCO* archive, suggesting that it exercised considerable influence. Blair similarly comments on "a sort of struggle between the sense and the sound" that attends all attempts to read poetry, and notes "When we are reading or reciting verse, there is a peculiar difficulty in making the pauses justly. The difficulty arises from the melody of verse, which dictates to the ear pauses or rests of its own; and to adjust and compound these properly with the pauses of the sense, so as neither to hurt the ear, nor to offend the understanding, is so very nice a matter, that it is no wonder that we so seldom meet with good readers of poetry" (Hugh Blair, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, third ed. [London: A. Strahan, 1787], vol. II, 443). See *ibid*., 442-6 for a more extended meditation on the same topic.

[cxcii] Scott's interest in romance as a genre of course persisted throughout his entire career. Two especially good accounts of Scott's uses of and beliefs about romance are Ian Duncan, *Modern Romance and Transformations of the Novel: The Gothic, Scott, Dickens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), *passim*., and Miranda Burgess, *British Fiction and the Production of Social Order, 1740-1830* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 189-202. I refer to Scott's long narrative poems as "verse romances" first in order to distinguish the poems from the novels and second because Scott himself referred to his five main long poems (*The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, *Marmion*, *The Lady of the Lake*, *Rokeby*, and *The Lord of the Isles*) as "metrical Romances"; see e.g., the brief note on the unnumbered page immediately preceding the title page of the first canto in early editions of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*: in order to accomplish the poem's historical and theoretical goals, "the plan of the ancient metrical romance was adopted" (Walter Scott, *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* [London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1805], n.p. Hereafter cited parenthetically by the abbreviated title *Lay* and page number).

[cxciii] Scott, "Review of *Amadis de Gaul, by* Southey *and by* Rose," *The Edinburgh Review, or, Critical Journal, for Oct. 1803…Jan. 1804*, ed. Sydney Smith, vol. III (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable & Co., 1804), 132. For more on the historicism suggested by this famous passage, see Phillips, *Society and Sentiment*, 281ff.

[cxciv] Scott, "Review of *Specimens of the early English Metrical Romances, chiefly written during the early part of the Fourteenth Century: To which is prefixed, a Historical Introduction, intended to illustrate the Rise and Progress of Romantic Composition in France and England,* by George Ellis, Esq., and *Ancient English Metrical Romanceës* [sic], *selected and publish'd by* Joseph Ritson," *The Edinburgh Review, or, Critical Journal, for Oct. 1805…Jan. 1806*, ed. Sydney Smith, vol. VII (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable & Co., 1806), 388. Scott here follows Richard Hurd by arguing that romance can offer insight into seemingly barbaric and inscrutable ways of life; see Richard Hurd, *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* (London: A. Millar, 1762), 3-4 *et passim*.

[cxcv] Scott, "Review of Johnes's *Translation of Froissart*," *The Edinburgh Review, or, Critical Journal, for Oct. 1804…Jan. 1805*, ed. Sydney Smith, vol. V (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable & Co., 1805), 347. This passage and the previous two also appear in Edgar Johnson, *Life of Scott*, vol. I, 216; 232.

[cxcvi] This is a critical commonplace. See among other examples Arthur Aikin, Review of *Marmion: A Tale of Flodden Field*, *The Annual Review of History and Literature* 7 (January 1808), 462-3; Francis Jeffrey, Review of

The Lay of the Last Minstrel, *Edinburgh Review* 6.11 (April 1805), 6-7; Unsigned Review, "The Lay of the Last Minstrel, a Poem," *The Imperial Review : or, London, Edinburgh, and Dublin literary journal* 4.13 (January 1805), 91.

[cxcvii] On Scott's unprecedented commercial and critical success, see inter pares Peter T. Murphy, *Poetry as an Occupation and an Art in Britain, 1760-1830* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 138-40, and St. Clair, *Reading Nation*, 209, 221-3, 245-6, 632-44. All figures collated from *ibid*, 216 and esp. Appendix 9, pp. 594-5; 632-5; 660-4. On Scott's capacity to transcend party difference by presenting an "impartial" rendering of the past, see Ian Duncan, *Scott's Shadow: The Novel in Romantic Edinburgh* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 26-31.

[cxcviii] For examples of such criticism, see among others: Unsigned review, "*Rokeby, A poem* by Walter Scott Esq.," *The Literary Panorama…* (London: C. Taylor, 1813), vol. XIII, 749-50; Unsigned Review, "*Rokeby*," *The Monthly Review, or Literary Journal, Enlarged, from January to April Inclusive, 1815* (London: Becket and Porter, 1815), vol. 76, 281; Anonymous, "Scott's *Rokeby, a Poem*," *The Critical Review* 4.3 (London: J. Mawman, 1813), 258 (this latter example, oddly enough, also *praises* Scott's descriptive powers). This criticism would grow even louder and more insistent following the publication of *The Lord of the Isles* in 1815; see e.g. Unsigned review of *The Lord of the Isles, The Theatrical Inquisitor and Monthly Mirror* (London: E. Hildyard, 1815), vol. VI, 57-8; Unsigned review of *The Lord of the Isles, The Monthly Review, or Literary Journal, Enlarged, from January to April Inclusive, 1815* (London: Becket and Porter, 1815), vol. 76, 266. Intriguingly enough, some critics insisted that Scott's penchant for exact description and antiquarian note-writing was simultaneously aesthetic strength and weakness: see e.g. Unsigned review of *Rokeby, The General Repository and Review* (Cambridge: William Hilliard, 1813), vol. 4, 126-7. This latter position seems derivative of a point first articulated in Jeffrey's review of *Marmion* (Jeffrey, "Review," in *Edinburgh Review*, 1808, as reprinted in John O. Hayden, *Scott: The Critical Heritage* [London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970], 35-51). See also below, Section IV.

[cxcix] This continues to be a major source of interest for Scott critics; two seminal attempts to work through Scott's affective generation of lived historical experience are Ina Ferris, *The Achievement of Literary Authority: Gender, History, and the Waverley Novels* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), esp. 134-172, and Fiona Robertson, *Legitimate Histories: Scott, Gothic, and the Authorities of Fiction* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 7-8; 62-85.

[cc] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, in "Christabel" (1798), was the first Romantic-era writer to reintroduce the constant-stress/varied-syllable line in original poetic composition. "Christabel," which also features medieval subject matter and a northern British setting, famously languished in an incomplete and unpublished state for nearly twenty years. Scott had heard Coleridge's friend John Stoddard recite the poem before he began writing the *Lay* and freely acknowledged Coleridge's influence upon his meter, but for many observers, then and now, his borrowing tilts into outright plagiarism: see, e.g., George Gordon Byron, *Byron's Letters and Journals*, ed. Leslie A. Marchand (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973-79), vol. 4, 321; Chris Koenig-Woodyard, *A Hypertext Transmission of Coleridge's "Christabel," 1800-1816*, *Romanticism on the Net* 10 (May 1998); Mary Moorman, *William Wordsworth: The Early Years, 1770-1803* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), 594. On the difference between footnotes and endnotes, Lionel Gossman observes "those historians who have wished to create the greatest impression of continuity between their text and reality have in fact taken care to eliminate the telltale scar separating the two parts of the page" ("History and Literature: Reproduction and Signification," in *The Writing of History: Literary Form and Historical Understanding*, ed. Robert H. Canary and Henry Kozicki [Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978], 32; qtd. Robertson, *Legitimate Histories*, 119).

[cci] As I say, this is merely a representative example chosen in no small part because *Marmion* is the only one of Scott's poems that has been published in a modern scholarly edition. Other instances of place reading that demonstrate a similar intersection of formal innovation and transnational cultural theory include the description of the ravine of "Blockula" in *Rokeby* (Scott, *Rokeby* [Edinburgh: John Ballantyne and Co., 1813], xxix-xxx), the extensive reading of sites within Melrose Abbey in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (*Lay* 227-33), and the brief historical explication of the "Dun of Bochastle" in *The Lady of the Lake* (Scott, *The Lady of the Lake* [Edinburgh: John Ballantyne and Co., 1810], 403). Transnational notes are rarer in *The Lady of the Lake* and especially *The Lord of the Isles* than they are in the other three romances.

[ccii] Rei Terada, *Looking Away: Phenomenality and Dissatisfaction, Kant to Adorno* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 1-34. There are, of course, serious differences between Terada's study of aesthetic discourse and Scott's poetry; I reach for the comparison in order to play up what I see as the unproductivity of both place-reading (it accomplishes nothing vis-à-vis plot, nor in regards to character development, etc.; at least initially it appears to be pure description for description's sake) and of phenomenophilia.

[cciii] On the hallmarks of eighteenth-century picturesque poetry, see John Barrell, *The Idea of Landscape and the Sense of Place, 1730-1840: An Approach to the Poetry of John Clare* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1972), 1-63, and my discussion of Romantic modification of the established pattern above, in Chapter One.
[cciv] *M* 214n.V, 215nn.VI, 222-4n.XIV, 226-7n.XIX, 227n.XX, 227-30n.I, 230-1n.III, 231nn.IV-V, 232n.VI, 232-3n.VII, 233-5n.VIII, 235-6n.X, 236n.XI, 238nn.XIV-XV, 239n.XVI, 240-1n.III, 241n.IV, 245-6n.I, 252n.X, 262n.XV, 264-5n.XIX, 266n.XXI, 270-6n.V, 277n.VII, 278n.VIII, 280n.XIII, 280-1n.XIV, 281-3n.XV, 284-5n.XVIII.
[ccv] Joseph Rezek, *London and the Making of Provincial Literature: Aesthetics and the Transatlantic Book Trade, 1800-1850* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 113-48; Juliet Shields, *Nation and Migration: The Making of British Atlantic Literature, 1765-1835* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 65-90; Evan Gottlieb, *Romantic Globalism: British Literature and Modern World Order, 1750-1830* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 2014), 89-94. Both Rezek and Shields examine the importance of Scott's implicit theory of culture as an influence on James Fenimore Cooper; Rezek focuses on how the early Waverley novels developed a circulatory model of presenting provincial difference for the examination of London and English audiences, while Shields focuses on how the Waverley novels enable Cooper "to imagine an American identity formed through cultural rather than racial mixing" (Shields, *Nation as Migration*, 14; 68). Gottlieb's argument is perhaps most germane to my own account: he too recognizes the capacity of Scott's wartime poems "to inspire the present . . . and satisfy the national desire for martial vigor and political unity during a time of conflict" (89). But whereas Gottlieb sees *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, *Marmion*, and *The Lady of the Lake* as reductively nationalist forerunners to Scott's later, supposedly more internationally minded poems *The Vision of Don Roderick* (1811) and *The Field of Waterloo* (1815), I must insist otherwise. As I have been trying to show throughout this chapter and dissertation, "the local" in Romantic culture is not always the polar opposite of some broadly conceived category named "the global"—indeed, locales often emerge as merely one intersection of many small-, regional-, international-, and global-scale processes, as Scott's place reading makes clear. Penny Fielding has made a similar point (Fielding, *Scotland and the Fictions of Geography*, 185.
[ccvi] Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 105.
[ccvii] See above, Chapter 2.
[ccviii] For another example, see the reading of "Brodick or Brathwick Castle" in Scott, *The Lord of the Isles* (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable and Company, 1815), 386-7.
[ccix] Mary Favret, *War at a Distance: Romanticism and the Making of Modern Wartime* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 5.
[ccx] Alan Liu, "Local Transcendence: Cultural Criticism, Postmodernism, and the Romanticism of Detail," *Representations* 32 (Autumn 1990), 75-113.
[ccxi] The notion of Scott as bricoleur is common to much recent criticism; among the first to point it out is Robert Crawford, *Devolving English Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 111-34.
[ccxii] Edgar Johnson, *Sir Walter Scott: The Great Unknown* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1970), vol. I, 400-1.
[ccxiii] Scott took a more serious attitude than most towards traditional deference to persons of high rank, sentimentally referring to successive Dukes of Buccleuch as his "chief" and lavishing his noble and royal friends with attention and praise.
[ccxiv] Scott evinces his contempt for what he calls "the general distribution of property" in Scott, *The Visionary, Nos. I, II, III* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood, 1819), 7, *et passim*.
[ccxv] The classic account of the rise of Spencean and Owenite collectivism after the Napoleonic Wars is E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage, 1966), 613-39; 689-709; 779-826.
[ccxvi] As cited in Frank Podmore, *Robert Owen: A Biography* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1906), vol. I, 237n.
[ccxvii] See note 196, above.
[ccxviii] J.G. Lockhart, *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott, Bart*. (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1862), vol. IV, 76. On sales of Scott's poetry, see St. Clair, *Reading Nation*, 632-44.
[ccxix] Scott does ironize this point by pointedly straying from His Majesty's highway shortly after this declaration: Waverley leaves the Barony of Bradwardine and ventures "off the map" and into the Highlands and the realm of romance. But the novel's late return from romance to history, however ambivalent, marks its difference from the poems as one of kind rather than degree, since the poems are loathe to oppose romance and history at all.
[ccxx] Ina Ferris makes a similar point about the novels when discussing the difference between Scott's historical fiction and history proper: "it is the speaker who establishes for the reader which referential and hermeneutical rules are in place. The speaker of history implicitly claims identity with the author of the text, as a fictional narrator does not, and in so doing the speaker of history grants to what is spoken a status distinct from that of fiction" (Ferris, *The*

Achievement of Literary Authority: Gender, History, and the Waverley Novels [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991], 109). Ferris does not address Scott's poetry in this discussion; for what it is worth I would suggest that as a novelist Scott heightens the distance between his narratorial voice and Ferris's "speaker of history," especially relative to the poems.

[ccxxi] Every entry in the aforementioned catalogue of reading places in the *Lay* (*Lay* 227-33), for example, features the name of the place's present owner, a tacit guide to readers of means as to where they might inquire if they wanted to view the places in question. Scott's poetry was so popular that it drove massive numbers of tourists to whichever remote Scottish or English sites he chose as settings: savvy innkeepers begged Scott to allow them to re-name their establishments after him or his characters and to provide them with mottoes they could inscribe above their doorways; the smartest and wealthiest among them constructed entirely new wings (or, in at least one case, a completely new hotel) in order to accommodate the surge, oftentimes seeing annual visitors increase by more than fivefold (Johnson, *Scott*, 336; Lockhart, *Life*, vol. II, 292, 387-8; vol. III, 12-3; Duncan, *Modern Romance*, 87-8). For more on Scott's influence on literary tourism, see Ian Brown, ed., *Literary Tourism, the Trossachs and Walter Scott* (Glasgow: Scottish Literature International, 2012), and Murray G. H. Pittock, "Scott and the British Tourist" in Gerard Carruthers and Alan Rawes, eds., *English Romanticism and the Celtic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 151-66. Pittock is especially sharp on how directly Scott's landscape description could function as an invitation to tourists (*ibid*., 165).

[ccxxii] For the Kaim of Kinprunes, see Scott, *The Antiquary*, ed. David Hewitt (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), 28. Hereafter cited parenthetically by the abbreviated title *A* and page number.

[ccxxiii] Cf. Ferris, *Achievement*, 131.

[ccxxiv] See *A* 463n.30.17-8; *A* 463-4n.31.14; and Robertson, *Legitimate Histories*, 1-2.

[ccxxv] Curiously, when Lovel points out to Oldbuck that "the invasion was not repelled," the antiquary waves off his objection, on the grounds that a repelled invasion will better suit popular tastes, in the first place, and that poetry makes no claims to historical authenticity, in the second (*A* 107).

4. The Global Parish: Localism, Anglicanism, Empire

[ccxxvi] The best critical treatment of the poem is Kevis Goodman, *Georgic Modernity and British Romanticism: Poetry and the Mediation of History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 106-43. Other important recent accounts include Esther Schor, *Bearing the Dead: The British Culture of Mourning, from the Enlightenment to Victoria* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 151-195; Alison Hickey, *Impure Conceits: Rhetoric and Ideology in Wordsworth's 'Excursion'* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997); Sally Bushell, *Re-Reading the Excursion: Narrative, response, and the Wordsworthian dramatic voice* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002); Julia Carlson, *Romantic Marks and Measures: Wordsworth's Poetry in Fields of Print* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 260-303.

[ccxxvii] Mary Moorman, *William Wordsworth, A Biography: The Later Years, 1803-1850* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965), 110.

[ccxxviii] Aubrey De Vere, *Essays Chiefly on Poetry* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1887), vol. II, 277.

[ccxxix] This is a recurrent theme in the "Preface" to *Lyrical Ballads* (1800); see e.g., "For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings; but though this be true, Poems to which any value can be attached, were never produced on any variety of subjects but by a man who being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility *had also thought long and deeply*" (Wordsworth, "Preface" to *Lyrical Ballads*, reprinted in Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads*, eds. R.L. Brett and A.R. Jones [New York: Routledge, 2005], 291; my italics. Similar formulations crop up *passim*.)

[ccxxx] Geoffrey Hartman, "Wordsworth, Inscriptions and Romantic Nature Poetry," from *From Sensibility to Romanticism: Essays Presented to Frederick A. Pottle*, eds. F.W. Hillis and Harold Bloom (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), as reprinted in Hartman, *The Unremarkable Wordsworth* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 40; original emphasis; Alan Bewell, *Natures in Translation: Romanticism and Colonial Natural History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017), 226-69; 231.

[ccxxxi] Wordsworth, "Advertisement" to Poems on the Naming of Places, in *Lyrical Ballads*, eds. Brett and Jones, 261.

[ccxxxii] Wordsworth, "Michael," in *Lyrical Ballads*, eds. Brett and Jones, l. 31. Hereafter cited parenthetically by line number. As Marjorie Levinson observes, following Geoffrey Hartman, it is only through the action of the poet that the story can be transmitted to us, its readers (Marjorie Levinson, *Wordsworth's Great Period Poems: Four Essays* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986], 74-9; Geoffrey Hartman, *Wordsworth's Poetry, 1787-1814* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964], 265-6). This removal from the realm of personal memory is, I suspect, what

Goodman has in mind when she calls *The Excursion* "an experiment in the historiography of the past" (Goodman, *Georgic Modernity*, 14; 130).

[ccxxxiii] Wordsworth's model of acculturation throughout *The Excursion* seems broadly similar to the "compositionism" outlined in Bruno Latour, "Towards a Compositionist Manifesto," *New Literary History* 41 (2010), 471-90.

[ccxxxiv] See above, Chapter One, Section One, for a detailed examination of Gilpin's picturesque theory.

[ccxxxv] Bewell similarly argues that what he calls "the unlocking" of the "story" of the sheep-fold "is the primary creative task of the narrative" (Bewell, *Natures in Translation*, 251).

[ccxxxvi] Saree Makdisi, *Romantic Imperialism: Universal Empire and the Culture of Modernity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 45-69.

[ccxxxvii] William Wordsworth to Charles James Fox, 14 January 1801," reprinted in *The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth*, ed. Ernest de Sélincourt; *The Early Years, 1787-1805*, rev. C.L. Shaver (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), 312-15. N.B. also Wordsworth's insistence upon the importance of place reading to this same class of men, and his declared attempt to demonstrate that importance in "Michael" and "The Brothers": "Their little tract of land serves as a kind of permanent rallying point for their domestic feelings, as a tablet upon which they are written, which makes them objects of memory in a thousand instances, when they would otherwise be forgotten" (*ibid*.). On the importance of these "statesmen" to Wordsworth's poetry and thought more generally see David Simpson, *Wordsworth's Historical Imagination* (New York: Methuen, 1987), 79-107, esp. 84-6. On the poem's interest in preserving residual cultural formations for the future see Levinson, *Wordsworth's Great Period Poems*, 74-9; Hartman, *Wordsworth's Poetry*, 265-6; on "residual" cultural formations more generally see Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 121-8, esp. 122-3.

[ccxxxviii] Cf., e.g., the Scottian scenery, meter, and rhythm of the poem's opening lines (1-66), or its enumeration of sociological detail while setting the historical scene (264-434), with the religious and philosophical musing of Cantos Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh (Wordsworth, *The White Doe of Rylstone* [1807/15], in *The Poetical Works of Wordsworth*, eds. Thomas Hutchinson and Ernest de Selincourt [London: Oxford University Press, 1959], 311-29).

[ccxxxix] On the dimensions of this crisis, see among others E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage, 1966), 472-832, esp. 603-710; Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 315-30; Peter J. Fritzsche, *Stranded in the Present: Modern Time and the Melancholy of History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 55-91, *et passim*.

[ccxl] William Wordsworth, "Prospectus for *The Recluse*," ll. 47-55, as printed in Wordsworth, *The Excursion*, eds. Sally Bushell, James A. Butler, and Michael C. Jaye, with the assistance of David García (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007), 40. All further passages of *The Excursion* will be taken from this edition and cited parenthetically by book and line number. On the centrality of *The Excursion* to *The Recluse*, see the opening sentence of Wordsworth's "Preface" to *The Excursion*, *ibid*., 38.

[ccxli] M.H. Abrams, *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1971), 26-7 *et passim*.

[ccxlii] See Bushell, Butler, and Jaye, "Introduction," in Wordsworth, *The Excursion*, 3-5 and 19-24; Jonathan Wordsworth, "Introduction," in William Wordsworth, *The Excursion (1814)* (Oxford: Woodstock Books, 1991), xix.

[ccxliii] "produce, n.". *OED* Online. December 2016. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/151977?rskey=K8XtlE&result=1 (accessed March 07, 2017). See especially definitions 3a and 4. Compare "product, n.1". OED Online. December 2016. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/151988?rskey=AHxyav&result=1 (accessed March 07, 2017). Organic connotations with "produce" were apparently relatively recent (the *Oxford English Dictionary*'s first listed example dates from 1725), and the association of "product" with what we might now call the commodity form seems first to have entered the language in 1825, a bit too late to establish with certainty an organic/industrial parallel. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, of course, was the leading thinker within Britain striving to distinguish "organic" from "mechanical" production during Wordsworth's time. Within his work as a whole, Wordsworth tends to use "produce" slightly more often than "product," with the former noun more often associated with "natural" settings and processes (as in "Rich with indigenous produce," *Prelude* 5.236) and the latter commonly associated with poetic or literary creation (as in Voltaire's *Candide*, characterized within *The Excursion* as the "dull product of a scoffer's pen" [*E* 2.484]) (Lane Cooper, ed., *A Concordance to the Poems of William Wordsworth, edited for the Concordance Society* [London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1911], 745). My understanding of "Paradise" as an ongoing and always-tenuous project and my use of the phrase "limited utopia" are of course both heavily indebted to Anahid Nersessian, *Utopia, Limited: Romanticism and Adjustment* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015),

which casts the Romantic period as seeking this limited form of utopia through a process of "adjustment," defined as "an ethical operation that allows human beings to accommodate themselves to the world by minimizing the demands they place on it" (3). My reading of *The Excursion* differs considerably from Nersessian's short account, which casts the poem as a straightforwardly Burkean elision of the physical and biological feasibility and even existence of the French Revolutionary project (on Nersessian's understanding of the tenuousness of utopia, see esp. *ibid*., 1-13; on *The Excursion* see *ibid*., 32-5). For what it is worth, my sense is that the poem is far more preoccupied with the physical world than Nersessian allows; indeed, I think that the poem critiques what it considers the insufficiently *grounded* ambitions of the Revolution as that political project's unmaking (see below).

[ccxliv] Important exceptions to this rule include Charles Lamb, who considered the poem "a day in heaven," and John Keats, who called it one of the "three things to rejoice at in this Age" (Bushell et. al., "Introduction," in Wordsworth, *The Excursion*, 24; 3). John Ruskin affixed an epigraph drawn from *The Excursion* to every volume of *Modern Painters*. Famous contemporary expressions of disapproval include those of Mary Shelley (who, upon seeing Wordsworth's dedication of the poem to the Earl of Lonsdale, declared flatly "He is a slave"), Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and Francis Jeffrey, of whom more below. The response of this latter class of critics was more representative of the poem's Romantic-era reception; Victorian responses tended to be more enthusiastic.

[ccxlv] For a comprehensive review of this pattern in criticism of *The Excursion*, see Richard Gravil, *Wordsworth's Bardic Vocation, 1787-1842* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 204-8; 216-20.

[ccxlvi] David Simpson, *Wordsworth, Commodification, and Social Concern: The Poetics of Modernity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 29.

[ccxlvii] On *The Excursion* as "an experiment in the historiography of the past," see Goodman, *Georgic Modernity*, 14; 136.

[ccxlviii] Cf. the "Abundant recompense" Wordsworth receives in exchange for his lost youthful pleasures "Tintern Abbey" (l. 89, reprinted in *Lyrical Ballads*, eds. Brett and Jones, 159).

[ccxlix] The site in question (Hackett Cottage on Lingmoor Fell) is over a hundred miles from the Scottish Borders; as the Cornell edition of The Excursion observes, the metaphor makes little sense unless understood as a nod to Scott (Wordsworth, *The Excursion* 405n.700).

[ccl] The long passage in question begins at 5.899 and ends at 7.1079 (i.e., the end of Book VII); the reading places that launch the stories are to be found at 5.911, 6.117, 6.221, 6.284, 6.420 (finally named 6.513), 6.690, 6.808-9, 6.1101, 6.1156-9, 6.1240, 7.31, 7.55, 7.366-7, 7.416-7, 7.504, 7.570-1 (that is, if a face can indeed qualify as a reading place; the Pastor at least insists that faces can be "read" [7.581], and Amanda Jo Goldstein has recently suggested that Percy Shelley conceived as marks upon faces as telling a kind of a story; see Goldstein, *Sweet Science: Romantic Materialism and the New Logics of Life* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017], 136-65), 7.658, 7.723-4, 7.935, 7.990.

[ccli] As Nersessian points out, the etymological roots of the verb "to perfect" are "to work all the way through" (*Utopia, Limited*, 17).

[cclii] Gravil, *Wordsworth's Bardic Vocation*, 204-5.

[ccliii] On the historical displacement and mass production of refugees during and after the Napoleonic Wars, see Fritzsche, *Stranded in the Present*, 55-91; on Romantic literary explorations of such figures, see Ina Ferris, "'On the Borders of Oblivion': Scott's Historical Novel and the Modern Time of the Remnant," *MLQ* 70.4 (2009), 473-494, and Celeste Langan, *Romantic Vagrancy: Wordsworth and the Simulation of Freedom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[ccliv] On Voltaire's distaste for local details, which he thought undermined the potential for large-scale arguments to be made, see Anthony Grafton, *The Footnote: A Curious History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 94-5. On dirt in particular as a symbol for a stubborn local identity that resists universalizing logics, see Ian Duncan, *Scott's Shadow: The Novel in Romantic Edinburgh* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 70-8.

[cclv] Gravil, *Wordsworth's Bardic Vocation*, 204-8; 216-20.

[cclvi] See above, Chapter 3.

[cclvii] Thompson, *MEWC*, 733. On the literary culture of the working classes in the postwar years, see *ibid*., 711-46.

[cclviii] Gauri Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 1-22 *et passim*.

[cclix] Thompson, *MEWC* 733; Frances Ferguson, "Education," in *William Wordsworth in Context*, ed. Andrew Bennett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 236-40; "Bell, Andrew (1753–1832)." Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 5 Apr. 2019. http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-1003682.; Andrew Bell, *An Experiment in Education, Made at the Male Asylum in Madras. Suggesting a System by which a*

School or Family may teach itself under the Superintendance [*sic*.] *of the Master or Parent* (London: Cadell and Davies, 1797); on improved morality see esp. 27-35.
[cclx] *The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth,* eds. Ernest de Selincourt, Mary Moorman, Alan G. Hill, 2nd ed., vol. III, *The Middle Years, Part II: 1812-1820* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), 210.
[cclxi] Moorman, *Later Years,* 105-6; Stephen Gill, *Wordsworth: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 344; on the development of Wordsworth's Christianity around the turn of the century, see William A. Ulmer, *The Christian Wordsworth, 1798-1805* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001).
[cclxii] Ferguson, "Education," in ed. Bennett, *Wordsworth in Context*, 237.
[cclxiii] Carl B. Estabrook, *Urbane and Rustic England: Cultural Ties and Social Spheres in the Provinces*, 1660-1780 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), 198.
[cclxiv] Thompson, *MEWC* 487, my emphasis; on local radicalism see *ibid*. 28; 407.
[cclxv] Bell, *An Experiment*, 22-6.
[cclxvi] The project of producing national community became a specifically Anglican task for both theological and pragmatic reasons. It is theologically fitting to stress, as Wordsworth does, the shared labor inherent to such a process, since Anglicanism, over and against Unitarian "rationality" and Calvinist "Grace," insisted upon "good works" as the key to establishing paradisal community on earth, and to reaching Heaven after death. Anglicanism was, likewise, more stereotypically associated with communal concerns than its more individualistic counterparts. In part because the latter denominations, especially Calvinist Dissenters, tended to decry Anglican insistence upon ritual and collective good works as superstitious, superficial, and empty substitutes for real faith, Anglicans often found themselves in the uncomfortable situation of arguing for the practical benefits, as well as the theological correctness, of their beliefs. On this distinction within the period, see Ulmer, *Christian Wordsworth*, 196n.41.
[cclxvii] See, e.g., Bushell, *Re-reading*, 236-7; Hickey, *Impure Conceits*, 109-15, 121-4, 209-15; Kenneth Johnston, *Wordsworth and "The Recluse"* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 320ff.
[cclxviii] Even today, conversion to the Anglican or Episcopal faith from any other Protestant or non-Christian faith is referred to as "Reaffirmation" or "Confirmation"; conversion from Catholicism receives the special title "Reception."
[cclxix] On the uproar the poem caused among its Christian readers and critics, see Gill, *Life*, 308-9; 415-9.
[cclxx] William Wordsworth, *The Prelude* (1805), 13.69, ed. J.C. Maxwell (New York: Penguin, 1986).
[cclxxi] All citations in this and the following paragraph are taken from Wordsworth, "Preface" to *The Excursion*, reprinted in *The Excursion*, eds. Bushell, Butler, Jaye, 38-9.
[cclxxii] On Wordsworth's relationship with Jones, see Mary Moorman, *William Wordsworth: A Biography, The Early Years: 1770-1803* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), 91-3, 130-53 *passim*, 161, 189, 224, 238, 241, 475; *eadem*, *Later Years*, 9, 15, 50, 132,308, 425, 433; Gill, *Life*, 44-51, 74, 77, 184, 338-51, 376, 393.
[cclxxiii] Thomas Gray, "The Bard," I.3, ll. 29-30; 33-4, reprinted in *Eighteenth-Century Poetry. An Annotated Anthology*, 2nd ed., eds. David Fairer and Christine Gerrard (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 363-8.
[cclxxiv] Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, ed. Maxwell, 13.446-8.
[cclxxv] Compare also this capacity "to seize and occupy the sense" with Gray's opening line: "Ruin seize thee, ruthless King!"; see also Gravil. *Wordsworth's Bardic Vocation*, 5.
[cclxxvi] Thanks to the work of figures like Iolo, and of various freethinking Welsh societies within London like the Cymmrodorion and the Gwyneddigion, "bardism" in the 1790s came to connote Unitarian, republican, and revolutionary sympathies. See Chapter One, above, for more.
[cclxxvii] Cf. the mellifluous, fluid rhythm of "Tintern Abbey," which the Book II passage echoes in form.
[cclxxviii] There is also an echo here of Genesis 8, in which the Flood waters recede, leaving Noah and his family safe and on dry ground on Mount Ararat. See below.
[cclxxix] Wordsworth's obsession with water is a critical commonplace. See e.g. Paul de Man, "Time and History in Wordsworth," *Diacritics* 17.4 ["Wordsworth and the Production of Poetry"] (Winter 1987), 10-17, in which water imagery likewise comes to represent Wordsworth's thoughts regarding immortality, predestination, and a project of thinking historically in the first place, and Samuel Baker, *Written on the Water: British Romanticism and the Maritime Empire of Culture* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010), 81-188. Wordsworth also declares "origin and tendency are notions inseparably correlative" before discussing a child beside a stream in the first "Essay upon Epitaphs" (*Selected Prose*, 324).
[cclxxx] John Barrell, *Idea of Landscape and the Sense of Place, 1730-1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 1-63, esp. 14-27, and also my own discussion of Barrell and poetic portrayals of picturesque landscapes in Chapter One, above.

[cclxxxi] Wordsworth generally resists picturesque formulations on the grounds of their triteness, and his inversion of the general order of picturesque topographic-descriptive poetry here speaks to a lingering uneasiness with the genre. Nevertheless, the Stream's "boldly winding course," its linking together of hills, woods, villages, solitary homes, and the concomitant creation of "a cheerful quiet scene" all fulfill classical picturesque criteria. In tracing the Stream's progress, perhaps Wordsworth finds it necessary to adopt a to-him distasteful idiom; if so then the passage is not evidence of a softening attitude towards picturesque view-makers but rather the necessary byproduct of an emphasis on the Stream's boldly winding course.

[cclxxxii] For a more strictly personal rending of this image within *The Excursion*, see 5.923-8, in which the Pastor likens the progress of an individual life to a similar "Stream" that empties into "yon chrystal Lake." Eight years after the initial publication of *The Excursion*, the image of individual and collective life as Stream terminating in heaven recurs in the "Conclusion" to Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical Sketches* (*PW* 355).

[cclxxxiii] Wordsworth had earlier used carving as a metaphor for poetry: see e.g. "Lines written upon a Seat in a Yew-Tree" and the path worn into the fir grove by the "silent Poet" John Wordsworth in "When, to the attractions of the busy world." Here, however, it seems to be the detritus that has fallen from such an act of historical carving that matters.

[cclxxxiv] The sense in which baptism simulates the Flood and deliverance of man from it is likewise retained here: the flood of place reading "rose" into the sky, "to a higher mark than song can reach." We might also observe a muted or contained version of the promise of Christian baptism – namely, that the baptized, like the "images and precious thoughts" that place reading deposits on the memory, "shall not die, and cannot be destroyed."

[cclxxxv] Francis Jeffrey, "Review of *The Excursion*," *Edinburgh Review* 24 (November, 1814), 1-4. Though, as Hickey notes (*Impure Conceits* 1), most contemporary readers do not make it past the famous opening words of Jeffrey's review ("This will never do"), Jeffrey is much more aware of what Wordsworth is trying to do in *The Excursion* than many critics since. He recognizes the universal scope of Wordsworth's aims, but rejects that scope on the grounds that Wordsworth has become too local, has fallen too much in love with his own environs, properly to analyze and treat modern society outside his native mountains. While this may be at least partially true of the Wanderer (see e.g. 7.318-21; 8.149-97; 8.233-264ff.), it is evidently does not characterize the views of the Solitary; even the Wanderer himself comes to realize that hyper-localist isolationism is both a practical and a theoretical impossibility (*E* 9.1-20; esp. 13-5). As I hope has become clear, I think that *The Excursion* is an intelligent enough poem to realize that nominalist localism, while seductive, is ultimately unsatisfactory. On this latter point, see also Schor, *Bearing the Dead*, 175ff.

[cclxxxvi] Moorman, *Later Years* 261-7.

[cclxxxvii] On the developing internationalism of the British working classes in the postwar years, see Thompson, *MEWC*, 158-9, 183, 828-9

[cclxxxviii] See above, note 17.

[cclxxxix] John Colmer, "Editor's Introduction," in Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *On the Constitution of the Church and State*, ed. John Colmer (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), xxxiii; Andrew Elfenbein, "*On the Constitution of the Church and State* (review)," *Victorian Review* 35.1 (Spring 2009), 19.

[ccxc] Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society, 1780-1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), 59; 57-65.

[ccxci] Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, ed. Leslie Mitchell (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 76, 148, 96. See also ibid., 87, 109-14, 170, 191-8, 225-6, *et passim*.

[ccxcii] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *On the Constitution of the Church and State*, ed. Colmer, 67-8. Hereafter cited parenthetically by the abbreviated title *C&S* and page number.

[ccxciii] For a discussion of *The Excursion*'s critique of industrial capitalism, see Hickey, *Impure Conceits*, 98-107.

[ccxciv] "I am neither describing what the National Church now is, nor determining what it ought to be. My statements respect the idea alone, as deduced from its original purpose and ultimate aim: and of the *idea* only must my assertions by understood" (*C&S* 83).

[ccxcv] On the Madras System and Coleridge's conception of what he refers to in all capitals as "NATIONAL EDUCATION," see *C&S* 48 and 48n.2.

[ccxcvi] On *Church and State* evincing an exceptionally sophisticated conception of ideology for its time, see Colmer, "Editor's Introduction," lxi, lxviii; and Peter Allen, "S.T. Coleridge's *Church and State* and the Idea of an Intellectual Establishment," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 46.1 (1985), 89-106.

[ccxcvii] For more "organic" localism, see e.g. *C&S* 75: In a nation with a properly established Church, "to every parish throughout the kingdom there is transplanted a germ of civilization; that in the remotest villages there is a nucleus, round which the capabilities of the place may crystallise and brighten . . . *this* unobtrusive, continuous agency of a Protestant Church Establishment, *this* it is, which the patriot, and the philanthropist, who would fain unite the love of peace with the faith in the progressive amelioration of mankind, cannot estimate at too high a price . . . "

[ccxcviii] See above, Chapter 1, Section III, and Chapter 2, Section I.
[ccxcix] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria, or Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions*, eds. James Engell and W. Jackson Bate (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), vol. II, 118; 126-8. Compare also Coleridge's discussion of the Fancy and the Imagination: the works of Scott (and presumably Wordsworth at peak "matter-of-factness") would seem to evince too much of the former and too little of the latter (*ibid*., vol. I, 82-8).
[ccc] Samuel Taylor Coleridge to William Wordsworth, May 30th, April 1815, in *The Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. Earl Leslie Griggs (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), vol. IV, 570.
[ccci] Richard Holmes, *Coleridge: Early Visions* (Toronto: Hodder & Stoughton, 1989), qtd. 252.
[cccii] *Ibid*., qtd. 244-5.
[ccciii] *Ibid*., qtd. 195.

Coda: From materialist historicisms to historical materialism

[ccciv] Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin, 1976), vol. I, 177. Marx slightly misquotes William Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598/9), 3.iii.14-16: "To be a well-favor'd man is the gift of fortune, but to write and read comes by nature," G. Blakemore Evans, ed., with the assistance of J.J.M. Tobin, *The Riverside Shakespeare, Second Edition: The Complete Works* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997), 381.
[cccv] Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society. Revised Edition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 219.
[cccvi] Karl Marx, *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, ed. Dirk J. Struik, trans. Martin Milligan (New York: International Publishers, 1964), 108. See Marx's whole discussion of "estranged labor," 106-119.
[cccvii] Marx, *Manuscripts*, 141 (original emphasis). See also Amanda Goldstein's important account of this claim, and of the Young Marx's materialism more generally, in *Sweet Science: Romantic Materialism and the New Logics of Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 209-220.
[cccviii] Louis Althusser, "From *Capital* to Marx's Philosophy" (1968) in Althusser and Etienne Balibar, *Reading Capital*, trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Verso, 2009), 59-60 *et passim*.
[cccix] Alberto Toscano, "Materialism without matter: abstraction, absence, and social form," *Textual Practice* 28.7 (2014), 1221-1240; 1221, 1222. Toscano takes Marx's original quote slightly out of context: Marx argues that "not one atom of matter enters into the commodity as value" in his discussion of the commodity in the first chapter of *Capital* (138).
[cccx] The "problematic," for Althusser, is the collection of dominating forces that determines what it is possible to see and think under capitalism. See Althusser, "From *Capital* to Marx's Philosophy," 25-7.
[cccxi] Toscano, "Materialism without matter," 1230.
[cccxii] Scott, *Marmion*, ed. Ainsley McIntosh (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), 4.420.
[cccxiii] Louis Althusser, "Cremonini: Painter of the Abstract" (1966), trans. Ben Brewster, in *Lenin and Philosophy and other essays by Louis Althusser* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 236-7; quoted in Toscano, "Materialism without matter," 1234.
[cccxiv] Althusser, "Cremonini," 230.

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