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THE ANTIQUARIAN IMPULSE: HISTORY, AFFECT, AND MATERIAL CULTURE IN EIGHTEENTH- AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY BRITISH LITERATURE

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THE ANTIQUARIAN IMPULSE: HISTORY, AFFECT, AND MATERIAL CULTURE IN EIGHTEENTH- AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY BRITISH LITERATURE

By

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ABSTRACT

THE ANTIQUARIAN IMPULSE: HISTORY, AFFECT, AND MATERIAL CULTURE IN EIGHTEENTH- AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY BRITISH LITERATURE

By

Kelly Eileen Battles

This dissertation focuses on the figure of the antiquary to explore questions about what constitutes proper historical inquiry in the period from roughly 1765 through the end of the nineteenth century. Antiquarianism is a mode of historical inquiry that is the forerunner of archaeology and that privileges an eclectic mixture of textual, material, visual, and oral sources. Because antiquarianism resists grand narratives in favor of localized topographical history, it comes to be widely characterized as an inappropriate form of historical curiosity and is set in contrast to the rise of history as a professional field of scholarly study. My argument traces how antiquarianism comes to be viewed as lacking authority, usefulness, and taste in its methodologies. Because antiquarianism pushes against the limits at which the past ceases to be legible, it becomes a source of anxiety about how history should be known, represented, and rendered into narrative. This anxiety becomes a productive, dynamic tension, rather than a paralyzing one, that I call the "antiquarian impulse," a creative energy that results in the emergence of new literary forms that provide alternative textual expressions to nonfiction historiography: the gothic novel and, later, the historical novel. Because the antiquarian impulse becomes a manner in which people envision their relationship to the past, I argue that texts such as George Eliot's *Romola* and Victorian photographs of ruins can be read through an antiquarian lens. Rather than constituting the historical past as safely separate from the present, the antiquarian impulse opens up the possibility that the past cannot be securely

contained within a coherent narrative and thus constituted as past. In this sense, the antiquarian impulse represents a threat to the nationalist project of developing a totalizing and progressive biography of the nation. Examples of antiquarian expressions such as Walpole's gothic "gloomth," Scott's historical novels, the photographs of Robert Adamson, and the antiquarian ghost stories of M.R. James all demonstrate the unsettling potential of the past erupting into the present. Antiquarianism becomes a palimpsest for history itself because its residue remains even as writers seek to eject it from the historical landscape of their narratives. Individuals read antiquarianism, rewrite it, synthesize it, and eventually assimilate it into their own historical practice. The antiquarian impulse thus becomes a form of popular historical imagination. The legacy of the antiquarian impulse lies in the way it opens up possibilities for the individual to undermine the authoritative voice of the professional historian grounded in texts produced by institutions of the state and allows for a subjective, affective connection to the past that is grounded in a sense of physical place. This dissertation seeks to trace the tangled genealogy of the antiquarian impulse in order to render visible this submerged influence on the way people imagine themselves in relation to the historical past.

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Introduction

In an epigram entitled "Antiquary" that first appears in the 1633 edition of John Donne's *Collected Poems*, Donne writes "If in his Studie he hath so much care/ To hang all old strange things, let his wife beware" (42). Donne's epigram taps into several prevalent notions about antiquaries and antiquarianism that later come to form the basis of a large body of satirical material in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British popular culture. Donne's epigram is framed as a warning to the wives of antiquaries, playing on the perception that antiquarian activity precludes heteronormative behavior. Donne's antiquary does not have a healthy interest in the past. The objects he collects for his study are characterized as "all old strange things," and the "so much care" he takes in these historical relics is implied to be excessive. The things are "strange," and so is his interest in them. The strangeness of the antiquary's objects of study reflect on the antiquary's subjectivity, constituting him as a dangerous figure in terms of both his sexuality and his particular brand of historical inquiry.

Donne's epigram is an early example of a phenomenon that gains momentum, as the stakes of history as a field of scholarly inquiry grow greater with the rise of the modern nation-state in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Exploring the boundaries of popular depictions of the figure of the antiquary and explaining how this discursive practice is implicated in questions of what constitutes proper historical inquiry form the basis of this dissertation. In this time period, antiquarianism comes to be widely characterized as an inappropriate form of historical curiosity, set in contrast to the rise of history as a professional field of scholarly study in the nineteenth century. Popularly depicted as departing from heterosexual, masculine norms, antiquarianism is set apart

from the masculine sphere of history, particularly the "dignity of history" associated with an exclusive focus on the political life of the nation.[1] These depictions effectively marginalize the works of antiquaries within the public imagination. This marginalization, according to Philippa Levine, opens the way for professional historians with their narratives of national consolidation. According to Levine, "The triumph of the new professionals was in confining antiquarianism to the fringes of historical enterprise where their efforts posed no threat to the monopoly of expertise necessary to the standing of the new professions" (173).

This dissertation examines antiquarianism and, in doing so, recasts anxieties beginning at the end of the eighteenth century about how history should be known, represented and rendered into narrative. Antiquarian writings do not privilege linear historical narratives tracing the grand political life of the nation and thus issue a challenge to the nature and purpose of history in this period. I examine how and why popular perception associated antiquarian inquiry with an inappropriate expression of historical curiosity, lacking intellectual rigor, taste and usefulness. In doing so, I uncover an alternative genealogy of the historical novel and the gothic novel. Antiquaries such as Scott and Walpole produce new narrative forms challenging the assumption that there is only one proper form of historical inquiry. My examination of antiquarianism rewrites the way scholars usually think about literature and history in the period ranging from about 1765, which marks the publication of Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* and Percy's *Reliques,* through the emergence of the modern field of history in the nineteenth century. The gothic novel and the historical novel, I suggest, emerge from the dynamic tension

[1] This phrase "the dignity of history" is widely used and has been initially attributed to Henry St. John Bolingbroke in *On the Study and Use of History* (1752). Sam Smiles notes that Lord Bolingbroke referred to the pre-Roman history of Britain, a particular interest to antiquaries, as "mere antiquarianism" (10).

surrounding this anxiety about historical practice, a creative energy that I call the "antiquarian impulse."

This dissertation is divided into two major parts. The first two chapters examine the parameters of the antiquary as a figure of satire. The second part of the argument considers antiquarianism in a more expansive mode as a cultural force that influences not only the practice of history, but also the manner in which people envision their relationship to the past. This organization is essential because popular perception of the figure of the antiquary becomes conflated with his methodology. Untangling this chain of associations between the figure and the methodology is the first step to understanding the force of this discursive practice as a larger, more effusive energy that becomes the antiquarian impulse. A fuller definition of this term as it applies to my argument occurs in Chapter Two.

Although antiquarianism had been around for many centuries prior, changing perceptions about the nature of history and historical research make antiquarianism a particular flashpoint of controversy, anxiety, and popular attention beginning in the last half of the eighteenth century.[2] Bearing in mind that the following study will gradually expand, complicate, and even contradict this initial description, I would like to offer a working definition of antiquarianism as it was practiced in Great Britain during the time period primarily under question, spanning from approximately 1765, continuing through the nineteenth century and up to the post-Victorian ghost stories of the antiquary M.R.

[2] Probably the two most prominent twentieth-century scholars of antiquarianism are Stuart Piggott and Arnaldo Momigliano. For more recent studies of antiquarianism, see Rosemary Sweet, *Antiquaries: The Discovery of the Past in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, and Martin Myrone and Lucy Peltz. On the origins of antiquarianism and the history of its split with archaeology, see Sam Smiles and Philippa Levine. For in-depth studies of individual antiquaries, see Stephen Bann on John Bargrave, Rosemary Sweet on Richard Gough in "Antiquaries and Antiquities in Eighteenth-century England"; and Stuart Piggott on William Stukely. Joan Evans has written a standardized history of the Society of Antiquaries.

James. While historians have produced studies of antiquarianism that extend back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, this later period marks the convergence of several important circumstances that complicate and challenge the popular conception of history: narrative experimentation in terms not only of historiography (Gibbon, Macaulay, and Carlyle, for example), but also different forms of fiction that concern themselves with notions of history such as the gothic novel and the historical novel; the emergence of the scientific method in relation to historical research; the rising professionalization and institutionalization of the historian that focused attention on defining a proper way to research and produce historical knowledge; increasing interest in national, local and folk histories that became the distinctive purview of the antiquary; and several highly publicized historical forgeries (Chatterton and MacPherson) that called attention to issues of historical authenticity, as well as those that blurred the lines a bit between fact and fiction (Percy's *Reliques).*[3]

Among the competing characterizations of antiquarianism, only one quality seems to remain constant: the importance of the material object as a source of historical knowledge for antiquaries. The assumption of the constancy of this single quality forms the starting point for my own exploration of antiquarianism. By all accounts, antiquaries are pioneers in the field of recognizing the material object as a valid source of historical knowledge, and in this sense not only small "moveable" artifacts are important, but also church monuments, architecture, as well as the traces left behind by the Roman and pre-Roman inhabitants of Britain: roads, walls, aqueducts, burial grounds (cromlechs), and

[3] For standard narratives of the "history of history," see Joseph M. Levine, Donald R. Kelley, and Mark Salber Phillips. Literary scholars have been very interested in tracing the difference between literature and history. See James C. Simmons, Ann Rigney, and Everett Zimmerman. For studies of the impact of prominent literary forgeries, see Ian Haywood and Paul Baines.

massive constructions such as Stonehenge. Only much later did the field of archaeology come to define its own use of the material object in opposition to antiquarian practice. Antiquaries were also pioneers in the field of visual culture, commissioning artist engravers to record these material objects for posterity and further study, and publishing large, elaborate picture books to acquaint the public with these historical remains and landscapes. Connected to local antiquarian societies were printing clubs in which members paid annual subscription fees to promote the publication of these works. These antiquarian societies encouraged the development of new visual technologies to record and disseminate knowledge about material historical artifacts. Prominent artists were commissioned by the Society of Antiquaries, including George Vertue (earlier in the eighteenth century) and even William Blake, whose work for the society some critics have credited with inspiring his interest in druidism and mythology.[4] Besides financially supporting and perhaps even inspiring Blake, however, antiquaries also fed a growing appetite among the public for visualizations of the past. Scholars like Sam Smiles have demonstrated that these engravings depicted not only surviving objects and scenes drawn from life, but also imaginative recreations of ancient peoples in full costume, providing a mostly fictional but nonetheless vivid look into the vaguely defined pre-Roman, ancient history of Britain.[5]

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[4] According to Rosemary Sweet, "Blake, who in the nineteenth century was one of the most influential figures in propagating a national myth of British history, first acquired his love of the medieval past and his appreciation of the Gothic form when working for James Basire, the Society's engraver, as a young man in the 1780s" ("Antiquaries and Antiquities" 199).

[5] See Sam Smiles for the most comprehensive discussion of the rise of archaeology. According to Smiles, the main attraction of the ancient past seems to be the malleability of the unknown: anything can be projected onto it. "Such appeals to the archaic past indicate how effective a symbol, because innocuous, the barbarian ancestor could be, redolent of a past so remote as to be either immune from class, religious or party interests or so ambiguous as to allow many different interests to seek confirmation from one and the same source" (38). The innocuousness of the distant past can easily be transferred into an anxiety about that past erupting into the present, as my discussion in chapter 4 reveals.

Antiquarian emphasis on the study of material objects goes further than its effects on visual historical representations. Antiquaries pioneered the modern field of archaeology by establishing the methodological tools with which they were able to study the preliterate and pre-Roman national past favored by their particular scholarly community. Standard narrative histories ranging from early ones such as Hume's *History of England* (1754-1762), to later ones by historians like J.R. Green, were forced by their methodologies to ignore British history prior to the Roman invasion. For these professional historians, only written records were valid sources of historical knowledge, which necessarily eliminates pre-literate societies from receiving attention. Everett Zimmerman explains by way of an example that "Hume neglects pre-Roman British history, in part out of his prejudice against a society he thought did not truly participate in the progress of civilization, but also out of his consequent unwillingness to grant authority to the available documentation" (20). This prejudice was established early, with Lord Bolingbroke proclaiming that pre-Roman history was "mere antiquarianism" (qtd. by Smiles, 10). The British Archaeological Association was founded in 1844 after a split from the Society of Antiquaries (in part because the Society refused to create a subcommittee on numismatics). As archaeology began the process of professionalization and its practitioners began to desire official academic recognition by the universities, they chose to distance themselves from the antiquaries with whom they had typically collaborated (although, in fact, many people retained dual membership in antiquarian and archaeological societies). They achieved this distancing from antiquarianism partly by emphasizing their growing interest in classical archaeology, sending out field researchers commissioned by the British Museum and others to dig up artifacts in the Middle East

and, to a lesser extent, Greece and Italy. The study of ancient history in the classical world retained the aura of acceptability among professional historians, so archaeologists, craving their respect, gradually left the exploration of British ancient history, as a lesser-respected field, to the lesser-respected antiquary.

Diverting the subject of study from the local to the classical world was not the only way in which archaeology began to distinguish itself from antiquarianism, however. It also took advantage of the mixed public attitude toward antiquarianism and played up its methodological differences. Smiles in his history of the field describes this as a split between two rival camps:

> In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries antiquarianism itself embraced both fanciful imaginings and disciplined inquiry, but the growth of a more rigorous archaeology in the mid nineteenth century would effectively split antiquarianism into two. Archaeology needed to discriminate between hard 'scientific' truth and imaginative projection and may be said to have developed the antiquarian tradition of empirical research to achieve this. What was left of antiquarianism would eventually become identified only with the unsystematic and speculative thought and with a propensity for romantic identification with the past. (166)

Although Smiles portrays this event as one in which archaeologists literally take away the science from the antiquaries, this characterization reinforces the too-neat division between antiquarianism and other forms of historical inquiry. The tradition of melding the scientific with the imaginative was inherent within antiquarianism before the split with archaeology and was continued after the split. In my discussion of antiquarianism, I

accept many of the premises established by scholars such as Smiles. However, I depart from these previous studies of the subject by asserting the continuing cultural influence of antiquarianism, although this influence begins to take a more diffuse form as it moves beyond the work of self-described antiquaries and toward expression in literature and visual culture.

One constant aspect of the conversation surrounding antiquarianism is criticism or dismissal of it as a legitimate mode of historical inquiry. Modern critics echo their nineteenth-century counterparts by repeatedly referring to antiquarianism as "trivial" (Collini 16) or dismissing it as "mere antiquarianism," as Marilyn Butler does in *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries* (20). Francis Haskell writes of the "sterile dreams of antiquarians" (277). Rosemary Jann refers in passing to "frivolous antiquarianism" (156) and "the merely antiquarian" (6), and excludes it from her study of the *Art and Science of Victorian History*: "I passed over writers like Sharon Turner or Henry Hallam, whose concern with the past was more thoroughly antiquarian than imaginative" (xv). Jann offers no explanation for this exclusion because, presumably, no explanation of the distinction between "antiquarian" and "imaginative" is required. The exclusion of antiquarianism from the standard narrations of the field of history is taken for granted. Jann's criticism of antiquarian work places it in an unclassifiable space between "art" and "science," the two divisions of her study.

Even modern critics who directly engage in the attempt to characterize the antiquary's role in the construction of a particular kind of historical imagination in this period differ widely in how to do so. Essential questions receive contradictory answers: To what extent is the antiquary an accurate historian? To what extent is the antiquary

operating in a sentimentalizing and/or Romantic mode? Is the antiquary interested in the object as an aesthetic or a scientific object? I would like to demonstrate that these questions imply rigid either/or ideas about disciplinary boundaries that have limited critical exploration of antiquarianism. The single fact that most modern critics and contemporary cultural observers of antiquaries seem to agree upon involves the centrality of the material object in their historical researches. Antiquarianism is an unstable category, as the following material will reveal. Because so many anxieties about the stakes of history are projected onto the figure of the antiquary, representations of antiquaries and antiquarianism constantly shift according to the prevailing thought of the moment. This shifting means that different representations of antiquarianism oscillate between presumable opposites: antiquaries are both bland and excessively emotive, obsessed with inappropriate and abject historical information and with dry historical minutiae.

Antiquarianism does not fit into notions of usefulness or purpose for historiography. It is not teleological, does not create an archive of knowledge about the universal human condition, and does not participate in the consolidation of British national identity. Rather, in focusing on local histories and fragmentary relics, it threatens the nationalistic project that depends on a totalizing historical narrative. Owing to this threat, the antiquary becomes a figure of satire, associated with femininity, impotence, infertility, childishness, homosexuality, and even necrophilia. The scope of these particular associations reveals the power of the discursive practice brought to bear in order to marginalize the antiquarian project. Antiquarianism is diminished and

abjected within popular perception because it is a dangerous, inappropriate form of historical inquiry.

In my first chapter, I depart from standard readings of Walter Scott's *The Antiquary* (1816) to argue that the novel rehabilitates the figure of the antiquary as a productive member of the community and nation. The novel engages these issues by assimilating the antiquary Oldbuck to traditional notions of masculinity, distancing him from the common image of the antiquary as infertile, impotent, effeminate, and childish. Scott's *The Antiquary* acknowledges the antiquary as a figure of satire, uses these popular perceptions for comic effect, but also subverts the notion that the antiquary is useless or even threatening to the cohesion of the nation. His novel depicts the antiquary's potential for being a socially useful, intellectually fertile, and masculinist force that binds together the community. The novel actively engages the antiquary as a comical figure even as it challenges the notion of antiquarianism as useless or divorced from the interests of the nation. In doing so, the novel suggests that fragmented, localized antiquarian narratives and grand national narratives of history are not necessarily antagonistic modes of historiography. Scott recuperates the figure of the antiquary by normalizing Oldbuck both socially and sexually, thereby lending credence to antiquarian methodologies. The novel mobilizes Oldbuck's antiquarian knowledge as a positive force within the community.

Walpole's novel *The Castle of Otranto* engages antiquarianism in a similar way to Scott in that both novels are self-reflective on the subject of antiquarianism and, in particular, the figure of the antiquary as the object of satire. Whereas Scott pushes against the antiquary as a figure of satire, Horace Walpole embraces it. In chapter two, I begin by

exploring representations of the figure of the antiquary as lacking aesthetic judgment. The antiquary's faulty aesthetic faculty leads to the perception of the antiquary consuming historical knowledge indiscriminately: as Nietzsche depicts the antiquary, he "gobbles" material without distinguishing between the worthy and the trivial, the appropriate and the abject. I then move into a reading of how Walpole's deployment of the gothic shifts the terms of taste from the distanced, analytical perception favored by Enlightenment philosophers such as Hume, Kant, and Hegel, toward a Burkean privileging of the sensations of the body as an index of good taste. The antiquarian impulse emerges in Walpole's novel in terms of how material objects evoke the sensation of "gloomth," an antiquarian feeling for the past that breaks down the strict boundaries between fact and fiction, historical authenticity and fakery.

Walpole's gothic conflates architecture and narrative, an association that emerges from antiquarian privileging of both the material and the textual. Whereas professional or proper historians rely increasingly on the ultimate authority of the text, following in the Rankean tradition, antiquaries rely on a broad, eclectic mix of source material. In chapter three, I argue that James Hogg's *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* follows from an antiquarian interest in the aesthetics of the fragmented narrative. The novel shows how antiquarianism uses folkloric knowledge, oral history, material objects, and texts produced outside of official institutions to call into question the epistemological preeminence of institutionalized textual forms of testimony about the past. Hogg's novel and Percy's *Reliques* are texts of self-consciously questionable status that follow in the tradition of overt antiquarian hoaxes by Chatterton and Ossian. These antiquarian hoaxes, along with antiquarian fakery such as Walpole's Strawberry Hill,

undermine the status of the historian as one who is able to use reliable textual sources to create an authoritative biography of the nation.

Chapter four argues that Victorian ruin photography uses the picturesque convention of the tourist figure to situate the individual in relation to the past. As the antiquarian impulse results in the diffusion of the antiquarian interest in the material ruins of the past, the tourist becomes a surrogate for the figure of the antiquary. The dangerous element of the antiquarian subject position is nullified in representations of the ruin tourist by assimilating it to a generalized, nationalist sentiment rather than the local loyalties that emerge in antiquarian narratives. My argument posits that certain photographs by D.O. Hill and Robert Adamson resist this assimilation and nullification, departing from a Romantic emphasis on nostalgia, melancholy and serenity. I look at how M.R. James's *Ghost Stories of an Antiquary* uses the photograph as an emblem of this "antiquarian eye," which forms a source of horror in his short stories.

Political upheaval in Europe in the wake of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars increases tourism and interest in local British ruins, long the province of the antiquary. Tourists use engraving techniques and, later, photography to visually capture the ruins, a practice that had long been associated with local antiquarian societies and their topographical albums of local history. Gilpin and, later, the Romantic poets develop aesthetic theories about the relationship between the ruins and the observing figure. These theories define the observer's stance toward the past in terms of the ruin as object of visual contemplation. The picturesque, Romantic depiction of this relationship in ruin photography, engravings, topographical narratives, and poetry, emphasizes the melancholy distance between past and present. The figures in the ruined landscape situate

the past as safely past, distinct from the present. This constitutes ruins merely within a safe aesthetic context rather than as a politically meaningful landscape. Antiquarian visualizations of the stance of the observer in relation to the ruins challenge the picturesque, nostalgic vision of the Romantics. The antiquarian subject position foregrounds the potential of the past to rupture into the present. Whereas picturesque albums like the Howitts' *Ruined Abbeys and Castles of Great Britain* emphasize a generalized, cohesive British identity built on the distanced aestheticization and interchangeability of ruins, antiquarian images, texts, and stories such as those of M.R. James point toward ruins as particularized sites of specific local histories, often the sites of violence that threaten the cohesion of British national identity.

While the ongoing professionalization of history, resulting in the institutionalization of history and archaeology within the academy by the end of the nineteenth century, may suggest that antiquarianism experiences a "decline and fall," the legacy of antiquarianism indicates otherwise. In chapter five, I argue that George Eliot's historical novel *Romola* exhibits a highly ambivalent relationship to history and the process of narrativizing history that reveals that these questions about appropriate and inappropriate stances toward the past remain in turmoil. The novel initially rejects antiquarianism in the Proem, but the novel then proceeds to test, move through, and discard a number of alternative models of historicity, embodied in Romola's shifting loyalties to various male figures in her life. The novel ultimately embraces a relationship to history that emphasizes the impossibility of achieving an authoritative distance or a source of definitive textual knowledge in the archives. Like Romola who never knows the truth about whether Savonarola was a false prophet, but who finds comfort in the

moment of his death through the sympathy of shared physical sensations, the novel suggests that an authoritative historical narrative may not be possible but that physical proximity to the places where historical events occur may trigger sympathetic reactions that approach a mode of historical truth. This conclusion hearkens back to Walpole's "gloomth" as an atmospheric evocation of historical authenticity through physical space. Just as Eliot's novel never completely rejects antiquarianism, history as a field continues to owe a debt to the legacy of antiquarianism. I conclude by suggesting that Eliot's novel is a textual artifact that demonstrates how antiquarianism becomes a palimpsest for history itself. Just as Romola absorbs different elements of historical perspective as represented by her loved ones, novelists and historians read antiquarianism, rewrite it, synthesize it, and eventually assimilate it into their own historical practice. The diffusion of these ideas spreads the influence of antiquarianism beyond professional historians and novelists to become a form of historical imagination, an historical analogy to Benedict Anderson's notion of the imagined community. This dissertation seeks to trace the tangled genealogy of the antiquarian impulse in order to render visible this submerged influence on the way people imagine themselves in relation to the historical past.

Chapter One: The Figure of the Antiquary

I. Use-Value and the Ends of History

In a February 1843 review of Thomas Arnold's *Lectures on Modern History* in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, the reviewer praises Arnold's conception of history as "the biography of the nation" in contrast to "mere antiquarianism" that is "calculated to contract and enfeeble the understanding. It is a pedantic love of detail, with an indifference to the result, for which alone it can be considered valuable. It is the mistake, into which men are perpetually falling, of the means for the end" ("Arnold's Lectures on History" 146). This statement focuses the critique of antiquarianism particularly on its seeming lack of purpose, "an indifference to the result." The *Blackwood's* reviewer describes an appropriate end of historiography strictly in terms of serving the nation. Antiquarianism is thus a type of historical knowledge that is not compiled into a totalizing narrative—a mere chronicle of pedantic facts.

In praising Thomas Arnold's style of historiography, the *Blackwood's* reviewer echoes a widespread notion of antiquarianism as a useless or inappropriate form of historical inquiry. In his journal entry for March 9, 1828, Walter Scott references popular caricatures of antiquarianism in describing a visit from his friend Hay Drummond, secretary of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. They engaged in some gossip over the controversies in which the Society was then involved. When Drummond departed, Scott wrote in his journal:

> I do not know any thing which relieves the mind so much from the sullens as trifling discussions about *antiquarian old-womanries*—It is like knitting a stocking, diverting the mind without occupying it, or it is like, by our

> lady, a mill dam which leads the attention gently and imperceptibly out of the channel in which they are chafing and boiling—to be sure it is only conducting them to turn a child's mill—What signifies that?—the diversion is a relief though the object is of little importance. (*Sir Walter Scott's Journal* 441, italics in original)

Paralleling the *Blackwood's* reviewer's comments that antiquaries focus on means to the exclusion of ends, Scott admits that his attraction is to the "diversion" and not to "the object." In this excerpt, Scott describes antiquarian activity as a pleasant and decidedly non-intellectual occupation. Like the repetitive movement of knitting or the turning of a mill, the mind can perform the action with little direct intellectual engagement. Antiquarian discussions are an amusing diversion rather than an intellectual pursuit. Scott's alignment of his antiquarian conversation with not only the feminine, but pointedly also an "old," non-reproductive femininity, suggests that antiquarian pursuits are similarly unproductive.

Scott's journal entry also aligns antiquarian conversation with the turning of a "child's mill," a similarly familiar juxtaposition of the figure of the antiquary with something not quite masculine. However, Scott's question "What signifies that?" is central to an understanding of antiquarianism as a practice that subverts typical notions of the practical. The historical inquiry and conversation is an end in itself. Antiquaries do not create theories of human behavior over time like Hume or Montesquieu, or contribute knowledge to a larger, coherent narrative of the nation like Macaulay.[6] Susan Manning has noted "their resistance to the grand narratives of philosophic history" (60). While the

[6] Susan Manning notes that "Antiquaries, in the common eighteenth-century view, were entirely other-directed: they catalogued and accumulated objects, delighting in singularity. Their relationship to the matter of their inquiries was subjective, affective, and—crucially—unconceptualized " (58).

object of antiquarian study is "trivial" and "of little importance," Scott's journal entry focuses on its subjective effect on the antiquary himself. This diversion of attention from object to subject in which the figure of the antiquary receives more attention than antiquarian scholarship, is symptomatic of antiquarian discourse in general. It presents the antiquary as a figure of pure compulsion, a cultural marker quite removed from the actual people who refer to themselves as antiquaries. What the antiquary studies is not as important as how the antiquary himself is perceived. The figure of the antiquary thus exhibits a type of hyper-subjectivity; representations of antiquarianism and antiquaries display an exaggerated awareness of the antiquary's affective reaction to his object of inquiry. Walter Scott himself exhibits a heightened self-awareness in both his fiction and nonfiction about this disparity between his own antiquarian impulse and the common cultural perception of the antiquary as a figure. In this chapter I examine how Scott navigates through the tangled web in which antiquarian methodology, narration, and popular perception converge. His novel *The Antiquary* (1816) presents a vision in which the antiquarian impulse is mobilized as a positive force that upholds the project of social cohesion.

Scott's journal entry renders explicit a connection that remains implicit in the *Blackwood's* reviewer's condemnation of "mere antiquarianism." Because antiquaries seemingly do not produce a form of knowledge that has a recognizable nationalistic function, contributing to the "biography of the nation," their historical knowledge is emasculated—"enfeebled" like a child or an old woman. Usefulness, in a social sense, becomes bound up with sexuality in such characterizations because the idea of usefulness is associated analogously with productivity in terms of sexual virility or fecundity. From

Pope's *Dunciad* to Samuel Foote's plays "Taste" (1752) and "The Nabob" (1772), the eighteenth century had already built up a well-established notion of the antiquary as a figure of ridicule, the fodder of satire about bad scholarship, bad taste, and forgeries.[7] Depictions of the antiquary often focus on this figure's lack of conformity to a virile, masculine type. The perception that antiquarianism lacks a productive function for the community is equated with both sexual immorality and sexual infertility. In contrast to the masculine virility associated with empirical reasoning, the figure of the antiquary is typically associated with femininity, childishness and multiple variations of non-normative sexuality: impotence or infertility, homosexuality, necrophilia, or a lack of sexual desire. The conflation of the antiquarian figure with these various forms of non-normative masculinity is an excessive and overdetermined attempt to marginalize the antiquarian project as a legitimate form of historical inquiry. The antiquary's supposed sexual impotence or infertility translates to intellectual sterility or a lack of social productivity as the effects of their historical work. The psychosexual abnormality of this figure comes about as a sublimation of the danger that antiquarian historical work poses to the unity of the nation. In her work on eighteenth-century antiquarianism, Rosemary Sweet has established that "[a]ntiquaries were acutely conscious of origins and did not subscribe to a notion of homogenous nationhood" ("Antiquaries and Antiquities" 198). The nation-building project to which historians were expected to contribute seemingly excluded the work of antiquaries. Their work is deemed useless and, thus, the figure of the antiquary represents a convergence of intellectual and sexual abnormality.

When Jeremy Bentham articulates his philosophy of utilitarianism beginning in 1789, it is only the most overt expression of a larger discourse circulating at the time

[7] For a fuller discussion of satirical portrayals of the figure of the antiquary, see Iain Gordon Brown.

concerning the use-value of human intellectual pursuits. All of these theories on use-value revolve around use for a larger community, whether defined as the nation, the class system, or a collective archive of universal knowledge. Antiquarianism failed to fit neatly within any of the popular conceptions of the use value of historical study and, therefore, the figure of the antiquary came to be associated with solipsism, caprice, and history pursued for individual pleasure rather than in the service of a larger goal. Antiquaries produced microscopic histories of small, insular locales—the county history or topographical study is a trademark antiquarian historiographical pursuit. Characteristic works in this antiquarian mode include Richard Gough's *History and Antiquities of Croyland Abbey* (1783), John Hutchins's *History and Antiquities of Dorset* (1774), and William Barrett's *The History and Antiquities of the City of Bristol* (1789). Contrast these titles with contemporaneous works such as David Hume's *History of England* (1754-1762), Edward Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776-1789) and William Robertson's *History of Scotland* (1794) and the scope of antiquarian narratives in contrast to other forms of historiography of the time becomes obvious. Antiquaries break apart the nation into minute, segmented local units, whereas these other histories unite nations under a single, authoritative and linear narrative of national origin.

Far more than the limited geographic scope of antiquarian studies, the perception that they lack a governing philosophy contributes to the accusation that they also lack usefulness. Fully developed narrative arcs of historians like Macaulay, whose narratives present an unbroken line of positive progress, and the nostalgia associated with the Burkean view of history, are characteristics shared by historiographical writings that

interpret and theorize about the significance of historical events rather than simply chronicle them. In his opening commentary given upon the foundation of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in 1780, Lord Buchan references the public's negative perception of antiquaries:

> And here I cannot but observe, that the name of *Antiquary*, from the frivolous researches of some of them, and the prejudices of the uninformed public, has, with other still more respectable appellations, become the butt of fashionable and humorous stricture, which, if we could embrace the more useful and interesting subjects which are connected with antiquities, might be happily avoided. The most unpopular studies, when under the auspices of philosophy and philanthropy, become interesting and useful to all. (qtd. in Iain Gordon Brown, 6)

Lord Buchan identifies the source of these "prejudices" within the perception of antiquarianism as "frivolous" and argues that an antidote to this popular caricature of antiquarianism is the development of a "philosophy," or governing theory, and "philanthropy," or service to a greater good, along with a call to "embrace the more useful" branches of their studies.

Much like Buchan's call for philanthropy to form a portion of the mission of Scotland's Society of Antiquaries, Bentham articulates his notion of utility by connecting the good of the individual to the good of the community. He warns that actions based on "caprice instead of reason" divorce the individual from the larger interests of the community. According to Bentham, "An action then may be said to be conformable to the principle of utility, or, for shortness sake, to utility, (meaning with respect to the

community at large) when the tendency it has to augment the happiness of the community is greater than any it has to diminish it" (89). Bentham argues that those things that give the most pleasure to the individual are those things that benefit the cumulative amount of happiness in the community. For Bentham, this principle of utility has implications for every facet of human activity including government and science.

Lord Buchan's call for a governing philosophy does not prevent the perpetuation of the negative popular perception of antiquarianism into the nineteenth century. Antiquarianism stands in contrast to other forms of history that have clearly and specifically articulated governing philosophies. For example, Karl Marx, in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (1852), declares that unlike other chroniclers of the events in France between 1848 and 1851, he has a clear purpose to "demonstrate how the *class struggle* in France created circumstances and relationships that made it possible for a grotesque mediocrity to play a hero's part" (8). Marx envisions the study of history as an exercise in debunking the illusions concerning the past, revealing them as farce and parody. In the preface to an 1885 edition of *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, Friedrich Engels writes that "Marx not only studied the past history of France with particular predilection, but also followed her current history in every detail, stored up the material for future use and, consequently, events never took him by surprise" (14). In this statement, Engels reveals that the Marxist conception of historiography is essentially forward-looking. The study of the past is useful only insofar as it can be used to predict and shape the future for specific political aims.

Like Marxist historiography, whiggish history also pursues a clearly articulated end. Thomas Babington Macaulay's *History of England* was written with the express

purpose of glorifying the nation and engaged in a project of nation-building. He writes at the opening of his *History* that he hopes:

> the general effect of this chequered narrative will be to excite thankfulness in all religious minds, and hope in the breasts of all patriots. For the history of our country during the last hundred and sixty years is eminently the history of physical, of moral, and of intellectual improvement. Those who compare the age on which their lot has fallen with a golden age which exists only in their imagination may talk of degeneracy and decay: but no man who is correctly informed as to the past will be disposed to take a morose or desponding view of the present. (52)

Macaulay's whiggish view of history, like Marx's, can be described as teleological. It looks to the past primarily in terms of how it can service the present, whether that goal be the glorification of the nation for Macaulay or the incitement of class revolution for Marx. Macaulay's reference to "degeneracy and decay" has a double meaning here. In referring to a particular outlook on the past, it targets both the historian and the history he produces.

Antiquarianism seems to have no forward-looking goal in mind, unlike the majority of teleological historical practices emergent in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For the Whig historian, the direction is toward greater material prosperity; for John Stuart Mill toward a state of personal liberty and free expression; for Hegel toward pure freedom; for Kant toward enlightenment and a cosmopolitan state; and for Marx toward a proletarian revolution and a state of material equality. Antiquarianism as considered from the perspective of the popular imagination, however, looks toward the

singularity of the past as distinct and even exotic when considered from a present perspective. It is the lack of a clearly defined contemporary political slant that situates antiquarianism as history without a practical function.

Recently scholars have begun to question and complicate the notion that antiquarianism occupies a simple position in relation to the project of nationalism, suggesting that antiquaries both destabilized and contributed to the consolidation of national identity in ways other than the production of grand narratives or "biographies of the nation." Katie Trumpener broaches this idea in *Bardic Nationalism*, her seminal work that establishes the dynamics between British nationalism and the bardic tradition existing on the cultural peripheries in Scotland, Ireland and Wales. Trumpener establishes a genealogy of the bard that exposes the figure's integral connection to antiquarianism. Miranda J. Burgess also acknowledges that antiquarianism's relation to the project of the modern nation is complex, arguing that antiquarianism is simultaneously national and cosmopolitan. Yoon Sun Lee launches from Trumpener's premises, suggesting that antiquaries occupied an ironic stance in relation to nationalism. In *Nationalism and Irony,* Lee examines how the stance of antiquaries like Scott toward the past is often perceived to be opposed to the patriotic purposes of those such as Macaulay precisely because antiquaries aestheticize the "degeneracy and decay" lamented by Macaulay in the opening of his *History.* Lee writes that antiquaries "assumed the already accomplished or imminent demise of tradition as a matter of continuous, practical usage" and argues that "the trope of catastrophe rather than the narrative of inheritance seemed to structure the practice, if not the discourse, of antiquarian history" (82). This "trope of catastrophe" often embodied in the image of

physical ruins is also common to the most prominent Romantic poetry of the early nineteenth century; however, the narrative purpose of historiography is more deeply implicated in a nationalist political project that is put in danger by such a rhetorical stance, whereas the inward-looking poetry of Wordsworth, for example, posits a project that on the surface seems to deal more with the revelation of truths about the individual mind than the fate of the nation. In other words, the Romantic project of Wordsworth's poetry does not pose a clear and immediate threat to the nation because, unlike historiography, there is not an assumption that its explicit purpose is to serve the nation.[8]

The idea that antiquaries do not create grand narratives of the nation or encompassing theories of human nature is also related to the nature of the antiquary's object of study. Because antiquaries often extended their studies into the preliterate realms of British history, they depended on an eclectic mixture of historical source materials, including but not limited to textual documents. The antiquary's interest in the material object, however, is a distinguishing characteristic that distances antiquarian methodology from mainstream historiographic trends at the turn of the century. The material object by its very nature transcends or eludes narration. Referring to the "specific unspecificity" of things, Bill Brown has traced a history of critical inquiry that ponders the material object's seeming resistance to signification and, thus, its ability to be assimilated to standard linear narration. Brown opens *Things*, his collection of essays on material culture, by ventriloquizing a common query: Why must we theorize things?

[8] Of course, this is not to say that Romantic poetry does not deal with the idea of history or historical themes. My point here is that historiography as a narrative genre often has a strictly and explicitly defined nationalist purpose, sometimes to the exclusion of other purposes, whereas other forms of literary and artistic endeavors are more fluid in terms of their intended use value. The effect of this strictly defined purpose is that any deviation immediately opens the gate for accusations that alternative modes of historiography are not simply deviations, but actually represent a threat to the nation-building project as a whole.

"Why not let things alone? Let them rest somewhere else—in the balmy elsewhere beyond theory" (1). In this line of inquiry, the "thing" is aligned with the moment, the pre-cognitive and purely experiential, "what's encountered as opposed to what's thought" (5). Brown creates a taxonomy in which the term "things" refers to unorganized matter, while "objects" are the human perception of these disorganized things in which they become meaningful. Using Brown's taxonomy, the dissonance between antiquarian methodology and the negative public perception of antiquarianism may be likened to the antiquaries' project of organizing "things" into meaningful "objects," a distinction that does not signify within the wider public perception. Much like antiquarianism, the material object is highly resistant to theory, signification, and narrative. According to Brown, the narratives emerging from these objects "police the boundaries of appropriate affective reaction" ("Keynote Address"). In this model, public discourse targeted at mocking the figure of the antiquary may be a method of "policing" what is perceived to be an inappropriate affective relationship to the material object. Things, then, are the singular morsels of meaning that resist easy digestion into objects and, therefore, into a cohesive and linear narrative. Perhaps this accounts for the difficulties that antiquaries encountered in their attempts to produce narratives rather than disjointed chronicles of their findings. Shawn Malley has suggested as much when he argues that "Scott recognized the past's resistance to narrative assimilation" and connects this resistance to "the epistemic relations of materials to historical story-telling" (238). The indeterminacy of the material object echoes two important aspects associated with antiquarianism: the slippery gendering of the figure of the antiquary and the frequent accusations of the antiquary's inability to "theorize."

II. "You laugh at much of this . . . and I forgive you": Walter Scott's Oldbuck and the Rehabilitation of the Antiquary

Walter Scott's novel *The Antiquary* enters into this controversy about the nature of historical study and, in doing so, challenges the notion that antiquarianism does not serve a socially useful and productive purpose. In my reading of *The Antiquary*, I suggest that Walter Scott engages with the issues brought up by Lord Buchan in his opening address to the Society of Antiquaries. In particular, the novel challenges and subverts standard notions of usefulness by emphasizing how local antiquarian studies can bind together the local community without undermining national cohesion. The novel addresses this goal not only by depicting the title character, Jonathan Oldbuck, as an important and engaged member of the community, but also by assimilating Oldbuck to traditional notions of masculinity. He is the person who binds together the characters from different classes and political outlooks, a vitally important social function in a novel set in 1794, a time period in which the class upheaval in France had created anxiety about the collapse of traditional hierarchies. Despite disputing the idea that the figure of the antiquary is an emblem of uselessness, caprice, social isolation, and emasculation, the novel also exploits these assumptions for comic effect. I argue that Scott's novel works to rehabilitate the figure of the antiquary into a productive (and fertile) member of the community and nation. Scott's *The Antiquary* appears twelve years earlier than his 1828 journal entry in which he extols "antiquarian old-womanries," indicating that after the publication of this novel, he seems to have settled into a less antagonistic relationship with the public persona of the antiquary, embracing the figure rather than pushing against

it or trying to rehabilitate it. However, the attitude of gentle self-deprecation evident in the journal entry is continuous with Oldbuck's habit of self-mockery in the novel.

Several of these themes about the gendering of historical practices and the idea of social connection are already present in separate threads of existing criticism on Scott's novel. Mike Goode has explored the manner in which *The Antiquary* forms a part of contemporary discourse, including political cartoons by Thomas Rowlandson and Frederick George Byron, among others, that typically portrays "widespread concerns that historical inquiry can improperly, sentimentally and sexually initiate—and, therefore, according to the logic of the period, also improperly gender—British men" (53). Similarly, others have noted that *The Antiquary* is concerned with defining how individuals function within a community, often in terms of how the figure of the antiquary fails in this endeavor. Ina Ferris argues that Oldbuck reifies the antiquaries' inability to "integrate into the community the passions of their minds, and so they are blocked from participating fully in its history" ("Pedantry and the Question of Enlightenment History," 282). Similarly, Joan S. Elbers argues that the novel demonstrates the consequences of "man cut off emotionally and spiritually from the network of relationships that make up the social organism" (406), although Elbers does not examine at length how this theme is connected to antiquarianism. Yoon Sun Lee does make this connection in relation to Scott himself. Writing of Scott's visit to the battlefield of Waterloo in search of valuable artifacts, Lee argues that "[Scott's] own performance on the field of Waterloo shows how antiquarianism can weld together public spirit and private gratification, patriotic nostalgia and commercial ambition, into an ironic whole" (*Nationalism and Irony* 86). In her reading of Scott's *The Antiquary*, she

suggests that the "ironic whole" emerges from a symbiosis of Wardour's traditional patriotism and Oldbuck's mercantilist antiquarianism. According to Lee, "Oldbuck's antiquarianism is self-consciously a private affair. The fervor with which he collects historical objects, records, and evidences reflects no desire to participate in a public or national history" (98).[9] While I agree with Lee's formulation of how Scott represents a welding of the public and the private in his own antiquarian activities, I argue that Scott portrays the socially productive and connected potential of antiquarianism in his novel *The Antiquary,* not through a symbiosis between Wardour (who seems merely comic and pitiful) and Oldbuck, but singularly through Oldbuck himself as representing this complicated mediation of the personal and the social. Scott's Oldbuck offers a vision of the antiquary as a socially productive lynchpin of the community. His antiquarianism, far from being opposed to the purposes of the community or cut off from full participation in history and community, is a vital adhesive in keeping it together and functional.

Such a reading moves toward explaining the unusual disconnect between Scott's own description of this novel as his favorite and typical critical characterizations (both past and modern) of it as a confusing pastiche of genres. *The Antiquary* is usually described as a flawed novel.[10] The confusing disappearance of Lovel, the apparent hero, for a good portion of the novel is only one of numerous narrative problems cited by

[9] Lee complicates this relationship of the antiquary to the nationalist project by suggesting that the antiquary exhibits an ironic stance of reconciliation between the ideologies of "patriotic traditionalism" and class interest in the form of mercantilism—the placing of a price on the remnants of the past versus seeing the past as a priceless legacy. What interests me in Lee's formulation of antiquarianism is that she notes the dissonance between antiquarian practice and discourse and she suggests, through the idea of irony, a reconciliation of this dissonance.

[10] David Punter's introduction to the 1998 Penguin edition of the novel edited by David Hewitt provides an overview of the novel's reception history. Joan S. Elbers also notes that "[p]erhaps no work of a major writer has been subjected to anything like the hostility of E.M. Forster's merciless dissection and sneering dismissal of *The Antiquary*" (405).

critics, who also mention the generic disconnect between the gothic Glenallen storyline and the comic main storyline, resulting in unexpected shifts in tone between the dramatic and the comic, as well as the improbable plot. It is a novel that does not seem to cohere. The perpetuation of ideas about the illegitimacy of antiquarianism perhaps contributes to the underlying critical assumptions that continue to classify *The Antiquary* as a flawed narrative, particularly when compared to Scott's other historical novels. Although most of Scott's novels invoke antiquarian practice in some sense, *The Antiquary* overtly addresses cultural conceptions of antiquarianism and thus, perhaps unsurprisingly, the miscellaneous nature of antiquarian historical practice is mirrored in the structure of the narrative.[11] If Oldbuck, the title character, is considered as the unconventional hero of the novel, we can see that the structure of the narrative coheres around the antiquary as a heroic figure in a way that parallels the role that Oldbuck plays in binding together the town of Fairport.

Even as Scott's text works to break down the idea that antiquarianism is an effeminate and socially useless pursuit, it references these assumptions for comic effect.

[11] Although all of Scott's historical novels are heavily influenced by his antiquarianism, often featuring antiquaries as the fictional editors in the narrative frames, *The Antiquary* deals with these ideas most explicitly. Conflicting critical interpretations of the political alignment of *The Antiquary* reflect the ideological slipperiness of antiquarianism. For example, Goode argues that Burkean sentimentality and nostalgia, with the accompanying conservative politics, is threaded throughout the novel and, by extension, through antiquarianism itself. Yoon Sun Lee, in contrast, departs from evaluations of Scott's novel as politically conservative, suggesting that Scott's antiquarianism privileges a skeptical attitude toward history that emphasizes fragmentation between past and present. Antiquarianism is opposed to Burkean "patriotic historicism," in Lee's terms, which emphasized an unbroken tradition extending smoothly between past and present. According to Lee, growing feelings of nationalism during the fears of a French invasion at the turn of the century required an attitude toward history that glorified the triumphs of the past and placed them within an intelligible and progressive national narrative. However, "antiquarianism . . . emphasized the defunct, the illegible and the trivial" (*Nationalism and Irony,* 544), breaking down the neatly progressive narratives favored by the Whig historians, whose most prominent practitioner was Macaulay. Lars Hartveit concurs with Lee in that *The Antiquary* "express[es] [Scott's] increasingly pessimistic vision of progress" (34). These opposing critical trends related to the political alignment of Scott's novel point toward the conclusion that antiquarianism in the nineteenth century does not automatically align with a particular ideology.

Scott's novel seems to vacillate between embracing, and thus reclaiming, the antiquary as a comedic figure (as in his 1828 journal entry), and pushing against it. For example, Oldbuck lives up to these assumptions in small, humorous ways, but drops this comedic façade whenever the town is in danger or the bonds of friendship and community are at stake. Antiquaries were consistently depicted comically as having a broken aesthetic faculty, mistaking forgeries or common objects for something greater. These representations, which often link the failure of intellectual prowess with sexual impotence, can be traced back to antecedents such as Pope's satires of antiquaries in works such as the *Dunciad, The Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus*, and *To Mr. Addison, occasioned by his dialogues on medals.* The latter treatise references Dr. Woodward's mistaking a forgery for a genuine Roman shield and speaks of a pseudonymous antiquary "Curio" who "restless by the Fair-one's side, / Sighs for an Otho, and neglects his bride" (216). Early in *The Antiquary*, Oldbuck buys a large tract of land on the mistaken belief that it contains ruins of ancient Roman fortifications. Much to Oldbuck's embarrassment, he is corrected by the beggar Edie Ochiltree, who explains that he and a friend created the supposed "Praetorium" only twenty years ago during the digging of a dyke (which, interestingly in terms of Oldbuck's separation from the sexual economy, occurs on the occasion of a wedding) (30-32). Scott, however, mediates his comic portrait of Oldbuck with a measure of sympathy, as when the young man Lovel, who has witnessed Ochiltree's embarrassing revelation, prepares to be amused by the spectacle, but quickly changes his mind:

> "This," thought Lovel to himself, "is a famous counterpart to the story of *Keip on this side*." He then ventured to steal a glance at our Antiquary,

but quickly withdrew it in sheer compassion. For, gentle 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. (31)

Lovel's likening of Oldbuck's reaction to that of a young girl disappointed in love associates the antiquary's interest in the historical object with an awakening (albeit naïve) sexual, romantic nature rather than with a disinterested intellectual or aesthetic appreciation. In keeping with the conflation of various forms of the non-masculine with antiquarianism, the invocation of this image of "a damsel of sixteen" is immediately followed by the image of "a child of ten years," a phrase of indeterminate gender. Lovel's description of the look on Oldbuck's face upon hearing about the falseness of his Roman ruins echoes the popular portrayal of antiquaries as socially maladjusted old men whose natural attachment to women has been diverted into an unhealthy erotic fetishization of the material object.[12] More than simply aligning antiquarianism with a non-normative sexuality, however, this passage also associates it with femininity, gullibility, and sentimentality.

As Oldbuck's mistaking a twenty-year-old ditch for an ancient Roman fortification demonstrates, the antiquary was notoriously satirized as a figure given to misinterpreting the authenticity of historical testimony. The scene immediately calls to

[12] See Mike Goode for a more extended discussion of this topic. Goode and Iain Gordon Brown both reference cartoons drawn by Francis Grose and Thomas Rowlandson, among others, that feature explicit scenes in which wizened old antiquaries peer intently at objects while ignoring female figures in the background.

Lovel's mind a popular joke about antiquaries and their intellectual failings that at once situates Oldbuck as a representative of the common cultural perception of the antiquary for both Lovel and the reader. The allusion to "Keip on this side" is a reference to a well-known joke about antiquaries that the text assumes is comprehended by the reader, leaving it unexplained.[13] It forms part of a large body of comic material targeted at antiquaries. Isaac Disraeli in *Curiosities of Literature* passes on a similar story of a joke played at the expense of Richard Gough, the prominent antiquary, in which an object mimicking the tombstone of an ancient Danish king was presented for sale at a shop known to be frequented by Gough.[14] It was "steeped in pickle to hasten a precocious antiquity" and covered in "Saxon characters." Gough "purchased the relic for a trifle, and dissertations of a due size were preparing for the *Archaeologia*! Gough never forgave himself nor Steevens for this flagrant act of ineptitude" (49). Disraeli further emphasizes Gough's ineptitude by noting the "slight and ill-formed scratches" and the misspelling of the famous Danish king's name that should have revealed the artifact for a forgery to the expert, and goes on to give a few more examples of the same occurrence to further emphasize the point that antiquaries are gullible and inept. The proliferation of stories about forgeries in which spurious objects were buried to fool diggers, and even the more notable literary forgeries of Macpherson and Chatterton ultimately serve to establish the cultural value of authenticity, however. As Susan Stewart notes, speaking

[13] David Hewitt, editor of the Penguin edition and the authoritative Edinburgh Edition of the Waverley novels, has traced the reference to "Keip on this side" to an anecdote in a 1771 issue of *Town and Country Magazine*. According to Hewitt, "the Society of Antiquaries was asked to decipher the inscription on a stone found in Northumberland which read 'KEE PONT/ HI SSIDE.' Much learning was exposed to ridicule before the inscription was seen to read: 'KEEP ON THIS SIDE.' However, the story is what would now be called an 'urban folk-tale,' and Scott may have heard any of several competing versions" (notes, 376-377).

[14] Ina Ferris's recent article "Antiquarian Authorship: D'Israeli's Miscellany of Literary Curiosity and the Question of Secondary Genres" examines Disraeli's *Curiosities of Literature* as an antiquarian miscellany.

particularly of reproductions, "We thus cannot see the repetition as secondary or auxiliary, to the original, for instead of supplementing or supplanting the original, it serves to create the original" (20-21). The proliferation of forgeries establishes and testifies to the high value of authenticity, and the discourse surrounding the intellectual clumsiness of antiquaries perhaps contributes toward creating the notion of historical authenticity in this time. Forgeries and fake buried treasures abound in *The Antiquary*, mixed in with authentic objects that testify to the past. By focusing on the meaning of authenticity, these anecdotes by extension inform and complicate the notion of the historical forgery.

The conflation of the figure of the antiquary with childishness, effeminacy, and the non-productive appears as early as the epigraph to *The Antiquary*. Written by Scott himself but presented as a genuine excerpt from a presumably obscure text, the epigraph describes "Anselmo," an intelligent man who yet seeks seemingly childish and irrelevant outlets for his intelligence:

> I knew Anselmo. He was shrewd and prudent,
> Wisdom and cunning had their shares of him;
> But he was shrewish as a wayward child,
> And pleased again by toys which childhood please;
> As—book of fables graced with print of wood,
> Or else the jingling of a rusty medal,
> Or the rare melody of some old ditty,
> That first was sung to please King Pepin's cradle. (1)

Anselmo moving from "a book of fables" to "a rusty medal," and then to "some old ditty" traces in turn the three eclectic sources of historical knowledge in which the antiquary delights (the textual, the material, and the oral). The epigraph echoes the comment from Scott's journal that aligns antiquarian curiosity with that of a child—it is essentially useless in terms of its practical contribution to society. Additionally, the obscurity of this epigraph, authored by Scott but presented to the reader as an outside citation, calls attention to the questions of authenticity and textual authority explored throughout the novel. It is a fake historical text "buried" here to fool readers, just as Lovel and Ochiltree bury false treasure to fool the con man Dousterswivel.

As with Anselmo, who is "shrewd and prudent" despite his childish hobbies, when we are first introduced to the background of the title character, Jonathan Oldbuck, the antiquary's intelligence is not denigrated, but his use-value is questioned. The narrator relates Oldbuck's background, including his youthful difficulty settling on a career, and after Oldbuck rejects his father's proposal that he follow a career in a "mercantile concern":

> He was then put apprentice to the profession of a writer, or attorney, in which he profited so far, that he made himself master of the whole forms of feudal investitures, and shewed such pleasure in reconciling their incongruities, and tracing their origin, that his master had great hope he would one day be an able conveyancer. But he halted upon the threshold, and, though he acquired some knowledge of the origin and system of the law of his country, he could never be persuaded to apply it to lucrative and practical purposes. It was not from any inconsiderate neglect of the

> advantages attending the possession of money that he thus deceived the hopes of his master. "Were he thoughtless or light-headed, or *rei suae prodigus*," said his instructor, "I would know what to make of him. . . . a strange mixture of frugality and industry, and negligent indolence—I don't know what to make of him." (14-15)

Oldbuck's talents cannot be made to serve an economically or socially productive function. Echoing Scott's question from his journal, "What signifies that?", Oldbuck's instructor's insistence that "I don't know what to make of him" suggests that Oldbuck is more than just unclassifiable in terms of his career aims. While Scott's comments in his journal point to a pattern in which the figure of the antiquary, as well as antiquarian pursuits, are gendered feminine or rendered childish as part of the project to separate this mode of historical knowledge from more "masculine" modes of intellectual practice, the figure of the antiquary is also associated with forms of non-reproductive sexuality. Antiquaries are by turns described as feminine, homosexual, and interested in the historical object as an erotic focus. In *The Antiquary*, Scott references this popular perception of the antiquary's unusual sexual proclivities by suggesting that Jonathan Oldbuck's antiquarian fervor is a displacement of normative heterosexual desire onto historical objects through Oldbuck's perpetual state of bachelorhood and his crotchety disregard for the female inhabitants of his household. Oldbuck's self-imposed exile from the sexual economy distinguishes him from the young lover Lovel in that, since the failure of an early romance with Eveline Neville, his one true love in life has been the pursuit of his antiquities. In this sense, his antiquarianism, rather than being an index of his romantic failure, compensates for his previous shortcomings. In fact, his

antiquarianism cements his relationship to Lovel, thereby situating Oldbuck as a foster father to his former lover's son.

Oldbuck's social skills are the primary vehicle of his comic effect. He exhibits a penchant for pedantic conversation and a curmudgeonly dismissal of his "womankind," the three female inhabitants of his household. Although Oldbuck is divorced from the sexual economy, Scott's antiquary belies the dominant perception of the socially inept scholar. Oldbuck exhibits an awareness of this expectation concerning the figure of the antiquary and lives up to that image as a form of ironic self-amusement. Upon first introducing Oldbuck to the reader as he and Lovel await an Edinburgh coach, Scott describes the Antiquary as bearing "a countenance in which habitual gravity was enlivened by a cast of ironical humour" (6). Shortly after, while Oldbuck engages in an angry exchange with Mrs. Macleuchar, the proprietor of the stagecoach stop, Lovel observes that Oldbuck appears to amuse himself with the misanthropy of his own social performance: "There was something so comic in his pettish resentment, that the younger traveler, who was in no such pressing hurry to depart, could not help being amused with it, especially as it was obvious, that every now and then the old gentleman, though very angry, could not help laughing at his own vehemence" (8). This pattern is born out in the rest of the novel, in which Oldbuck exhibits a high level of awareness about the intricacies of his status as a social actor. Essentially, Oldbuck knowingly performs the part of the antiquary as a social caricature for his own amusement and, in doing so, destabilizes that caricature. The antiquary's awareness of himself as a social actor allows for a measure of self-reflection, creating the potential for Oldbuck to break out of the perception that antiquarian pursuits are about egotism and self-involvement.

Both Oldbuck and the novel itself proceed in this attitude of ironic self-amusement as they simultaneously challenge and perform the stereotypical role of the Antiquary. Critics such as Goode have noted that Walter Scott represents himself similarly in critical writings such as his "Dedicatory Epistle" to *Ivanhoe* and his *Essay on Border Antiquities.* Scott positions himself as occupying a space of detachment from classification as either antiquary or historian in his practice as a writer, turning a critical eye toward both roles. Although modern critics are quick to perceive Scott's light-hearted tone of self-mockery in the text, they fail to transfer this realization into their readings of Oldbuck as an ironic representation of the figure of the antiquary. Goode, for example, does not find any hint in the text of Scott's amusement at his self-parody in the character of Jonathan Oldbuck. "At times, [the] incompatibility between his pleasure in past cases and his ability to participate in present 'causes' can be comic. But the novel as a whole implies that it is no laughing matter, emphasizing that Oldbuck's historical pursuits and pleasures interfere with other men's understanding of, and thus their ability to act prudently in, the nation's present historical situation" (62). The general critical consensus is blind to the irony in the text, evaluating Oldbuck in a straightforward manner as a typical antiquary caricature, as one who is oblivious to the niceties of social interaction and allows his pedantic studies to interfere with meaningful human connection in the present. According to Ferris, "If Oldbuck speaks a great deal about the past, he does not often do so in ways that identify the past as a source of personal affect or sentiment" ("Pedantry and the Question of Enlightenment History," 279). Ferris's desire to dispel the common reading of Scott's historical sensibility as one that emphasizes the sentimental and the nostalgic results in her interpretation of *The*

Antiquary as a novel that acts purely as a critique of the antiquarian pursuit. Ferris concludes that Scott employs the novel as a way of distancing himself from an antiquarian role. "Even as he [Scott] cannot quite let go of the antiquary, he finally aligns himself and his fictional project with historian's history. And he does so because he seeks to uphold the notion of public discourse" ("Pedantry and the Question of Enlightenment History," 278).

Departing from Ferris and Goode's respective readings, I suggest that the novel represents an attempt to rehabilitate the much-ridiculed figure of the antiquary even as it ironically references the antiquarian caricatures for comic effect. Oldbuck's awareness of how his antiquarianism is popularly ridiculed again parallels Scott's own statement in his journal, "What signifies that?" His statements to Lovel often suggest that his willingness to mock himself derives from a lighthearted awareness of public perception. Upon showing Lovel his *sanctum sanctorum* full of antiquities, he tells Lovel, "'You laugh at much of this . . . and I forgive you'" (26). Similarly, he jokes when Lovel balks at changing out of his wet clothes after the rescue of the Wardours. "'Shalt have my night-gown, man, and slippers, and catch the antiquarian fever as men do the plague, by wearing infected garments'" (66-67). Such an attitude suggests that Oldbuck is not only aware of how he is perceived, but also that he finds it a source of personal amusement. For Oldbuck and for Scott, antiquarianism has a value that supersedes the public derision leveled against its practitioners. Oldbuck's willingness to forgive and his self-deprecating humor is a force that encourages affective ties among individuals, echoing the antiquary's affective ties to the past.

Far from being socially isolated and surrounded only by dusty historical relics and obsolete texts, Oldbuck engages in an extended network of social contact with antiquarian friends. The novel depicts the ties of local loyalty and friendship between Oldbuck and his friends as more important than their political or class alignments. Sir Arthur is an aristocratic Jacobite while Oldbuck is a Protestant with whiggish sympathies, proud to be descended from an entrepreneurial German printer. However, Oldbuck is the one who always gives in and negotiates reconciliation with Wardour after their numerous disagreements. Wardour's antiquarianism is self-serving in a more overt manner than Oldbuck's in that his historical studies are centered on elevating his family history. His antiquarianism privileges personal glory over personal pleasure. The novel dismisses Wardour as a model for the figure of the antiquary because of these tendencies. After all, Oldbuck is the title character of the novel, as the narrative refers to him simply as "The Antiquary" just as often as it uses his name. Their frequent arguments are typically instigated by Wardour's belief that Oldbuck has overstepped the bounds of deference owed to someone of his nobility as they debate historical controversies such as the authenticity of the Ossian poems, the accuracy of the "bead-roll of one hundred and four kings of Scotland" or "the good fame of Queen Mary" (38). Through the intervention of Oldbuck or Isabella Wardour, these breaches are quickly healed: "On such occasions, Oldbuck, considering that the baronet's pettishness resembled that of a child, usually shewed his superior sense by compassionately making the first advances of reconciliation" (39). One of their angry exchanges occurs right before the Wardours' dangerous trek on the beach at the end of a dinner party in Lovel's honor. Sir Arthur angrily storms out of Monkbarns after a heated argument. Oldbuck, however, mediates

his anger, following Wardour, warning him not to hurt himself in his haste, and begging him to "Stay a minute . . . I was a little too rude with you . . . come, come, forget and forgive—confess we have given the young fellow here a right to think us two testy old fools" (51). Moments such as these demonstrate that Oldbuck is not ruled by his passion for antiquities to the exclusion of the world around him. He is even able to back off from his stance in the argument about the etymology of the word *picts*, giving in to Sir Arthur's opinion despite his own feelings.

Oldbuck is highly engaged with the people around him and mobilizes his historical studies in the service of maintaining his friendships. Consistently, Oldbuck uses his antiquarian studies mostly as a vehicle or occasion for social interaction, as in his relationship with Sir Arthur Wardour. Similarly with Lovel, he desires to cement their friendship by collaborating on an epic poem on the battle between the Caledonians and the Romans in which Lovel supplies the verses and Oldbuck provides the footnotes. He engages in extended correspondence by letter with other antiquaries in which, similar to his friendship with Wardour, Oldbuck puts on a show of cantankerousness and misanthropy but ironically delights in the performance of this caricature of antiquarianism. He boasts to Lovel that "'the controversy upon Ossian's Poems between Mac-Cribb and me . . . began in smooth, oily, lady-like terms, but is now waxing more sour and eager as we get on'" (84). During Lovel's visit, Oldbuck wants to share his correspondence with Mac-Cribb because he sees the sharing and discussion of antiquarian knowledge as the basis of his burgeoning friendship with Lovel.

Although he functions as the central comic element throughout the novel with his pedantic, Latin-sprinkled conversation and the obscure historical controversies he

engages in with his correspondents, he is also the central sympathetic character, unselfishly coming to the aid of the other characters. His charity toward Ochiltree and the other impoverished locals emphasizes a different type of archaic code: that of a feudalistic paternalism in which the local aristocrat takes on a responsibility for the material well-being of his neighbors. The glorification of a chivalrous past is part of the nationalistic project also championed by political figures like Edmund Burke, who lament a lost age of chivalry, as well as the Whig historical narrative consolidated later by Macaulay that looks back to a mythical age of freedom and material prosperity lost with the middle ages. Even though Burke and Macaulay distance themselves from antiquarianism, Oldbuck embodies an antiquarian worldview that is not set completely at odds with their ideals. Oldbuck exemplifies the Burkean ideal in the scene describing the funeral of Steenie Meiklebackit. After Steenie's father, overcome by grief, refuses to act as head pallbearer for his son's coffin, Oldbuck takes his place, explaining that tradition dictated that his role as "landlord and master to the deceased" obligated him to "carry his head to the grave" (252). In this case, his antiquarian knowledge is the vehicle for his participation in the community. Although Oldbuck tries to perform the part of the disinterested observer of the ancient funereal traditions, he "had repeated recourse to his snuff-box to conceal the tears" (250). Oldbuck's attempt to put on a disinterested and analytical front in this particular scene suggests that he is trying on the persona of the philosophical or scientific historian and that this persona does not fit. He unsuccessfully tries to suppress the signs of his emotion while he narrates to Lovel the ethnographic and historical significance of the funeral ceremonies carried on by the family. As the antiquary, he is both intellectually and emotionally engaged in the scene before him. The

text suggests that such a stance toward the past is the one that is the most socially useful. As the novel comes to a close, Oldbuck's generosity and sense of duty to the community compels him to form a central part in bringing together the Earl of Glenallen with his lost son, in assisting Sir Arthur Wardour when his possessions are threatened with foreclosure, and in getting Edie Ochiltree released from prison. Oldbuck's role in resolving the various threads of the novel's plot contradicts the more typical characterization of the antiquary as socially unproductive and disconnected from the reality of the present, although these elements are acknowledged and deployed for comic effect in the novel.

III. The Real Hero: Lovel Versus Oldbuck

Lovel is usually labeled the hero of the novel, resulting in negative critical assessments of *The Antiquary*, because his disappearance for the great majority of the narrative seems improper for a heroic figure.[15] A further examination of the novel and, in particular, the character of Oldbuck demonstrates that this simplistic opposition between the privileged masculinity of Lovel and the degraded and comical antiquary Oldbuck breaks down under scrutiny. Rather, Oldbuck stands at the center of the novel as its hero—a seemingly logical interpretation given that he is the title character. This reading circumvents the standard (and unsatisfying) interpretation of Lovel as hero: a "mediocre hero" as Georg Lukacs described him (34). In contrast, I argue that the novel encourages

[15] In his overview of the history of negative critical assessments of *The Antiquary*, Punter tries to reconcile these harsh critical assessments with Scott's often-cited opinion of it as his own favorite novel by pointing toward the "expressionist" qualities of Gothic and the manner in which the novel enacts in its form the improbabilities, exaggeration, and fracture of the Gothic. Mike Goode makes a similar argument when he writes that these negative critical assessments stem from the fact that "critics have not known what they were looking for—that the novel, in short, tells us an unfamiliar history" (55). Joan S. Elbers also admits that these characteristics are "flaws" but that the novel is ultimately unified by the single theme of isolation and community.

a contrarian reading of Oldbuck as an unconventional hero. Such a reading reveals discontinuities in the straightforward image of Oldbuck as a comic figure, suggesting that the novel ultimately endorses the antiquarian worldview. It is also in keeping with Lukacs's description of a pattern of "mediocre" heroes in Scott's historical novels. According to Lukacs, "Scott thus lets his important figures grow out of the being of the age; he never explains the age from the position of its great representatives, as do the Romantic hero-worshippers" (39). Considered in this light, antiquaries have heroic potential and are in touch with their own age rather than lost in idle contemplation of the past.

The characterization of antiquarian modes of knowledge as trivial or nonproductive is symptomatic of what Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick has termed an "epistemologically cloven culture" (12). *The Antiquary* works to some extent to reveal and call into question this epistemological fracture in the figure of Oldbuck. Set in contrast to Lovel, who is the representative of masculine virility and action, is the typical image of the antiquary as a figure lost in fruitless contemplation of the past. While Oldbuck often conforms to the negative depictions of the figure of the antiquary, Oldbuck's status as the moral center and ultimate savior of his friends and neighbors elevates him to a higher status that belies the comic and dismissive initial portrait provided by the novel. But while focusing on Oldbuck as the ultimate hero of the novel solves this apparent narrative flaw, it also means that Oldbuck rehabilitates the figure of the antiquary within the masculinist social framework as one who is a useful and productive member of the community. Even his surname contains the term "buck," referring to a masculine animal or virile man. Certain passages appear to establish

Lovel's status as heroic, heterosexual, and masculine—Lovel's role in rescuing the Wardours, his thoughts of Isabella Wardour in the haunted bedroom at Monkbarns, and his appearance as a military leader at the end when the town is at risk for a French invasion. However, Lovel's heroic status breaks down upon scrutiny. Lovel only partially rescues the Wardours. He manages to save them from the tide by leading them to a sheltered outcropping. It is Oldbuck who recognizes the danger they are in and summons help from the wider community to complete the rescue, saving everyone including Lovel himself whose heroic powers were not enough to bring the rescue to completion. Similarly, Oldbuck leads the charge against the false alarm of a French invasion at the novel's conclusion, brandishing the sword his father used in 1745 against the Jacobite rebels. This rehabilitation of Oldbuck obviously reaffirms the privileging of heroism, physical prowess, logic, and heterosexuality as masculine, normative, and desirable.

Lovel functions in *The Antiquary* not only as a foster son to Oldbuck and as the romantic hero, but also initially as a foil to Oldbuck's antiquarianism. Lovel is a man of action. He climbs down a treacherous sea cliff to rescue the Wardours and appears in the final scene of the novel in his true guise as Major Neville, a capable young military man arriving just in time to calm down the inhabitants panicking over a rumored French invasion. Additionally, Lovel's sexual interest in Miss Wardour sets him apart from the bachelor Antiquary. The manner in which Lovel's participation in the sexual economy separates him from the antiquarian mindset becomes obvious when he first spends the night at Oldbuck's residence, Monkbarns, immediately after saving the Wardours and Edie Ochiltree from the storm-swept sea cliff. He stays in the Green Room, rumored to

be haunted by one of Oldbuck's predecessors, but laments his inability to get himself into the proper mindset to appreciate the creepy ancient atmosphere of the haunted room, filled with the material relics once owned by the purported ghost. He is too distracted by thoughts of Miss Wardour:

> [H]e almost regretted the absence of those agitated feelings, half fear half curiosity, which sympathize with the old legends of awe and wonder, from which the anxious realities of his own hopeless passion at present detached him. . . . He endeavoured to conjure up something like the emotions which would, at another time, have been congenial to his situation, but his heart had no room for these vagaries of the imagination. The recollection of Miss Wardour, determined not to acknowledge him when compelled to endure his society, and evincing her purpose to escape from it, would have alone occupied his imagination exclusively. (76-77)

His concern about his romantic future with Miss Wardour prevents Lovel from entering into an antiquarian frame of mind in the atmospheric and historically-evocative bedroom. Significant also is the description of Lovel's romantic worries as "anxious realities" set in contrast to the "vagaries of the imagination." The bedroom is a historical museum in stasis rather than the scene of sexual encounters existing in a vital and promising present. This separation of the impotent antiquarian bedroom from the virile world inhabited by Lovel emerges in his initial impressions as Oldbuck departs from the room: "Step after step Lovel could trace his host's retreat along the various passages, and each door which he closed behind him fell with a sound more dead and distant. The guest, thus separated from the living world, took up the candle and surveyed the

apartment" (75). Lovel is an outsider temporarily inhabiting the sterile and obsolete world of the antiquary.

In his own reaction to the haunted bedroom, Oldbuck does not fit into a clear-cut opposition to Lovel's heterosexuality. Lovel cannot enter into a properly antiquarian mindset in the haunted bedroom because he is distracted by thoughts of love. However, Oldbuck does not react to the bedroom in a gullible or superstitious manner either. He cautions Lovel to disregard his sister Grizzel's stories of ghosts, providing a rational explanation for the rumors. Oldbuck blames the story on an overnight visitor, a "'superstitious old fellow'" who recalled "'in his sleep the image and idea of my ancestor . . . Add a *quantum sufficit* of exaggeration, and you have a key to the whole mystery'" (73). Oldbuck distances himself from superstition and exaggeration in this exchange, placing himself in the realm of reason and empirical explanation. Additionally, he joins Lovel in his reaction to the bedroom as the scene of heterosexual romantic fantasy, telling him upon entering that it reminds him of a youthful love affair. We find out later in the novel that this relationship was with Eveline Neville, Lovel's mother:

> "I am seldom in this apartment," he said, "and never without yielding to a melancholy feeling—not, of course, on account of the childish nonsense that Grizzel was telling you—but owing to circumstances of an early and unhappy attachment. It is at such moments as these, Mr. Lovel, that we feel the changes of time—the same objects are before us—those inanimate things which we have gazed on in wayward infancy and impetuous youth, in anxious and scheming manhood—they are permanent and the same—but when we look upon them in cold unfeeling old age—can we, changed

> in our temper, our pursuits, our feelings, changed in our form, our limbs, and our strength, can we be ourselves called the same?—or do we not rather look back with a sort of wonder upon our former selves, as beings separate and distinct from what we now are?" (74-75)

In this passage, Oldbuck reiterates that he does not belong to the gullible mindset that believes in ghosts, "the childish nonsense." He goes on to describe the antiquarian relationship to the material object as one that, rather than leading to a similarly childish fantasy of recreating or inhabiting the past, emphasizes the striking and unfathomable difference between past and present. However, Oldbuck's characterization of the antiquarian mindset reveals that avoiding childishness does not mean eliminating elements such as wonder and feeling from historical inquiry. Oldbuck's relationship to the past as revealed in this passage is characterized by the inanimate object triggering an affective reaction that reveals historical truths but is not childish or unfeeling. In this way, the novel works to both reveal and complicate assumptions about the figure of the antiquary by situating Oldbuck as a wise and reflective mentor for Lovel rather than a clueless pedant. In saying to Lovel that "we feel" certain sensations about the past, Oldbuck's language in this speech brings the antiquary into sympathy with Lovel and "we" used in a larger, communal sense. This plural and communal pronoun implies that antiquaries share and sympathize with typical human sensations in reaction to the past, and that the antiquary, like the historian, can successfully function as a spokesperson for that relationship to the past.

The culmination of the haunted bedroom scene occurs when Lovel tells Oldbuck that he believes he has received a ghostly visitation from Oldbuck's ancestor. Lovel

believes that Oldenbuck, the ancestor, visited him in the dream and advised him to persevere in his pursuit of Miss Wardour. In a complete inversion of the antiquary as childish, effeminate, and lacking in judgment, Oldbuck cements his position as an authoritative and masculine figure in contrast to Lovel's gullibility and sentimentality. After Lovel describes the dream, "The Antiquary burst into a fit of laughing" and said that a momentary snatch of conversation overheard by Lovel the day before when his "mind was bent elsewhere" was "mechanically received and retained" by his ear and subsequently translated into the dream (104). Edie Ochiltree later explains to Lovel that, while Oldbuck loves stories about historical figures, he has no patience for ghost stories: "He'll listen the hale day, an ye tell him about tales o' Wallace, and Blind Harry, and Davie Lindsay, but ye maunna speak to him about ghaists or fairies, or spirits walking the earth, or the like o' that—He had near flung auld Caxon out o' the window amaist, (and he might just as weel hae flung awa' his best wig after him) for threeping he had seen a ghaist at the Humlock-knowe" (175). Oldbuck's disgust with ghost stories, coupled with his rational analysis of Lovel's dream, situates the antiquary in this novel as a serious historian. In Edie Ochiltree's recollection to Lovel, Oldbuck comes close to tossing a friend out the window for speaking of ghosts. Such physical aggression on the part of Oldbuck places him in accordance with traditional notions of masculinity and, in doing so, rehabilitates the figure of the antiquary.

IV. National Treasures and Sentimental Relics

Rather than presenting the antiquary's sentimental attachment to his historical studies as the factor that prevents him from playing an active and manly role in the

destiny of the nation, the text shows Oldbuck operating as a vital historical actor on the national stage through that very quality. Through the medium of his sentimental attachment to significant objects, historical relics from his personal past that ultimately converge with the destiny of the nation in the figure of Lovel/Neville, Oldbuck becomes an important figure connected to the fate of his community and nation. The novel's treatment of historical objects also illustrates the tension between disinterested historical inquiry and antiquarian self-interest. In *The Antiquary*, there are two types of historical objects: those that recall events in the collective, national memory and those that memorialize personal events in the life of the bearer. Consistently in Scott's novel, objects collected for their commemoration of the ancient history of Great Britain turn out to be fakes. Only personal objects exerting a sentimental hold on the collector bear a measure of authenticity. Jonathan Oldbuck's walking stick, which appears several times in the text, falls into the category of true authenticity. On their way to the funeral of Steenie Meiklebackit, Oldbuck and his bellicose nephew encounter a seal along the beach. Hector appropriates Oldbuck's walking stick as a weapon against a seal and promptly loses it to the sea. The chapter ends on a vaguely melancholy note as Oldbuck speaks to himself on the now-empty beach: "'I cut it,' he said, 'in the classic woods of Hawthornden, when I did not expect always to have been a bachelor—I would not have given it for an ocean of seals—O Hector, Hector!—thy namesake was born to be the prop of Troy, and thou to be the plague of Monkbarns!'" (246). Oldbuck's words at this point are an echo from earlier in the text when he explains to Lovel the derivation of his walking stick. It is only with the revelation that Oldbuck at one time aspired for the affections of Eveline Neville that his walking stick begins to signify as a material

remembrance of his love for the dead woman. The emergence of another sentimental relic from the time of the Hawthornden walking stick, also associated with Eveline Neville, provides an important narrative impetus toward the revelation that will bring to an end the Glenallen plot line. Elspeth sends Edie Ochiltree to Lord Glenallen with the "dreadful token," (227) the ring worn by his wife Eveline, as a sign of her willingness to confess. Revealing the power of the material object to stand witness to the past, the ring transmits the entire history of Elspeth and the Countess's subversive deeds in a single glance. It elicits an affective reaction from Lord Glenallen that points toward its power and significance as a remnant of the past. Ranging from Oldbuck's walking stick lost by Hector to the seal, to the ring sent by Elspeth to the Earl of Glenallen, these personal objects trigger an affective response that inevitably leads to the uncovering of a long-buried truth in the personal past of the individual. These truths are different from the historical memory of the nation—they are personal and primarily sentimental events.

In contrast to the relics such as Eveline's ring and Jonathan Oldbuck's walking stick, other historical objects do not bear the force of truth and authenticity. In *The Antiquary*, the hallmarks of historical truth that have gained importance in the burgeoning field of historicism, both documents and archaeological objects, are more likely to be forgeries than authentic evidences of the truth. This pattern in Scott's novel parallels the rash of highly-publicized forgeries in the nineteenth-century that purported to be genuine remnants of past times. *The Antiquary* and the infamous forgeries both emerge out of a prevalent cultural obsession with concepts of historical authenticity. The two primary examples of this trend in the text are the chest filled with buried treasure planted by Edie Ochiltree and Lovel and the documents attesting to the kinship between Eveline Neville

and Lord Geraldin. Both of these forgeries perform significant roles in changing the course of the characters' fates. However, the text reserves judgment, representing the forgery as capable of both positive and negative force. Lovel and Ochiltree's fake treasure saves Wardour from financial catastrophe while Elspeth Meiklebackit's false testimony on false documents leads to Eveline's suicide and Lord Glenallen's deathlike and solitary existence. Elspeth's false oath on the veracity of the documents proves that the letters cannot stand on their own as testimony to the truth. Lord Glenallen's later interview with Elspeth reveals the truth:

> "But did you not show me letters of my father's, which seemed to me, unless my senses altogether failed me in that horrible moment, to avow his relationship to—to the unhappy"—
>
> "We did; and, with my testimony, how could you doubt the fact, or her either?" (263-4)

By questioning the validity of objects divorced from personal sentiment, Scott's novel inverts the terms by which the public discourse has criticized the antiquarian sensibility. Ina Ferris notes that one of the accusations leveled against the antiquary is his concern with the trivial, the minute, and the "trifling" ("Pedantry and the Question of Enlightenment History," 275). This accusation founds itself on the problematic assumption that only those events affecting the political destiny of the nation escape from the merely trivial. In *The Antiquary*, it is precisely those relics that testify to the purely national destiny, divorced from an applicability to the concerns of the local community and its inhabitants, that lose the aura of authenticity. Oldbuck's investigations into the Roman ruins that trace a portion of the grander narrative of the British national tradition

turn out to be false and misplaced. By contrast, only the personal and the local have access to authenticity and relevance to the present. The abortive grand conclusion that sets up the reader to expect the townspeople, with the newly-restored Major Neville at the head of a naval defense, to fight off the invading attack, instead turns the great events of political and martial history into a joke. The text's conclusion belittles the subjects of the professional historian. In the introduction to the Oxford edition, Nicola J. Watson describes this ending as a "wonderfully twisty joke" (xxvi). The question remains, who or what is the target of this joke? The humor of the conclusion's misfiring renders the discourse of the professional historian the subject of ridicule, just as the antiquary's trifling curiosities form the typical target of the ridiculous.

Ultimately, Scott's novel attempts to reconcile the dichotomy that completely divorces antiquarian passion from utility and national interest. In the final episode of the novel in which the townspeople band together against the rumor of French invasion, these two categories collapse. Objects become the concrete receptacle of both individual and communal memory. They are relics of personal meaning and national significance. When Griselda, his niece and "two maid-servants" burst into his bedroom in the middle of the night to announce that the French are coming, Oldbuck calls for a sword. He rejects in turn a Roman falchion, an Andrea Ferrara, and "a two-handed sword of the twelfth century" (349). Finally, Oldbuck calls for "the sword which my father wore in the year forty-five—it hath no belt or baldrick—but we'll make shift" (349). At a moment of incipient national disaster, the Antiquary seizes an object that makes up a portion of his antiquarian sword collection, and holds a place in both his personal history and that of the nation. At the novel's conclusion, Scott suggests that the popularly

caricatured opposition between the antiquarian's narrow personal pursuits and the historian's narrative of the nation does not bear out. For Oldbuck, and for the entire town of Fairport, the personal and sentimental historical narrative is never divorced from the destiny of the nation.

The novel's concluding statement that updates the reader on the Antiquary's subsequent activities after the denouement upholds Oldbuck's sensitivity to the importance of social interaction, suggesting that historical inquiry forms the basis for human interaction rather than serving as an end in itself. "The Antiquary is a frequent visitor at Knockwinnock and Glenallen-house, ostensibly for the sake of completing two essays, one on the mail-shirt of the Great Earl, and the other on the left-hand gauntlet of Hell-in-Harness" (356). The "ostensible" excuse for his visits is his antiquarian curiosity, which takes a supporting role in the primary point—the maintenance of his position as an important actor in the social sphere of his community. Personal and national narratives of history, public and private memory, are not divorced from each other. The novel's conclusion points toward the possibility, not yet realized, that Jonathan Oldbuck brandishing his father's sword from forty-five as he goes out to meet the invaders from France encapsulates an antiquarianism that does in fact "uphold the notion of public discourse," presenting Oldbuck as an active participant in community and national concerns. *The Antiquary* thus rejects Lord Buchan's call to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland to bridge the gap by appealing to the public on its own terms through "philosophy and philanthropy." The novel actively embraces the antiquary as a comical figure. Simultaneously, it also promotes a vision of antiquarianism that emphasizes its role in preserving community history, tradition, and lineage. Oldbuck's antiquarian

knowledge is precisely the element that allows him to be a source of social cohesion and continuity between the past and present.

Chapter Two: Gothic Excess and Antiquarian Bad Taste

The Antiquary primarily plays on the joke of Jonathan Oldbuck and Arthur Wardour as pedantic bores, too dull to understand the niceties of social interaction. Whereas Oldbuck and Wardour represent the failure of antiquarian social judgment, the figure of the antiquary is also associated with a failure of aesthetic judgment. It is this form of bad taste in which Horace Walpole's gothic excess engages. Walpole shifts the apprehension of taste from a disinterested, analytical mode to the idea of bodily sensation as an index of taste and of historical authenticity. This linkage of history and taste emerges from the association of antiquarian subjects with inappropriate affective reactions stimulated by historical objects. The simultaneous gothic and antiquarian impulses within Walpole's novel *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) and his architectural experiment Strawberry Hill reveal that these two modes are intertwined in terms of their mutual challenging of received notions of both aesthetics and epistemology. In presenting Walpole's novel and, by extension, the gothic novel as a genre, as a reaction to the discourse surrounding antiquarianism, I posit an alternative genealogy of both the historical novel and the gothic novel that takes into consideration the influence of antiquarianism on their development. The gothic novel and the historical novel, I suggest, emerge from the dynamic tension surrounding the anxiety about historical practice, a creative energy that I call the "antiquarian impulse."

The rise of the gothic novel occurs contemporaneously with the antiquarian activity with which this study is concerned, and some novelists combine an active antiquarian interest outside of their fictional work with novels that exhibit a heightened awareness of the antiquarian impulse filtered through conventional gothic tropes.

Previous studies of antiquarianism have failed to explore the discursive links between the antiquarian impulse and the gothic; critics of the gothic generally acknowledge that the concept of history is essential to understanding gothic texts. However, gothic critics have failed to link the gothic sense of history to antiquarianism in particular, even though their descriptions of the gothic's particular deployment of history are remarkably consistent with the antiquarian sense of history.[16] My argument here is not only that the gothic sense of history is specifically antiquarian in nature, exhibiting an antiquarian impulse, but also that the antiquarian sense of history has gothic overtones. The antiquarian and gothic discourses are in many ways symbiotic.

This link between antiquarianism and the gothic is a primary example of what I call the antiquarian impulse, by which I mean a diffusion of antiquarian ideas beyond antiquarian figures, methodologies, or writings strictly defined. This antiquarian impulse is a type of creative energy produced from the tension between different ways of knowing and accessing the past and it can be seen operating in the emergence of gothic novels, art, architecture, and the popularity of fake ruins, for example. Appropriately, the antiquarian impulse, containing all the baggage of uselessness and lack of productivity associated

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[16] Markman Ellis's *The History of Gothic Fiction* is a partial exception to the trend in which critics of the gothic overlook antiquarianism. Ellis briefly discusses the antiquarian connection in reference particularly to the rise of vampire fiction, which he dates as early as *Christabel* and Polidori's *Vampyre*. According to Ellis, "By attending to the oral stories of ordinary people, and scrupulously recording their orality (that they are spoken), the antiquarian established a text that, it could be argued, offered a transparent transition from the village elder's rambling anecdote to the comfortable study of the enlightened researcher. In the antiquarian collection, belief which was fugitive and unofficial was granted (or assumed) an official imprimatur" (174-5). Ellis's brief foray into an exploration of the antiquarian roots of the gothic effect in the context of vampire tales dovetails with my emphasis on the antiquarian privileging of otherwise marginalized oral and material histories. In Ellis's conception of the antiquary's role in the provenance of the vampire tale, however, he misrepresents the antiquary's ability to lend official, empirical credence to such historical research. Popular perception does not reward the antiquary with the status of "enlightened researcher" as Ellis states, but rather portrays antiquaries as infected or abjected by the marginalized subject matter to which they are drawn. Rather than rehabilitating oral folklore to the level of legitimate historiography as Ellis suggests, the subject matter degrades the antiquarian researcher to the level of his marginalized subject of study.

with the figure of the antiquary, manifests itself in novels, a narrative form initially characterized by accusations that it was for unproductive and idle minds. Antiquarianism, with its emphasis on folklore and material artifacts, provided a strong impetus to the rise of gothic revival architecture and, with Horace Walpole, the emergence of the first fiction labeled as gothic. Unlike antiquarianism, the emergence of the gothic as a literary aesthetic has been dated very specifically to the mid-eighteenth century, but it acts as a catalyst or focus for ongoing debates about history, legitimacy, and authenticity. The following argument focuses on convergences between the two discourses—antiquarianism and the gothic—in terms of their common vocabulary, methodology, aesthetic effect, and privileging of materiality and historical atmosphere (often to the exclusion of historical accuracy). Exposing the link between these two discursive modes reveals that the antiquarian impulse is a pervasive and influential way in which people represented their relationship to the past. Scholars have accepted that the gothic is an important discursive mode in this period. My intention in revealing an essential connection between the gothic and antiquarianism is to uncover a heretofore unacknowledged element of gothic narrative and, at the same time, to bolster my claim that, although antiquarianism may revel in the obscure and arcane, it is not itself obscure and arcane in its influence on the literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The gothic and the antiquarian impulse are linked through a shared aesthetic project that emerges in *The Castle of Otranto* as a form of bad taste. The association of the figure of the antiquary with a faulty aesthetic faculty takes on a narrative form in gothic literature, which challenges the idea that the standards of traditional good taste are also an indication of the individual's ability to represent and apprehend historical authenticity.

In Walpole's construction of the faux-Gothic Strawberry Hill and his novel *The Castle of Otranto*, the antiquarian impulse produces material and narrative expressions of an antiquarian fantasy: the reanimation of the spirit of the past in the present. I begin by establishing the manner in which the figure of the antiquary is associated with bad taste. Because the epistemological questions regarding the appropriate narration of history depend on the historian taking on a specific authoritative subject position in relation to the past, the question of what constitutes proper history cannot escape from the figure of the antiquary as a subject-position. Walpole's novel mobilizes the antiquarian impulse by locating historical authenticity within the sensations of the body, in direct contrast to the distanced, analytical apprehension of the Enlightenment philosopher. While the issue of subjectivity and bodily sensation has become a critical commonplace in discussions of both gothic and sentimental novels, the position that the antiquarian impulse holds within this conversation has not been sufficiently acknowledged. The antiquarian privileging of bodily sensation extends to an emphasis in gothic narratives on the sensations evoked by physical space. The creation of an atmosphere of "gloomth," to use Walpole's terminology, becomes a hallmark of the antiquarian impulse.

I. The Antiquary's Broken Aesthetic Faculty

The Castle of Otranto engages self-reflexively in the subject of antiquarian bad taste, a feature that grows out of the antiquary as a figure of satire. The figure of the antiquary in popular discourse oscillates between an emphasis on antiquaries' status as failed objective scientists on one hand and connoisseurs of a certain type of faulty aesthetic pleasure on the other. Accordingly, popular representations of antiquaries move

between portraying them as lacking the critical judgment and authority of professional historians and as lacking aesthetic judgment. While gullibility is the failure of critical judgment, bad taste is the failure of the antiquary's aesthetic judgment. Much of the comic material in the form of cartoons and caricatures that critics such as Goode, Peltz and Myrone have examined focuses on the decidedly bad taste of the antiquary. According to Lucy Peltz and Martin Myrone:

> Antiquarians were ridiculed for their fascination with dirty and recondite objects, their creation of cabinets filled with 'rotten and stinking' relics 'the better for being mouldy and wormeaten,' in short for being polluted by the fragments that they studied, collected and fetishized. Like the recurrent motif of the chamber-pot, mistaken for a 'sarcophagus, or Roman urn,' the satiric response to antiquarian tomb openings was a particularly evocative one which afforded different critics ample ammunition for ridicule. (2)

The antiquary's bad taste results from his indiscriminating pleasure in any object purely because it is old. According to Nietzsche, "Then there appears the repulsive spectacle of a blind rage for collecting, a restless raking together of everything that has ever existed. Man is encased in the stench of must and mould; through the antiquarian approach ... often he sinks so low that in the end he is content to gobble down any food whatever, even the dust of bibliographical minutiae" (75). The image of the antiquary as a raging, indiscriminate glutton is a "repulsive spectacle" for Nietzsche, lacking any redeeming qualities and failing in his project because of this lack of discrimination. It is this repulsive image that both Scott and Walpole seek to recuperate in their own manner.

This satirical characterization of antiquarian bad taste has a long history. Robert Burns, in a poem excerpted by Scott as a chapter epigraph in *The Antiquary*, writes of an antiquary coming to Scotland to collect "auld nick-nackets;/ Rusty airn caps and jingling jackets," objects of no worth, and warns the locals, "If there's a hole in a' your coats, / I rede you tent it: / A chield's amang you takin' notes, / And, faith, he'll prent it" (lines 3-6). In this poem, Burns satirizes an antiquarian tourist, "On the Late Captain Grose's Peregrinations Through Scotland, Collecting the Antiquities of that Kingdom." The narrator suggests to the locals that they hide their defects, the "hole in a' your coats," because the antiquary is most interested in that which should properly remain hidden. In documenting and disseminating this information ("takin' notes" and "prent it"), the antiquary breaks social rules by revealing embarrassing details that, in good taste and propriety, should be kept private. The miscellaneous and improper nature of the antiquary's interest constitutes him as having bad taste, an inability to distinguish between valuable and random objects. Both Rosemary Sweet and Paul Baines also cite John Earle's 1628 *Micro-Cosmographie* as an early example of a characterization of the antiquary as "one who hath that unnaturall disease to bee enamour'd of old age, and wrinckles, and loves all things (as Dutchmen doe Cheese) the better for being mouldy and worme-eaten" (qtd. in Sweet, *Antiquaries* xiii). Within this discourse, antiquaries are attracted to the abject and decayed physical remnants of the past.

Scott pushes against this notion of antiquarian abjection at the conclusion of his novel *The Antiquary*, recuperating this element of satire targeted against the antiquary just as he addresses other elements of the satirical figure throughout the novel. He does this partially through the narrative structure of the novel. One indictment leveled against

The Antiquary as a flawed novel is the absurdity of the conclusion. The abortive, farcical ending is targeted at the narrative expectations of the reader, resulting in readings of the novel that misfire, paralleling antiquarian misinterpretations and misreadings.[17] Just as all the major conflicts of the novel are coming to a resolution, two chapters before the conclusion, a new and ultimately irrelevant element is introduced: the imminent threat of a French invasion. Sir Arthur has just been saved from bankruptcy and everyone has gathered for a meal, creating a perfect set piece for a neat conclusion, when Edie Ochiltree mentions that an alarm has been raised regarding a potential invasion of the coast. A short chapter later, the watchman lights the warning beacon and the entire town, ranging from Edie Ochiltree up to the Earl of Glenallen, comes together in a display of populist patriotism. Almost immediately Major Neville, formerly known as Lovel, shows up to explain that it is a false alarm because the machinery of Dousterswivel the con man has gone up in a blaze. The absurdity of this ending, irrelevant in terms of plot and representing a miscarried opportunity for bravery and valor, may appear to be a tacked-on narrative letdown, incomprehensible unless it is read through a different lens as an ironic narrative enactment of antiquarian bad taste. After all the dangling threads of narrative conflict have been neatly tied together the last chapter is a narrative excess that seems unproductive in terms of the plot unless it is read precisely in terms of the antiquarian place within discourses of productivity and taste.

This narrative anticlimax, rather than being a postscript or an incomprehensible narrative letdown, is in keeping with the exploration throughout the novel surrounding questions of productivity and virility in the figure of the antiquary, filtered this time

[17] See, most prominently, E.M. Forster's evaluation of the novel as a narrative failure in *Aspects of the Novel* (46-56).

through a military scenario. The novel's ending, judged to be in bad taste by critics past and present, "overstrain[s] the medium" to use Susan Sontag's description of camp (287), in order to reveal a different, antiquarian mode of taste.

Invoking Sontag's camp terminology is especially resonant in this context given the convergence within public perception of antiquaries as both sexually and aesthetically non-normative.[18] George Haggerty has argued that, in their correspondence, Walpole and Cole's mutual divulgence of details about their diseased, gout-ridden bodies invited a homosocial intimacy that paved the way for their antiquarian exchanges ("Epistolary Relations").[19] From this perspective, the abject antiquarian body is conflated with the inappropriate materiality of antiquarian research. As antiquarianism became an interpretive lens for navigating debates about historical meaning spurred on by the rise of nationalism and scientific methodologies, the figure of the antiquary came to represent an inappropriate expression of historical curiosity and methodology that is cast in the language of sexual and aesthetic bad taste. The antiquary was characterized by an excessively emotive relationship to the past that lacked intellectual rigor and applicability to the present. Walpole's gothicism in *The Castle of Otranto* is both a performance of bad taste and a narrative that describes an excessively sensational relationship to the material object. Although Walpole was best known during his time as a political figure, the reactions of Walpole's contemporaries who knew of his antiquarian interests produce evidence of the conflation of the intellectual and the sexual in the figure of the antiquary,

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[18] According to Sontag, camp cannot be described as "homosexual taste," but it is a method of destabilizing the prevailing power structure: "Homosexuals have pinned their integration into society on promoting the aesthetic sense. Camp is a solvent of morality. It neutralizes moral indignation, sponsors playfulness" (290).

[19] In his longer study, *Men in Love*, Haggerty elaborates on the queering of the gothic through images of abjection in *The Castle of Otranto*.

who becomes an abject gothic body. Davenport-Hines describes the manner in which William Guthrie portrays Walpole in a public letter he wrote on 28 August 1764, *Reply to the Counter-Address.* It was written in the wake of a political scandal featuring a male friend of Walpole's in direct response to Walpole's enthusiastic defense of his friend: "In it Walpole was characterized as 'by nature maleish, by disposition female, so halting between the two that it would very much puzzle a common observer to assign to him his true sex.'" (125). Guthrie perpetuates the conflation of the figure of the antiquary with a liminal sexual identity, while Davenport-Hines himself similarly perpetuates the image of the antiquary as one who is not heterosexually normative, having an unhealthy sexual interest in the material objects he collects—an interest that Davenport-Hines links to Walpole's homosexual desire for his friend. Walpole's sexuality, antiquarianism, and judgment become discursively tangled. The status of the antiquarian subject exhibiting an inappropriate reaction to historical objects looms over the debate about whether such a vision of the past can produce a viable historical narrative.

Antiquaries were depicted as suffering from an inability to see the larger significance of their historical inquiries, failing to create out of historical fragments a larger, coherent theory of historical progress. Walpole takes this debate beyond the figure of the antiquary to antiquarian narration, which, through the conflation of the antiquary with his object of study, suffers from similar accusations of dullness and abject bad taste. Links between his architectural experiments with Strawberry Hill and the evocation of atmosphere and physical space in his novel reveal that the material and the textual converge as parts of a single debate regarding historical authenticity. Strawberry

Hill was the precursor to Walpole's novel *The Castle of Otranto*, which serves as a textual extension of his architectural project.

II. Walpole's "Gloomth" and the Evocation of Gothic Atmosphere

In opening *The Castle of Otranto* with the appearance of a giant helmet, Walpole's novel suggests a humorous attack on the Humean standard of taste. According to Hume:

> It is acknowledged to be the perfection of every sense or faculty, to perceive with exactness its most minute objects, and allow nothing to escape its notice and observation. The smaller the objects are, which become sensible to the eye, the finer is that organ, and the more elaborate its make and composition. A good palate is not tried by strong flavours, but a mixture of small ingredients, where we are still sensible of each part, notwithstanding its minuteness and its confusion with the rest. (140)

The giant helmet literalizes the novel's overall lack of subtlety. It falls out of the sky without warning or explanation, a huge blow to the idea of subtlety and delicacy. Exaggerated effects are a gothic hallmark, and characters with delicate sensibilities, Hume's own mark of a fine organ of taste, are terrorized by plot elements that attack their sense of propriety and delicacy. Matilda's "gentle mind" is set in contrast to the gothic villain Manfred's "rugged temper" (94) that quickly becomes "almost hardened to preternatural appearances" (119). The gothic aesthetic effect depends on the "strong flavours" that Hume eschews.

Walpole's account of the novel's provenance suggests a subversion of the powers of reason that are so important to Enlightenment notions of good taste. He describes the novel as growing from a nightmare he had about "a gigantic hand in armour" and that he then proceeded to write "without knowing in the least what I intended to say" (qtd. in Frank, 14). This tale of provenance configures the novel as growing out of a true antiquarian impulse in the sense that "impulse" suggests the circumvention of the intellect—the novel is not premeditated. It is a product of an undisciplined mind and the author is a conduit of sensation. Walpole's manner of characterizing the novel's provenance as emerging from a dream and the genre's emphasis on excessive emotion represents an embrace of antiquarian stereotypes that Walter Scott's novel *The Antiquary* pushes against around fifty years later. Where Oldbuck dismisses ghosts, dreams and superstition, Walpole's novel launches a genre that celebrates the idea that the individual relates to the past as a kind of pleasurable haunting.

The gothic as an aesthetic category, built around Walpole's notion of "gloomth," subverts classical good taste. *The Castle of Otranto*, and the gothic aesthetic, deploys bad taste in a manner that subverts notions of both historical and aesthetic appropriateness and taste as defined by Enlightenment philosophers including Hume, Kant, and Hegel. The gothic is both a narrative and an architectural style set in contrast to the good taste associated with the symmetry and regularity of ancient architecture. *The Castle of Otranto* and Strawberry Hill are Walpole's narrative and architectural experiments in kitsch appeal that challenge notions of use value and good taste in historical inquiry. The symmetry of classical architecture becomes conflated with the linearity and cohesion of the narratives produced by Enlightenment historians who often take classical history as

their subject. The tension between the Gothic and the Neoclassical is the architectural embodiment of the tension between the antiquary and the "proper" historian.

Walpole does not believe that antiquaries in general have met the challenge of how to adequately represent the antiquarian vision of history, a failure that leads him to distance himself from the larger antiquarian community. Walpole was highly interested in the burgeoning field of archaeology and maintained membership in the national Society of Antiquaries, before personal differences caused him to repudiate the Society and their project, proclaiming, "I love antiquities; but I scarce ever knew an antiquary who knew how to write upon them. Their understandings seem as much in ruins as the things they describe. For the Antiquarian Society, I shall leave them in peace with Whittington and his Cat" (Letter to Rev. Mr. Cole, 8 January 1773, *Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, Vol. I, 292-3)[20] This complaint, in which Walpole likens antiquarian "understandings" to ruins, is fraught with the central tension between the aesthetic and the intellectual with which antiquaries struggled: ruins are aesthetically desirable but, as a narrative model for scholarship, intellectually suspect. Walpole's accusation contains an identification of contradictory qualities inherent in the antiquarian impulse. According to the clear oppositional strategies of post-Enlightenment thinking, an object or text can either be appreciated as an aesthetic object, or it can be viewed in a practical or functional manner as an archive of facts. The aesthetics of fragmentation are central to the affective

[20] Walpole's discussion of his break with the Society of Antiquaries is detailed in his correspondence with the Rev. Mr. Cole. Dick Whittington was mayor of London four times between 1397 and 1420. Legends continue to abound today about how he accumulated his wealth and political power somehow owing to his cat. Perhaps Walpole's disgust with this particular line of historical inquiry is owing to the popularity of this legend as a children's rags-to-riches tale. Walpole biographer Ketton-Cremer suggests that Whittington and his cat served only as a convenient excuse for Walpole to make a clean break from the Society after its head issued a negative review of one of his publications.

drive behind the antiquarian imagination, but the beauty of the ruin clashes with the Enlightenment privileging of the causal, linear historical narratives privileged by mainstream consumers of history. The attraction to ruins and other material fragments is central to the Romantic project, with which antiquarianism shares an appreciation of the aesthetic of the fragment. The antiquarian impulse involves the expansion of the concept of fragmentation to include not only materiality (ruins, artifacts, etc.), but also fragmented narrative forms and the privileging of the historical anecdote to the exclusion of linear grand narratives. Seeming to lack an organizing logic, fragmentary narratives are associated with pleasurable literary texts rather than serious intellectual work, much like the fragmentary physical ruins which tourists in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries began to seek out for aesthetic pleasure. Whereas the Wordsworthian tradition emphasizes the source of the sublime within the wonders of the natural world, the antiquarian impulse transfers this catalyst of the sublime from the natural world to the historical world—and particularly within the material and oral remnants of the past that remain in the present as an only half-understood testimony. The ruins and other historical fragments that antiquaries studied were reflected in the perception that antiquarian thought was itself fragmented and illogical, and incapable of being rendered into a coherent narrative. Walpole offers a solution to this problem of narration in the form of his novel.

The conflation of the antiquarian subject and his object of study as equally fragmented and lacking a governing logic extends to characterizations of antiquarian narratives as fragmented, dull, and pointless. Walpole's tensions with the Society of Antiquaries in many ways mirror the tensions exhibited by his successor in literary and

antiquarian endeavors, Walter Scott. In the preface that he contributed to an 1811 edition of *The Castle of Otranto,* Scott distinguishes between the "proverbially dull" historical writings of their fellow antiquaries and the unique narrative vehicle of gothic fiction through which Walpole chose to transmit his antiquarian knowledge:

> Mr. Walpole's lighter studies were conducted upon the same principle which influenced his historical researches, and his taste in architecture. His extensive acquaintance with foreign literature, on which he justly prided himself, was subordinate to his pursuits as an English antiquary and genealogist, in which he gleaned subjects for poetry and for romantic fiction, as well as for historical controversy. These are studies, indeed, proverbially dull; but it is only when they are pursued by those whose fancies nothing can enliven. A Horace Walpole or a Thomas Warton, is not a mere collector of dry and minute facts, which the general historian passes over with disdain. He brings with him the torch of genius, to illuminate the ruins through which he loves to wander; nor does the classic scholar derive more inspiration from the pages of Virgil, than such an antiquary from the glowing, rich, and powerful feudal painting of Froissart. His mind being thus stored with information, accumulated by researches into the antiquities of the middle ages, and inspired, as he himself informs us, by the romantic cast of his own habitation, Mr. Walpole resolved to give to the public a specimen of the Gothic style adapted to modern literature, as he had already exhibited its application to modern architecture. (332)

The image of the antiquary bearing a torch through darkened ruins is a Gothicized image of antiquarian historical researches that transfers dullness to the "general historian." Echoing Walpole's words in his letter to Cole over thirty years earlier, Scott emphasizes the need to "enliven" historical narratives. Scott points toward the "Gothic style" as the appropriate remedy for the dull antiquarian treatises, likening Walpole's gothic literary experiment that transforms antiquarian information into romantic inspiration to Walpole's similar championing of the Gothic Revival in architecture that preceded *The Castle of Otranto.* In this passage, Scott distinguishes between the typical antiquary, "a mere collector of dry and minute facts," and the inspired antiquary who transforms historical fact into historical atmosphere. He mentions particularly that Walpole's dwelling at Strawberry Hill stimulated his mind "stored with information," providing the necessary imaginative impetus for the creation of his novel. This amalgamation of intellect in the form of historical facts and aesthetics in the material form of Walpole's gothic home reconciles, for Scott, the tension inherent in the antiquarian impulse. For Scott, then, in his interpretation of Walpole's project as well as in his own historical novels, the key to this reconciliation of intellectual and affective historical knowledge is a grounding in an evocative physical space.

Expanding on Walpole's own preface to the second edition of *The Castle of Otranto,* in which Walpole explains his intent and seeks to place his novel within the literary tradition, Scott announces that Walpole's purposes were more revolutionary than Walpole initially stated. Scott locates the power of Walpole's narrative in its evocation of an accurate historical atmosphere felt by the reader of the narrative rather than in the transmission of specific historical facts. In this way, the narrative is meant to reenact

within the reader the affective atmosphere of a historical moment, thus achieving an alternative mode of historical accuracy. Describing this concept in language that calls to mind the night Lovel spends in the haunted bedroom at Monkbarns in *The Antiquary*, Scott compares the experience of a modern person, who "has happened to pass a solitary night in one of the few ancient mansions which the fashion of more modern times has left undespoiled of their original furniture," with the experience of Walpole's readers:

> Now it seems to have been Walpole's object to attain, by the minute accuracy of a fable, sketched with singular attention to the costume of the period in which the scene was laid, that same association which might prepare his reader's mind for the reception of prodigies congenial to the creed and feelings of the actors. His feudal tyrant, his distressed damsel, his resigned, yet dignified churchman—the Castle itself, with its feudal arrangement of dungeons, trap-doors, oratories, and galleries, the incidents of the trial, the chivalrous procession, and the combat—in short, the scene, the performers, and action, so far as it is natural, form the accompaniments of his specters and miracles, and have the same effect on the mind of the reader that the appearance and drapery of such a chamber as we have described may produce upon that of a temporary inmate. (334-5)

Scott locates the groundbreaking qualities of Walpole's literary experiment within his ability to transform his vast historical knowledge into a narrative that seeks to reanimate the past by reproducing the cultural spirit of ancient people within the minds of the modern reader: "It was, therefore, the author's object not merely to excite surprise and terror, by the introduction of supernatural agency, but to wind up the feelings of his

reader till they became for a moment identified with those of a ruder age" (335). This process of reanimation of the past through specifically gothic literary effects has its beginnings, in the example given by Scott and in Walpole's twin literary and architectural experiments, in the atmospheric effect of physical space.[21]

In *The Castle of Otranto,* Walpole evokes historical atmosphere through material objects rather than through Radcliffe-style lyrical prose describing the setting. There is very little lyrical description in *Otranto*, with its quickly-paced plot that is full of action. Unusual and surprising objects are left to stand for themselves, with little description or exposition explaining their appearance.[22] Material objects are elevated to the level of characters—they are the primary movers of the plot, beginning with the opening moments when the servants interrupt the family gathering for the marriage ceremony with cries of "Oh, the helmet! The helmet!" (74). A survey of just the first few moments of action involving Manfred's initial propositioning of Isabella and her escape indicate to what extent material objects dominate and move the narrative: after the helmet murders his son, Manfred's semi-incestuous sexual advances toward Isabella are interrupted by another intrusion of the helmet. Manfred halts his pursuit long enough for Isabella to gather her thoughts because "the moon, which was now up, and gleamed in at the opposite casement, presented to his sight the plumes of the fatal helmet" (80) and, immediately afterward, Isabella runs away when Manfred is startled by "the portrait of his grandfather, which hung over the bench where they had been sitting, uttered a deep

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[21] Frederick S. Frank, a recent editor of *The Castle of Otranto*, follows previous Walpole scholars in interpreting the genesis of Walpole's novel as arising from his gothic architectural fantasies: "It might be said that the first Gothic novel was being written long before Walpole set his nightmare to paper, for as Strawberry Hill evolved, the literary fantasy grew directly out of the architectural fact" (283).

[22] Frederick S. Frank in his introduction refers to the "audiovisual gadgetry" (24) in the novel as a dramatic, stage-like quality.

sigh and heaved its breast" (81). This object-centered narrative obsesses over the status of outsized material objects that drive the motions and the fates of the human characters.

The appearance of giant pieces of the statue of Alfonso serves as the true plot catalyst, beginning with the helmet and including the armored hand, foot, and sword at pivotal moments in the plot. The sword in particular stands as a significant antiquarian element in the text. Frederic of Vicenza's retinue enters the castle with "an hundred gentlemen bearing an enormous sword, and seeming to faint under the weight of it" (117). Frederic later explains that he obtained the sword when he and his men stumbled upon a dying hermit who advises them that a secret lay buried under a particular tree. He and his men disinter the sword and on its blade is inscribed a prophecy that leads to his appearance at the Castle of Otranto and the ultimate downfall of the usurping Manfred. This passage is significant in that it mirrors an archaeological dig brought about by the folk knowledge of a hermit and containing important testimony about the past. In the case of the sword, the antiquarian belief in the legibility of material objects is literalized through the actual, legible words on its blade.[23] The intermittent and never-explained arrival of these pieces of armor represents the undeniable presence of the past within the present. They disrupt linear temporality. These objects are antiquarian in the sense that their excessive size and martial origins demonstrate that these material testimonials of the past may be dangerous if ignored.

Within the antiquarian impulse, narratives emerge from material objects, including architecture. Gothic buildings are material precursors to gothic texts.

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[23] This scene involving the exhumation of objects central to the forwarding of the plot is an antiquarian element shared by two of my other primary examples of antiquarian novels. In Scott's *The Antiquary* Dousterswivel uncovers a treasure chest planted in the ground as a false relic by Lovel and Edie Ochiltree. Also, as discussed in chapter three, Hogg's novel *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* begins and ends with an antiquarian archaeological excursion to a grave site.

Walpole's neo-Gothic architectural experiment, Strawberry Hill, represents a drive to render concrete and material his antiquarian and gothic fantasies that are later expressed within his novel. The concrete material object serves as a catalyst for the antiquarian impulse, which in its "inspired" expression as defined by Scott, seeks to reproduce an accurate historical atmosphere or feeling within the subject rather than to transmit bare historical facts. Walpole's unique term for this evocative atmosphere is "gloomth."

Walpole disassociates the aesthetic effect of "gloomth" from the symmetry and clean lines of the classical world centered in Italy. He corrects some misunderstandings of Horace Mann concerning his aesthetic project at Strawberry Hill and, significantly given that it echoes satirical observations about the broken antiquarian critical faculty, associates Gothic with bad taste when considered by universal or classical standards. In a letter to Mann dated 27 April 1753, Walpole writes:

> I thank you a thousand times for thinking of procuring me some Gothic remains from Rome; but I believe there is no such thing there: I scarce remember any morsel in the true taste of it in Italy. Indeed, my dear Sir, kind as you are about it, I perceive you have no idea what Gothic is; you have lived too long amidst true taste, to understand venerable barbarism. You say, 'you suppose my garden is to be Gothic too.' That can't be; Gothic is merely architecture; and as one has a satisfaction in imprinting the gloomth of abbeys and cathedrals on one's house, so one's garden on the contrary is to be nothing but *riant*, and the gaiety of nature" (*Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, 20: 372).

In this letter to Mann, Walpole explains that the gothic does not reside within the classical confines of Italy and that, furthermore, it is not an expression of nature, present in gardens. Rather, it is set in contrast to "true taste" and emerges from falsity—it is a façade, an inauthentic "imprinting" of the "gloomth" of "venerable barbarism" onto the domestic space of the house. In his correction of Mann's misinterpretation, Walpole sets forth a condensed theory of the gothic aesthetic that defines it as a feeling for history. The word "gloomth" is a fake mimicry of an antiquated word, paralleling Walpole's emphasis on the gothic as a false history that can be "imprinted" on modern architectural spaces.

The word "imprinting" can similarly be tied to the act of narration, so that the idea of gothic literature is only a short leap from the architectural fantasy of Walpole's Strawberry Hill. The gothic novel "imprints" an atmosphere of "gloomth" onto the false trappings of historical narration, which Walpole emphasizes in the conventional conceit of the found manuscript in the first preface to *The Castle of Otranto*. Walpole distinguishes between the obviously false elements of the supernatural in the story and an underlying sense of truth: "Though the machinery is invention, and the names of the actors imaginary, I cannot but believe, that the ground work of the story is founded on truth" (61). Just as the false façade of Strawberry Hill is the catalyst for the feeling of "gloomth," Walpole's preface emphasizes the provocation of an authentic historical feeling through the means of fakery as a legitimate and worthy goal. The statement that he "cannot but believe" is a subversion of distanced historical analysis in favor of an authentic emotional reaction as an index of historical truth.

When Walpole imprints gloomth onto his house, he creates an architectural oddity featuring a mixture of old and new. Similarly, the pastiche of narrative traditions that inform *The Castle of Otranto* can be seen as a type of narrative deformity—an impurity of form. Walpole's Preface to the Second Edition of *The Castle of Otranto* is overwhelmingly concerned with justifying the formal abnormalities of the novel: its mixture of "two kinds of romance, the ancient and the modern" (65) and its mixture of comedic and tragic tones. Walpole explains the latter by invoking Shakespeare as his example. Walpole's reliance on Shakespeare as his predecessor in the rejection of classical rules of dramatic unity is significant in that it echoes antiquarian privileging of local and national history over that of the classical world.[24] The first point Walpole addresses in this second preface is even more significant as a manifestation of the antiquarian impulse. He explains that he wants to reconcile the "imagination and improbability" of ancient romance with modern romance's "strict adherence to common life" to the extent that "Nature has cramped imagination" (65). Rather than seeing these two types of narrative as mutually exclusive, separate categories, Walpole uses the opposition as a productive tension to produce a new type of narrative in which the situations are imaginative but the human reactions are natural, proceeding "according to the rules of probability" (65). Additionally, in the preface to the first edition in which Walpole maintains the stance of an anonymous antiquarian translator publishing a found manuscript, he describes the dissonance between the events and the language: "The

[24] It is important to remember here that in the latter half of the nineteenth century, archaeologists used this distinction between the high cultural value of the classical world and the lower cultural value of local British histories as a way to distinguish themselves from antiquaries. Archaeologists began to focus more on the classical world and the Near East and left local archaeological projects to local, county-based antiquarian societies. See Sam Smiles, chapter 8 "The Megalithic Landscape," for a good review of this process of separation.

principal incidents are such as were believed in the darkest ages of Christianity; but the language and conduct have nothing that savors of barbarism. The style is the purest Italian" (59). Walpole's description of *The Castle of Otranto* as a story that presents barbaric beliefs and supernatural occurrences under cover of the linguistic façade of "purest Italian" finds its material parallel in the papier-mâché façade of Strawberry Hill and his description to Horace Mann of the "venerable barbarism" of the gothic. All of these examples point toward a pattern in the gothic of fake surfaces covering over, or even pointing the way toward, an alternative mode of authenticity that would be judged as false by empirical standards of proof. According to George Haggerty, a central paradox with which the gothic genre grapples is the reconciliation of "fact and fancy," a dichotomy that Haggerty also casts in terms of "how ultimately subjective and objective worlds can be made formally complementary" ("Fact and Fancy in the Gothic Novel," 383). The antiquarian impulse suggests that this resolution can be reached both by shifting the terms by which one defines authenticity, and by presenting these fake histories, objects, and spaces as a gateway to a form of authenticity that is subject-oriented and uses affective response as an index of truth.

III. Gothic Sensation and the Antiquarian Body

In casting the gothic aesthetic effect of "gloomth" in terms of a vocabulary of sensation, Walpole intervenes in a larger conversation about whether the aesthetic faculty is located within bodily sensation or exists apart as an intellectual critical faculty. Denise Gigante has traced the history of gustatory taste as it developed in contrast to classical notions of aesthetics that are set apart from bodily sensations. Enlightenment

philosophers engaged in a project to separate the aesthetic pleasure of the mind from the sensual pleasure of the body. This dichotomy results in a hierarchy in which the pleasures of the body are inferior and, ultimately, dangerous. According to Gigante, "Not only is taste bound up with the unruly flesh; traditionally, it is associated with *too* intense bodily pleasure and the consequent dangers of excess. While the exertion of the higher senses theoretically leads to more mind, the exercise of the lower senses of taste and smell can result in too much body and its various forms of sensuousness" (3). While the modern critical material on eighteenth-century theories of taste is vast, my interest here is in how theories of proper taste intersect with theories of proper history. There is a parallel between the danger that Gigante identifies in excess bodily pleasure, the satire associated with the figure of the antiquary, and the narrative excess of the gothic. Nietzsche's description of the antiquary as a glutton "gobbling" historical minutiae cements this parallel. For this reason, figures such as Hume, Hegel, and Burke are central to my argument because of the permeable boundary between their theories of what constitutes proper taste and proper history. It then becomes significant that Hume and Hegel articulate aesthetic theories that emphasize distance from the pleasures of the body, and that they both engage in a "grand narrative" mode of historiography.

Whereas Hume argues that standards of beauty are universal, the faculty of taste, which serves an individual in judging those universal standards, varies considerably.[25] In other words, beauty is an external quality present in the object, and taste is a faculty possessed by the subject. For both Hume and Hegel, good taste is the result of education

[25] According to Hume, "Thus, though the principles of taste be universal, and nearly, if not entirely, the same in all men; yet few are qualified to give judgment on any work of art, or establish their own sentiment as the standard of beauty" (144).

and a product of the faculty of reason. The apprehension of tasteful objects, then, triggers only the disinterested intellectual faculty, whereas bad taste is a reaction that resides within the body. For example, Hegel argues that

> what is called good taste takes fright at all more profound effects of art, and is silent where the reality comes in question, and where externalities and trivialities vanish. For when great passions and the movements of a profound soul are unveiled, we are no longer concerned with the finer distinctions of taste and its pettifogging particularities. It feels that genius strides contemptuously over such ground as this, and, shrinking before its power, becomes uneasy, and knows not which way to turn. (39)

For Hegel, the lowest form of aesthetic apprehension is the "purely sensuous," whereas good taste mediates between bodily sensation and intellectual apprehension to produce the "semblance of the sensuous" (43). Additionally, the discriminating taste does not intervene in situations that do not conform to "reality," a situation that overtly excludes narratives built on elements of the supernatural. The mediation between sensation and apprehension described by Hegel functions much like Kristeva's description of the function of art as a "means of *purifying* the abject" (17). Walpole's gothic, rather than performing this purification of the abject, instead revels in gross excess, fragmentation, and social taboo.

In contrast to Walpole's gothic, and in conformity with their philosophies of taste, both Hegel and Hume's practice as historians directly opposes antiquarian historiography in its Enlightenment abstractions and grand narratives that seek to derive universal laws of human nature by describing patterns from examples. Hume's coupling of qualities

such as reason, morality, and universality, which inform his historiography, with his examination of taste reveals the important connection between standards of good taste and the practice of history. In his essay "Of the Standard of Taste" (1757), Hume notes that lack of education or cultural difference can greatly hamper a person's taste. Because, at its extreme, bad taste is a mark of ignorance or barbarism for Hume, any text that would celebrate bad taste as a virtue would automatically associate itself with such ignorance and barbarism. Walpole and other gothic writers partially shield themselves from such charges by setting their stories in an indistinct past and in countries such as Italy, France, or Spain, whose Catholicism rendered them barbarous and superstitious according to the prevailing Anglican thought of the day. However, Walpole's description of the "venerable barbarism" of the gothic in his letter to Horace Mann implies an intention to recuperate an aesthetic mode that modern civilization has ousted in its movement away from the barbaric. The gothic is, after all, named after one of the barbaric tribes that represent a threat to the Enlightenment historical narrative of the rise of civilization centered in Rome and the Humean standard of good taste. Hume argues that because cultural difference informs our standards of taste, "we are more pleased, in the course of our reading, with pictures and characters that resemble objects which are found in our own age or country, than with those which describe a different set of customs" (146). The gothic in contrast emphasizes strangeness and is marked by cultural and historical difference.

Edmund Burke's ideas differ most significantly from Hume's in terms of where they conceive of the origin of good taste. Burke connects taste strongly to a bodily reaction, linking organic concepts such as taste for food, lust, pain, and fear to aesthetic

ideas. For Hume, experience and education produce refined notions of taste, and he explicitly separates the delicacy of the passion from delicacy of taste.[26] For Burke, experience may produce a greater knowledge of taste, but it does not change the essential sense (19). Burke's notion connects to the antiquarian impulse in that it emphasizes an affective, instinctual knowledge rather than the Humean notion (in history and aesthetics) of a fully reasoned standard ruled by logic and morality. Furthermore, one of Burke's more notable examples of good taste, in which a Turkish emperor judges that a sculpture of the head of John the Baptist lacks the realistic depiction of a severed neck, demonstrates that his standards of good taste include depictions of abjection and immorality that Hume would condemn as barbarous (Burke 19).

Literary scholars have noted that Burke's formulation of the sublime has been particularly influential on the gothic aesthetic, but it is just as central to the antiquarian reaction to the past. Burke connects the effect of both the sublime and the beautiful, not to a Kantian disinterestedness, or to the Humean or Hegelian intellectual apprehension, but to such human instincts as lust, pain, fear, and self-preservation. Associating these aesthetic effects to instinctual and organic reactions of the body divorces them from the Enlightenment dichotomy of mind and body, in which the reasoning powers of the mind overcome the baser animal instincts. Specifically in Burke, the sublime is the most powerful aesthetic effect and it causes a state of astonishment and fear that "effectually robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning" (53). The singularity of this

[26] In his essay on "The Delicacy of Taste and Passion," Hume writes: "I believe, however, every one will agree with me, that, notwithstanding this resemblance [between the two types of delicacy], delicacy of taste is as much to be desired and cultivated, as delicacy of passion is to be lamented, and to be remedied, if possible" (10). Hume's statement that taste must be cultivated while passion must be remedied suggests that one is a product of culture and one is an unfortunate quality an individual is born with, and that cultivation eliminates it.

moment, the fact that the "motions" of the soul are "suspended" (53), correlates with the antiquarian privileging of singularity and resistance to cause-and-effect narration, the realm of historians such as Hume. It is also continuous with the way in which the antiquarian impulse works to break down oppositional categories such as past/present, fact/fiction, and, in this case, mind/body, and reason/affect.

Particularly in terms of the fact versus fiction dyad, the most important and subversive quality of the antiquarian historical sensibility as expressed in gothic architecture and literature is that it is ultimately a false history when considered in the sense of empirical historical fact.[27] The Ossian poems are forgeries, Percy's *Reliques* were, at best, significantly cleaned up by Percy, and architecture like Strawberry Hill was similarly fake, not only in terms of its status as a historical anachronism, but also literally in the case of the papier-mâché gothic embellishment at Strawberry Hill.[28] Historical novels as a genre are, strictly defined, fake histories. The antiquarian connection to this gothic historical aesthetic calls into question the notion of authenticity, suggesting that there is a productive tension between affective and intellectual authenticity.

Within the standard rubric of eighteenth-century aesthetic theory, good taste is linked to authenticity, cerebral apprehension, and delicacy. Bad taste is linked to fakery or inauthenticity, the sensations of the body, and excessive affect. *The Castle of Otranto*

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[27] Emily Jane Cohen argues that the gothic aesthetic is one that produces an artificial memory: "The fantastically decorated Gothic edifice, then, such as the Castle of Udolpho, Otranto, or Lindenberg, the Convent of Saint Clare, or Vathek's palace, is not only the core around which the Gothic novel is constructed, it is the cornerstone of an art of artificial memory" (886). Richard Davenport-Hines has traced this link between gothic architecture and historically-inflected literature to the few years before Walpole made the link explicit in the Strawberry Hill/*Castle of Otranto* connection. "The medieval symbolism that had motivated many gothic revival builders—Newdigate, Lyttelton, the Northumberlands and others—had a literary counterpart. The publication in the 1760s of James Macpherson's Gaelic epic poems, falsely ascribed by him to Ossian, and Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* was evidence of a new, widespread literary-historical interest" (133).

[28] For a discussion of the popularity for erecting fake ruins and Druid circles, see Smiles, chapter nine "Garden Design and the Prehistoric Past."

shifts the terms of this dichotomy. In the novel, virtuous characters such as Isabella, Theodore, Matilda, and Hippolita experience heightened sensations that lead to the uncovering of truth. Just as the figure of the antiquary is associated with an excessive affective reaction to the material remains of the past, these sensations are an index of a different kind of authenticity that eventually lead to the uncovering of Manfred's usurpation of Otranto. Manfred seeks to obliterate the historical record and, while his initial reaction to the sight of the helmet shocks him into a Burkean state of awe, he quickly becomes immured to the sight of the enormous objects. This shift suggests that the bodily sensations associated with gross excess and bad taste are, in Walpole's gothic imagination, actually an index of authenticity, and particularly of historical authenticity.

Manfred, who is invested in erasing the past, attempts to maintain a form of distanced, cerebral apprehension. Those who retain an excessive, emotive reaction that is located in the body are the characters that point the way to historical truth. For example, when the servant enters the chapel as the first witness to Conrad's death, his body rather than his words communicate the horror to the others. "The servant, who had not staid long enough to have crossed the court to Conrad's apartment, came running back breathless, in a frantic manner, his eyes staring, and foaming at the mouth. He said nothing, but pointed to the court" (73-74). Manfred's cold reaction is in stark contrast to that of the rest of the witnesses: ""The company were struck with terror and amazement. The princess Hippolita, without knowing what was the matter, but anxious for her son, swooned away. Manfred, less apprehensive than enraged at the procrastination of the nuptials, and at the folly of his domestic, asked imperiously, what was the matter?" (74). The testimony of the servant's body speaks to the rest of the court, but the villain

Manfred remains "less apprehensive," a phrase that resonates with multiple meanings both in terms of his lack of fear and his failure to apprehend the truth.

Manfred denies the testimony of his own body even when he begins to feel the effect of its sensations. Upon first seeing his son's body crushed underneath the helmet, "the horror of the spectacle, the ignorance of all around how this misfortune happened, and above all, the tremendous phenomenon before him, took away the prince's speech" (75). Again, however, Manfred's reaction is set in contrast to that of the other witnesses. "All who had known his partial fondness for young Conrad, were as much surprised at their prince's insensibility, as thunderstruck themselves at the miracle of the helmet" (75). Even before Manfred's villainy has been revealed, the other characters apprehend that there is something inappropriate about his reaction by reading the signs given by his body, which foretells the truth before any other evidence appears.

Similarly, when Theodore's identity as the true heir of Otranto is revealed, the body's status as an index of historical authenticity becomes literalized as the mark on his body announces his identity. "As [Theodore] stooped, his shirt slipped down below his shoulder, and discovered the mark of a bloody arrow. Gracious heaven! Cried the holy man starting, what do I see? It is my child! My Theodore! The passions that ensued must be conceived; they cannot be painted. The tears of the assistants were suspended by wonder, rather than stopped by joy" (110). The reaction of the spectators accords with the Burkean sublime and comes about as a result of seeing the physical marker of historical truth. Manfred also feels some measure of this sublimity at the sight of the bloody arrow, but again suppresses it as he did when he saw his son killed: "Manfred's heart was capable of being touched. He forgot his anger in his astonishment; yet his

pride forbad his owning himself affected" (111). Manfred's oscillation between sharing in the reaction of those around him, and the maintenance of a façade of disinterested apprehension becomes the central focus of the narrative.

Manfred's evolution from heartless gothic villain to contrite exile constitutes the character as being first betrayed and then redeemed by an antiquarian worldview. The figure of the antiquary is an arbiter of an alternative mode of taste that privileges sensation provoked by the proximity of the material remnants of the past as an index of authenticity. At the novel's conclusion, Manfred himself admits that the terms of authenticity have shifted. When Jerome offers a textual document in support of his testimony, Manfred declares that the document is no longer necessary: "Yet, my lord, I have an authentic writing. –It needs not, said Manfred; the horrors of these days, the vision we have but now seen, all corroborate thy evidence beyond a thousand parchments" (164). Sensation trumps empirical evidence in the end, in the form of "horrors" provoked by supernatural force that reveals Manfred's usurpation: "The moment Theodore appeared, the walls of the castle behind Manfred were thrown down with a mighty force, and the form of Alfonso, dilated to an immense magnitude, appeared in the centre of the ruins" (162). An unexplained voice from the sky and a "clap of thunder" announce Theodore's identity to all present. Manfred's dismissal of the "authentic writing" from Father Jerome represents the novel's recuperation of the antiquarian impulse as Manfred rejects empirical evidence in favor of the testimony of sensation and outsized material objects.

IV. The Afterlife of the Antiquarian Impulse

The productive energy of the antiquarian impulse has an afterlife later in the nineteenth century in terms of how it establishes the idea that the material object is legible and that there exists a subjective "spirit of the age" that can be measured through cultural artifacts ranging from literature to art and architecture. For example, Walpole's first preface to *The Castle of Otranto* makes the case that the narrative would lack a measure of truth if the author had omitted the supernatural elements because they are an expression of an authentic spirit of the people, despite their empirical falsity. According to Walpole, "Belief in every kind of prodigy was so established in those dark ages, that an author would not be faithful to the manners of the time who should omit all mention of them. He is not bound to believe them himself, but he must represent his actors as believing them" (60). Linked to the antiquarian privileging of a subjective historical spirit, the idea that material objects can be read for meaningful clues about the people who created them also originates with antiquarianism, but extends well beyond its borders in the nineteenth century. Richard Gough, the director of the Society of Antiquaries in the late eighteenth century, pioneered looking at monuments as expressions of the culture and time that created them rather than for mere facts about the people buried there.[29] This concept influences all readings of material culture, including architecture, in a cultural manner. This practice is noticeable in much later cultural, artistic, and architectural critics such as A.W.N. Pugin and John Ruskin. Despite the fact that Ruskin is by no means an antiquary, the legacy of how antiquaries relate to material

[29] According to Rosemary Sweet, "Gough and others in his circle were, therefore, acutely aware that a study of coins, buildings, or monumental tombs could furnish important information with a greater foundation of accuracy—not just about dates and rulers, but in that very eighteenth century phrase, the 'manners and customs of the time'" ("Antiquaries and Antiquities," 188).

objects can be seen in his analysis of architecture. Although Ruskin departs from the manner in which the antiquarian impulse values the production of a false and anachronistic historical atmosphere such as that of Walpole's Strawberry Hill, his concern with material objects as markers of authenticity testifies to the endurance of these epistemological questions. Contrary to the broken antiquarian critical faculty, Ruskin stands in the position of expert who does pass critical, aesthetic judgment on the materials from the past according to a universal standard of taste that does not forgive on the basis of age. The material objects produced during a particular age, for Ruskin, are imbued with legible clues about that age, an organic relationship between time and object. The nature of the material object and the characters of the builders are perceived to be in harmony with each other, and the spectator can see into the character of those from long ago by interpreting the signs evident in the material object. The reading of these signs acts as a type of bridge providing access between past and present.[30] In his essay on "The Nature of Gothic," Ruskin likens the material qualities of gothic architecture to the character of the society that created it: "[The word 'gothic'] did imply that they and their buildings together exhibited a degree of sternness and rudeness, which, in contra-distinction to the character of Southern and Eastern nations, appeared like a perpetual reflection of the contrast between the Goth and the Roman in their first encounter" (161). The ideal architectural expression is one in which the nature and spirit of the people of that time has an organic relationship with the "external forms" they

[30] In *The Stones of Venice*, Ruskin muses on how the material object can be in sympathy with the builders: "And there is something especially touching in our finding the sunshine thus freely admitted into a church built by men in sorrow. They did not need the darkness; they could not perhaps bear it. There was fear and depression upon them enough, without a material gloom. They sought for comfort in their religion, for tangible hopes and promises, not for threatenings or mysteries; and though the subjects chosen for the mosaics on the walls are of the most solemn character, there are no artificial shadows cast upon them, nor dark colours used in them; all is fair and bright, and intended evidently to be regarded in hopefulness, and not with terror" (136).

create. For this reason, although Ruskin praises the gothic architecture of the middle ages, he despises the Gothic revival style of his own time because it does not represent a natural outgrowth of the spirit of the time. Instead, it is anachronistic and false, making Walpole's Strawberry Hill as much of a gothic fiction as *The Castle of Otranto.*

Like Ruskin, Pugin believed that the architecture of the Gothic Revival was not a true expression of the time. In *Contrasts* (1836) he writes that "*Revivals of ancient architecture*, although erected *in,* are not buildings *of,* the nineteenth century" (v), and that the only way to restore good architecture in a true Gothic style is "by a restoration of the ancient feelings and sentiments. Without it all that is done will be a tame and heartless copy, true as far as the mechanism of the style goes, but utterly wanting in that sentiment and feeling that distinguishes ancient design" (43). Both Pugin and Ruskin believe that the Gothic Revival is somehow false because it does not reflect the actual spirit of the times and is only an imitation. Pugin wants the time to mold its spirit to the architecture, whereas Ruskin wants the time to mold the architecture to its spirit. They stand in contrast to the antiquarian impulse that privileged recreations of historical atmosphere ranging from physical edifices like Strawberry Hill to narrative monuments such as the gothic novel. Georg Lukacs' condemnation of the gothic novel's deployment of history as a superficial backdrop or "mere costumery" derives from this defining tension between historical atmosphere and a more empirically defined sense of historical accuracy. Despite Ruskin's dismissal of neo-gothic architecture, it is still a link in the genealogy of the antiquarian impulse that Ruskin and Pugin are engaging in a discussion of the subject of historical "spirit" and reading objects as historical artifacts.

In opening up the conversation about how material objects and architecture can provoke a sense of the spirit of history, Walpole creates both a new literary genre in the form of the gothic novel and elevates this element of antiquarian methodology into a larger sphere of influence in discourses of aesthetics, historical epistemology, and historiography.

Chapter Three: The Antiquarian Text as Archaeological Object

In the previous chapter I argued that within the bounds of gothic discourse, there is a convergence of gothic bodies, buildings, and texts. I have also suggested that popular depictions question antiquaries' possession of a reliable sense of aesthetic and critical judgment. The prevalence of such satire directed at the figure of the antiquary is symptomatic of a cultural anxiety surrounding the high stakes of historical narration in this time of empires and revolutions. In particular, the most characteristic aspect of antiquarian methodology—its interest in visual, oral and material evidences—presents a challenge to post-Enlightenment privileging of the textual document produced by institutional authorities of the state. Antiquarian projects such as the ballad collections of Walter Scott, Thomas Percy, and others, as well as antiquarian-themed fiction such as James Hogg's novel *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, address the manner in which the boundaries between the material, the oral, and the textual break down under scrutiny and, in doing so, they challenge the basis on which people judge historical authenticity. This thread of the antiquarian impulse essentially fragments the notion that the authority of historical testimony rests entirely in the texts produced by official arms of the state, diffusing the power of historical narration away from the urban political centers and toward the realm of rural oral tradition, as well as material culture existing previous to or outside the bounds of the literate institutions of the state.

Despite, or perhaps because of, their reliance on non-textual sources, antiquaries had a reputation for struggling to translate these source materials into traditional textual narratives. Writing to Rev. William Cole in 1778, Horace Walpole complains of the typical antiquarian writing style: "Facts, dates, and names will never please the

multitude, unless there is some style and manner to recommend them, and unless some novelty is struck out from their appearance" (*Correspondence,* 2, 116). William Godwin, in his essay "Of History and Romance," professes a similar dissatisfaction with the chronicling of facts typical of antiquarian writing: "Nothing is more uncertain, more contradictory, more unsatisfactory than the evidence of facts" (367). Godwin argues that "[f]rom these considerations it follows that the noblest and most excellent species of history, may be decided to be a composition in which, with a scanty substratum of facts and dates, the writer interweaves a number of happy, ingenious and instructive inventions, blending them into one continuous and indiscernible mass," terming this narrative style "historical romance" (368). These statements verbalize an inherent problem within the antiquarian impulse: how to transform into a coherent and linear narrative, materials that are valued for their very resistance to a traditional, progressivist historical narrative. Narrating the material object, the fragmentary relic, the visual image, or the half-recorded oral account into a typical, linear narrative form gets at the conflict that Thomas Carlyle locates at the heart of history-writing: "Narrative is linear; Action is solid" (52). Transforming the solidity of non-textual sources of historical knowledge into a linear narrative becomes a task that antiquarianism both struggles with and challenges. This conflict, however, becomes a productive tension rather than a paralyzing one in that it produces narrative innovations. The antiquarian impulse finds its most successful and popular expression, then, in the realm of fiction rather than historiography. The emergent fields of historical and gothic fiction, founded respectively (according to standard critical conceptions) by Walter Scott and Horace Walpole, provided the "style and manner" that pleased the multitude. For novelist-antiquaries such as Walpole, Scott, and later, M.R.

James, fiction offered an outlet to express the antiquarian conception of history that nonfiction historical treatises did not. Although the residue of illegitimacy remained, these fictional expressions of the antiquarian impulse, which were often inflected by a particularly gothic aesthetic, received praise from the reading public, whereas strict antiquarian treatises attracted public ridicule and satire.[31] In this chapter I demonstrate how texts such as Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765) and James Hogg's *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824) circumvent the dichotomy presented between text and material object by presenting these texts as archaeological objects in which readers engage vicariously in an antiquarian exercise by examining the boundaries where the past ceases to be legible.

I. Percy's *Reliques* and Literary Antiquarianism

Because of the antiquary's fluid relationship to different source materials and forms of narration, and between objects and the feelings they elicit, the antiquary lives on the boundary between fact and fiction.[32] Antiquarianism breaks down the barriers between text, material object, and spoken word, thereby challenging the post-Enlightenment privileging of textual evidence. Although antiquarianism is a direct forerunner of the modern field of archaeology and is usually associated with an interest in

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[31] An example of one of these satires, *The Nabob* by Samuel Foote, references the break between Walpole and the Society of Antiquaries over its investigation of "the history of Dick Whittington and his cat" (Ketton-Cremer 232-3)

[32] For more on the theme of antiquaries and authenticity, see Paul Baines. Baines argues that the commodification of historical relics leads to antiquaries' interest in material objects and textual authentication: "The premise of the early antiquarians, in the Italian Renaissance, was that monuments and objects preserved in their unalterable material substance truths which were firmly authentic in ways which oral and literate histories could not match; texts were subject to corruption and forgery, but coins and statues were (at least in theory) not. Hence the museum and its haptic stress on the actual object as mute witness to, or even a kind of synecdoche of, this or that moment of history, preserved from the contaminating metaphorical tropes of historical discourse" ("Our Annius," 35).

the material object, antiquaries also pioneered the field of textual studies. Paul Baines has traced the influence that antiquaries had in researching and attributing authorship of anonymous manuscripts, arguing that "[i]n the literary field, antiquaries were among the keenest to assign works to authors" (46). The appearance of Bishop Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* in 1765 heralded the literary world's new fascination with the fragmentary, folkloric traces of the English past, an interest that Nick Groom refers to as "literary antiquarianism" (4). Interest in antiquarian literature expanded from the former focus on the remnants of classical Greek poetry, which has always held an elevated cultural status, to the lowly, the folkloric, and the classically uninformed balladry and poetry formerly lost to the English literary heritage. Antiquaries had appeared in the wake of the Renaissance fueled by a nationalist desire to connect the British heritage to that of the ancient world. Bishop Percy, however, becomes the forerunner of a new brand of antiquary, one that turns inward in search of the essential qualities of the British nation rather than outward to the ancient Greeks and Romans. Such efforts represent a rejection of metropolitan values and qualities to be replaced by a search for the cultural markers in the rural margins of the British experience. Percy's *Reliques* instigated a fervor, partly fueled by the desire to reclaim a lost cultural heritage, that influenced the appearance of later works such as Walter Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802) and his *Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805), James MacPherson's forged verse of Ossian (1796), Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and *Christabel* (1798), and, more broadly, the Romantic movement's fascination with the figure of the unschooled, culturally authentic, British shepherd-poet—fictional figures like

Wordsworth's *Michael*, and living poets like James Hogg, Robert Burns, and John Clare fetishized for their rough-hewn, unpolished language.

Percy is not a mere conduit, collector, or facilitator of these lost ballads. He actively shapes them. Citing a 1774 letter from Thomas Percy to George Paton, Baines writes that "Percy suggested the mutilated 'fragments' of old ballads might yield beautiful songs 'if supplied and filled up, in the manner that old broken fragments of antique Statues have been repaired and completed by modern Masters'" (Baines 49). The apocryphal story of the manuscript's origin contributes to the romantic legend surrounding the provenance of Percy's *Reliques.* Percy reported that he rescued the manuscript while visiting Humphrey Pitt when he witnessed a maid tearing out leaves to use as fuel for the fire.[33] This story of origin, in which the antiquary sweeps in at the last moment to save the fragmentary remnants of a precious national treasure, emphasizes the fragility of the historical record. It also calls into question the ability of national institutions to completely guard the materials that make up the cultural legacy of the nation. It raises the status of individuals such as antiquaries who work outside official institutions to safeguard this cultural heritage.

Nick Groom argues that this manuscript that Percy saved from the fire can be likened to a textual body that must be reassembled into a healthy whole. Through the discussion surrounding the extent of Percy's role in shaping the ballads, as well as the later *Ossian* controversy, Groom suggests that Percy's *Reliques* points to how this project of reconstitution is problematic. The interest in the ballads is ultimately in their status as incomplete fragments. They are "reliques," incomplete leftovers. The title analogizes

[33] For a fuller description of Percy's account, see Hales and Furnival. This text is the first published version of Percy's source manuscript.

the fragmentary ballads to the material fragments of ruins and archaeological relics, again suggesting that within the boundaries of Percy's "literary antiquarianism," texts, material objects, and bodies converge around the subject of historical authenticity. In this chapter I discuss how Hogg's novel *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* picks up on this convergence of bodies, texts, and objects to make claims about the nature of the historical record.

The status of language—both oral and written—in this triangulation becomes problematic for both Percy's *Reliques* and in Hogg's novel. While the discourse describing antiquarianism constitutes it as privileging the material object over the text, this is not completely accurate. It is merely a function of the fact that, while other modes of historical scholarship also privileged textual sources, antiquarianism was singular in its additional focus on the material remnants of the past, providing a distinctive focus for satire of antiquaries. Language, just as much as material objects, was vital to antiquaries such as Percy, Scott, Walpole, and others. Besides his desire to prevent the ancient English ballads from falling into oblivion and being lost to time, Percy also mentions in his preface several other important goals he pursues in selecting and compiling the components of his manuscript: "Accordingly such specimens of ancient poetry have been selected, as either shew the gradation of our language, exhibit the progress of popular opinions, display the peculiar manners and customs of former ages, or throw light on our earlier classical poets" (Preface, 8). Language becomes an historical artifact for Percy that bears the traces of the passage of time and, potentially, the signs of decay as it falls away from a former moment of unadulterated cultural authenticity. Therefore, language becomes analogous to the romantic ruin that achieves charm with the signs of

decay. Percy's formulation assumes that within the structures of the language at a particular time in history are contained keys to the "manners and customs" of the time. Language therefore becomes the repository of cultural knowledge and bears the signs of the society from which it emerges. Almost forty years before Wordsworth and Coleridge lay out the principles of their new poetic movement in the preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, Percy has laid the groundwork for them in pointing the English reading public toward the common language of ordinary men as a source of authenticity and truth.

The traditional historical narrative of the English language argues that with the rise of the printing press, the language becomes rigidly codified in terms of usage and spelling, a process well on its way throughout the eighteenth century. The Romantics strike out against this codification for aesthetic purposes, strategically peppering their poetry with outmoded vocabulary and artfully incorrect spelling to render an antiquarian effect. Examples of this practice include Coleridge's pointedly-titled "The Rime of the Ancyent Marinere," which gestures toward an oral ballad tradition in a written, visible manner through the obsolete spelling. This practice of utilizing purposefully obsolete language goes back to precedents such as Percy, as well as the Chatterton and MacPherson forgeries, and can be likened to the application of a fake, antique veneer, or "linguistic rust," a highly suggestive phrase used in passing by Groom.[34] This "linguistic rust" calls to mind Pope's tale of the antiquary Dr. Woodward who discovers that he has purchased a fake shield when a maid washes off the false veneer. The simultaneous burst of interest in regional variations of English such as the Scottish dialect of Robert Burns and James Hogg is analogous to the linguistic rust signaled by obsolete vocabulary and

[34] Groom uses the phrase in passing to describe the qualities of the ballad manuscript that triggered Percy's antiquarian curiosity: "Interestingly, Percy, who adored the linguistic rust of the Folio MS, was involved in the Scriblerian gulling of a collector of antiquarian curios with a vernacular relic" (34).

spelling. This pairing of regional dialect with purposefully antiquated language in terms of aesthetic effect suggests that cultural authenticity can be found equally in a turn to the past and in a turn away from the cosmopolitan centers toward the rural, isolated fringes of British life perceived as culturally uadulterated by the damaging influence of the outside world. Groom in fact notes the irony that Percy's *Reliques*, while ideologically drafted into the role of buttressing a particularly English imperial imagination, is made up of mostly Scottish verse and ballads of the borderlands. Groom's explanation for this seeming inconsistency is that it "is another example of containment of the other, of internal colonialism. Minstrels also developed at the margins of orality and literacy. By plotting the borders, Percy melded together a national tradition, and clarified Englishness" (101). Percy's volume, in its inclusion of a large measure of Scottish balladry, thus appropriates the Scottish cultural heritage into a larger, encompassing notion of Britishness even as it boosts the cultural valence of a distinctive Scottish tradition.

II. Antiquarianism and the Uncanny Relic in Hogg's *A Justified Sinner*

My formulation of the term "antiquarian impulse" assumes that antiquarianism extends beyond the work of antiquaries such as Scott and Walpole, encompassing a broader cultural expression. James Hogg's novel *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* demonstrates the manner in which the epistemological and aesthetic conflicts that produce the antiquarian impulse become entwined with other discursive fields—in this case, a novel that is about religious controversy and an emergent examination of pathological psychology.

Hogg's novel ends with an account of the exhumation of Robert Wringham's body and the discovery of the memoir that makes up the greater part of the narrative. The Editor, accompanied by a party of curious adventurers that may have included Walter Scott under the cover of a thinly-disguised pseudonym,[35] sets out for the grave in order to confirm a report published in *Blackwood's Magazine* of the strangely-preserved corpse of a suicide. This concluding account is cast in the disinterested rhetoric of an archaeological excursion, detailing the conflicting sources of information about the site and their varying degrees of authenticity. The Editor catalogs the material objects uncovered in the grave and speculates on the significance of those objects. By including a fictionalized Walter Scott in the party and mimicking the methods and form of Scott's antiquarian essays that feature a concern with the material remains of local histories, the text reveals its indebtedness to the obsession with archaeological objects and the associated antiquarian discourse.[36] Although Hogg's novel ostensibly is not about history or its practice at all, it in fact grapples with questions about history and epistemology wrapped within the larger plot tension about religious knowledge.[37]

The antiquarian impulse expresses itself in Hogg's novel through an interest in the aesthetics of fragmentation and in a foregrounding of the clash among different sources

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[35] The exact identities of the excursion party are of some ambiguity. Clearly, the Editor is accompanied by John Lockhart (Scott's son-in-law), William Laidlaw (Scott's steward), a shepherd that has been identified as most probably William Beattie, and "another farmer" (227). My suspicion that Scott also forms a part of the party include two references to "Mr. S—t" (227, 230), as well as some ambiguous antecedents in the passage. For example, in the following sentence, is "Mr. Sc—t" the name of "another farmer," or is he a completely different person?: "We promised strict secrecy; and accompanied by another farmer, Mr. Sc—t, and old B—e, we proceeded to the grave . . ."(227).Or, previously, does Mr. L—w accompany the party alone, or does Scott, the "father-in-law" from whom they borrow a pony, accompany them as well? "[H]e himself would accompany us" is a bit ambiguous in terms of whether it refers to Laidlaw or to Scott.

[36] See, for example, Scott's "Essay on Border Antiquities" or his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border.* Incidentally, James Hogg's mother served as one of Scott's sources for this last work, establishing that Hogg operates in both a family and professional community that privileges the wisdom of local, traditional, oral knowledge.

[37] Scott MacKenzie, in fact, has suggested that the final section in which Wringham's body is exhumed is meant to offer a critique of Scott's historiographical methods (14).

of knowledge—not only religious knowledge but also testimony from the past as revealed through other sources than the textual. *A Justified Sinner* dramatizes the manner in which folkloric knowledge, orality, and material objects, as alternative sources of truth, call into question the epistemological preeminence of institutionalized, textual forms of testimony about the past, just as antiquarianism calls into question the preeminence of a single form of historical inquiry.

The confluence of antiquarian historical methodologies and the gothic aesthetic form occurs most visibly in the perception that both are fragmented modes of understanding, lacking a coherent and systematic form. Critics have sometimes misinterpreted the fragmentation of narrative form in Hogg's novel as an anachronistic novelty, likening it to the narrative experimentation of modernist and postmodernist texts, rather than recognizing this quality as one that grew out of a wider antiquarian/gothic interest in fragmentary aesthetic forms.[38] This fragmented quality, associated with postmodern critical discourse, signals that Hogg's text does not fit neatly into the narrative of even progression established by literary history that states that such qualities cannot appear in novels before the modern era. Critics typically account for this apparent discrepancy in the whiggishly progressive line of literary history by either emphasizing the novel's anomalous character as an outlier that does not belong to the dominant literary trends of its time, or by examining the qualities (such as Hogg's former illiteracy

[38] Redekop notes that many modern critics have been attracted to Hogg's novel because it appears to be ahead of its time: "The implicit consensus appears to be that *A Justified Sinner* is a kind of premature post-modernist novel" (162). Ian Duncan recently revisited these claims, arguing that critics reading the novels of Hogg and Scott through a postmodern lens "tend to overlook the knotty question of historical specificity" (97). Redekop seeks to revise what she sees as the prevailing current of criticism at the time of her article by concluding that Hogg's text in fact reaffirms traditional values rather than representing a proto-postmodernist gesture toward the rejection of authority and meaning, and that the fragmentation of the text is owing to Hogg's grounding in oral tradition which favors non-linear narratives, circularity, and repetition. Duncan prefers to historicize Hogg's novel by linking it with narrative gestures also present in the novels of Scott.

or his professional relationship with Scott) that somehow serve to explain how Hogg differs from the popularly conceived current notion of what novels are supposed to look like at this time—a notion that does not include the kind of narrative experimentation evident in *A Justified Sinner*. Rather than being an anomaly, however, the novel instead exhibits the same type of antiquarian impulse that produced similar critical assessments of Scott's *The Antiquary* as a novel that doesn't quite hold together as a unified narrative.

A short summary of the novel's unusual form demonstrates the fragmented and mixed nature of the novel and how this fragmentation calls attention to the work's metafictional status. *A Justified Sinner* opens with "The Editor's Narrative" in which the unnamed editor recounts the Colwan family history as revealed in official documents and oral tradition. The Editor's account takes up about one-third of the text and describes the plot from the vantage point of a disinterested outsider with access to events that occurred from the perspective of many different involved characters. At the end of this account, the narrator announces that he has exhausted all information that typical historical sources provide and that he will now insert another source of information. The Editor prefaces this "original document of a most singular nature" with no explanation of its nature or source, stating that "I offer no remarks on it, and make as few additions to it, leaving every one to judge for himself" (116). In offering this text as a primary historical document, and leaving it to the reader to "judge for himself," the Editor transforms his readers into historians themselves charged with the task of interpreting a historical document without the mediating presence of an editor, historian, or other authority.

Although no more explanation is provided before the insertion of the "original document of a most singular nature," it becomes immediately clear that the document,

labeled "Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Sinner," is a memoir written by Robert Wringham recounting the same events we have already read in the Editor's narrative. This time, however, we see the events occurring from a different, more personal and limited perspective. This second section, the memoir, ends with a frantic diary entry that portends Wringham's imminent death. The final, short section is again narrated by the Editor and provides the deferred explanation of how he first came into possession of Wringham's memoir when he retrieved it from the presumed grave of Wringham. The novel ends with the Editor essentially undermining the entire text by challenging its veracity: "With regard to the work itself, I dare not venture a judgment, for I do not understand it. I believe no person, man or woman, will ever peruse it with the same attention that I have done, and yet I confess that I do not comprehend the writer's drift. It is certainly impossible that these scenes could ever have occurred, that he describes as having himself transacted" (232). The Editor goes on to suggest that the memoir is either an allegory produced by an incompetent author or the product of madness.

While this narrative structure in which we read of the same events recounted from two different perspectives that are then ultimately called into question in the final section calls attention to the metafictional nature of the text, the final section by the Editor blurs the line between fact and fiction even further. The Editor's excursion is spurred on by his reading of a letter in *Blackwood's Magazine* that actually did appear in the magazine, planted there by James Hogg prior to the publication of the novel. James Hogg inserts himself into this final section as a character called "James Hogg" whom the excursion party asks for directions to the grave. "James Hogg" dismisses the excursion in a thick dialect as a waste of time (226-7). Together, the fragmented narrative and the elements

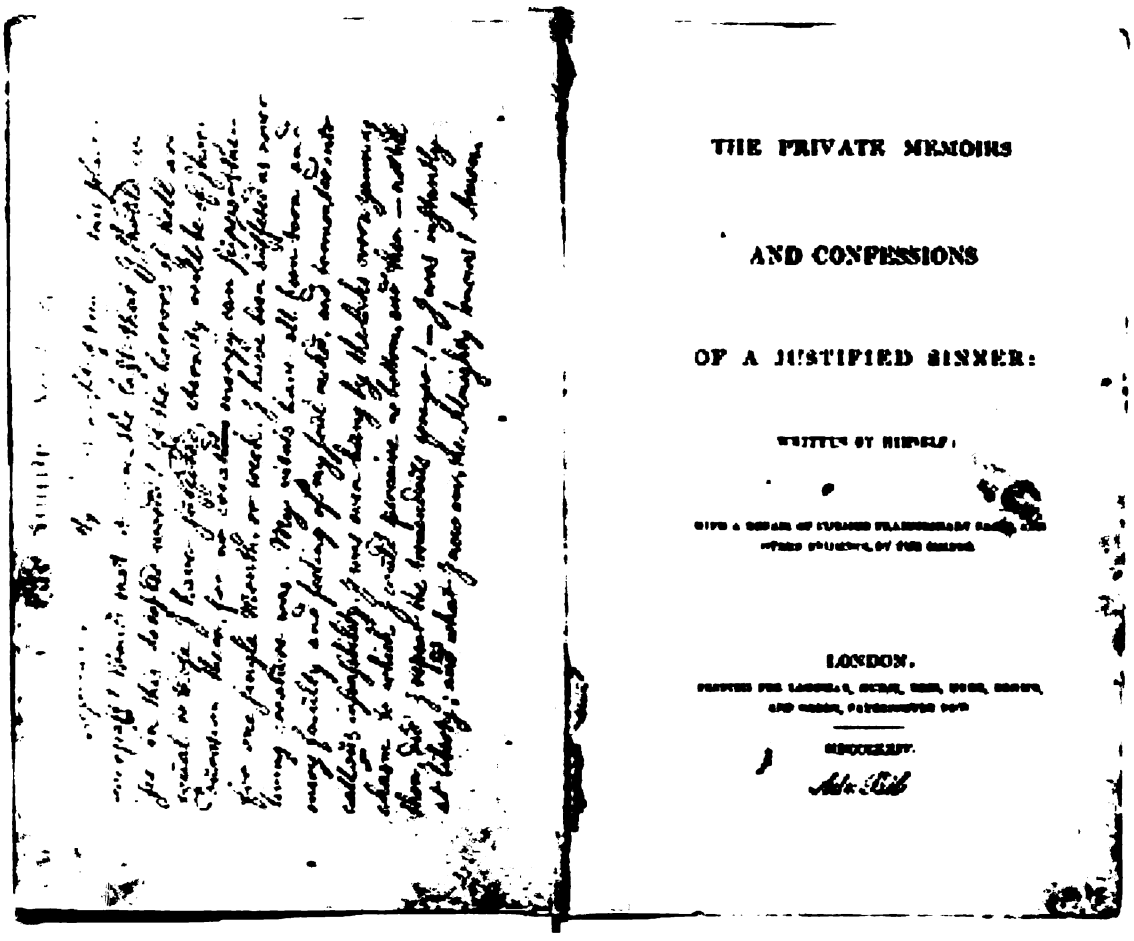
in the final section that call into question the usefulness and veracity of various sources of testimony (the memoir, the magazine letter, the Editor himself, and James Hogg the shepherd) enact an antiquarian theme. By calling into question the individual's ability to judge the past, even if that individual is an obviously knowledgeable and competent authority such as the Editor, the novel questions the accurate testimony of historical sources and the corresponding tone of unquestioned authority adopted by historians. This undermining of our access to historical fact is highlighted by the competition among a variety of sources: textual, material, and oral; institutionalized and personal; authoritative and institutionalized versus folkloric.

The antiquary privileges the material object as a legible cultural artifact, one that can cast suspicion on the supremacy of the written document as an authority. MacKenzie notes that in Hogg's *A Justified Sinner*, "There does not appear to be any point at which to fix authority, in the form of either a secret sensitive subjectivity or a documentary source whose connection to its temporal and spatial milieu is reliable. Our editor will do no more than historicize his text as an inadequate supplement to oral tradition" (22). In the novel's final exhumation scene, the yellowed paper of the manuscript revealing its age, the condition of the corpse, its clothing, and the objects buried with it are all read as authenticating artifacts that corroborate or challenge the written accounts (including the manuscript itself and the letter printed in *Blackwood's*). This interpretation of the signs of age as authenticating markers is an antiquarian process in which the text also invites the reader to participate. MacKenzie's reading of the novel suggests that in contrast to the fictional narrators of Scott who push readers toward specific interpretations of the text-as-manuscript, Hogg places the Wringham manuscript

before the reader unmediated by any "historically sensitive consciousness" (22). The reader's participation in the antiquarian process of historical interpretation is evident, for example, in the frontispiece of the novel's first edition.[39] This original frontispiece features the image of Wringham's distressed handwriting (an excerpt from the diary entries at the end of the memoir) to be examined for its evidence of a distracted mind rather than for the meaning of the words on the page, not reproduced in context until hundreds of pages later. [Figure 1]. Taken out of their context within the plot, the handwritten words announce to the reader the interpretive methods that are privileged in the text: the reading of the physical signs of authenticity to complement the content of the language on the page. Wringham's manuscript occupies the status both of a unique physical relic and of a story reproduced for the public by a printing press, and the frontispiece represents one of a number of signals in which Hogg announces the metafictional themes of the novel. Antiquarian historical methodologies similarly privilege the physical remains of historical evidence, a practice that has its legacy in the modern field of archaeology.

Antiquarian and gothic narratives emphasize the subject's oversensitive reaction to the material object, an affective reaction in gothic literature that has come to be known as the uncanny. The gothic historical sensibility plays on the contrast between materiality and immateriality, a concern it shares with the contemporaneously emergent antiquarian movement, which focused on the recovered object as a catalyst for the uncanny effect and

[39] This frontispiece is also reproduced in the 2001 Broadview edition edited by Adrian Hunter. David Groves has discovered a letter by an Edinburgh publisher that contains an account of a visit James Hogg made to his printing shop requesting a frontispiece resembling a sample of archaic handwriting. Groves argues that this anecdote suggests that the frontispiece then becomes more central to the integral meaning of the novel rather than a marketing gimmick conceived by the publisher (421-22).



THE PRIVATE MEMOIRS

AND CONFESSIONS

OF A JUSTIFIED SINNER:

LONDON.

Figure 1. Title-page and frontispiece from James Hogg, *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner, Written by Himself*, London, 1824. Image Rights Holder: National Library of Scotland.

the emergence of secrets. The antiquarian conception of the material object similarly plays on the simultaneous legibility and illegibility of the historical relic as a receptacle for knowledge about the past, and the key to accessing that knowledge is sometimes remote. In a proto-Freudian manner, relics within the gothic discourse represent the irrepressibility of truth, the secrets that refuse to be hidden. Freud's essay on the term "uncanny" acts as the standard reference point for this concept, which he defines as "that class of the terrifying which leads us back to something long known to us, once very familiar."[40] In Hogg's novel, material objects take on this sense of the uncanny, in which the recognition of the familiar in an unfamiliar context produces terror. Objects such as Gil-Martin's Bible and the exhumed relics in Wringham's grave focus the gothic effect of the uncanny through a specifically antiquarian emphasis on the recovered material object.

Nicholas Royle places the rise of the uncanny as pertaining particularly to the supernatural precisely within the Enlightenment opposition between reason and the unreasonable or unexplainable (22). The electric and elusive qualities of the uncanny are mixed equally with the terrifying, repulsive aspects. Besides producing a tinge of sublime terror, the uncanny produces a compulsion to seek it out that has about it a hint of the "pleasing pain" associated with the sublime and, by extension, becomes another way of expressing antiquarian bad taste. Susan Stewart's characterization of the antiquary is useful in this context. She describes the antiquary as one who is consumed by the aesthetic pleasure produced by the authentic historical object and who, in this entrancement, ultimately must "erase" or "kill" the "actual past." Stewart casts this

[40] My use of the term "uncanny" is also indebted to Fred Botting's definition of it as "an effect of uncertainty, of the irruption of fantasies, suppressed wishes and emotional and sexual conflicts. A disruptive return of archaic desires and fears, the uncanny disturbs the familiar, homely and secure sense of reality and normality" (11). See also Royle, Castle, and Vidler.

aesthetic act as one of violence in which the antiquary desires to reanimate the dead in a zombie-like form: "In order to awaken the dead, the antiquarian must first manage to kill them" (143). In such a formulation, the antiquary values the historical object as an uncanny one that inhabits a liminal space between the past and the present, the familiar and the unfamiliar.

The gothic aesthetic effect is produced by a confluence of the Freudian uncanny and the Burkean sublime as expressed in the *Philosophical Enquiry*. Antiquarian relic-seekers, such as the excursion party that appears at the conclusion of *A Justified Sinner*, are drawn to the historical artifact as an uncanny object, capable of producing a response akin to that produced by the sublime and accompanied by the irresistible urge to establish a palpable, material connection with a past that is dead. Anthony Vidler has previously described the uncanny as an aesthetic quality that resides and accumulates within the material object.[41] The disinterred material object embodies several important gothic themes. Its connection to the dead conjures sensations of the ghostly presence of past possessors of the object. Past and present collapse in the vicinity of such objects so that the beholder seems to inhabit the same space as those who have gone before, triggering the palpable presence of a double in the form of a ghostly shadow. Finally, the disinterested examination of the professional historian looking for clues is inextricably coupled with the object's evocation of an affective response that draws the seeker. The nature of this affective response to the strangely familiar relic is uncanny, a response that

[41] In *The Architectural Uncanny*, Vidler identifies the uncanny as "nicely intersect[ing] with the archaeological interests of the nineteenth century," highlighted by "the successive 'rediscoveries' and excavations of antique sites—Egypt, Pompeii, Troy" (45). Particularly in the case of Pompeii, literary works romanticized the excavated city, featuring "stories that centered on the idea of history suspended, the dream come to life, the past restored in the present" (47).

hinges on the beholder's belief in the historical authenticity of the object. Scott's Jonathan Oldbuck, musing in *The Antiquary* on the afterlife of the historical object as it moves through time (rather than conceiving of it as a static object), calls to mind the gothic's deployment of the double in Hogg's novel. The previous life of the object "haunts" the present such that current observers of the object are pursued by the conjuration of past observers.[42]

Hogg's novel is a notable early example of the demonic pursuit by the double, an important component of the Freudian uncanny. Robert Wringham repeatedly attempts to flee from Gil-Martin, whose inescapable presence can be likened to the remnants of folkloric wisdom haunting the boundaries of Enlightenment empiricism. This conflict between empiricism and folklore is exemplified by the text-based religious controversies of the Wringham family's brand of Calvinism. In the process of Gil-Martin's pursuit, the two forms of knowledge embodied by Wringham and Gil-Martin become as indistinguishable as their identical features, and the uncanny finds its home within the rigid processes of the reasoning mind rather than in the often irrational and unexplainable territory of tradition. When Robert Wringham comes across Gil-Martin reading a text that initially looks like a Bible, Hogg represents Wringham's response as a precognitive, instinctual reaction to the object. The strangely familiar visage of the as-yet-unnamed youth attracts Robert's attention, as does the book he reads which "seemed a Bible, having columns, chapters, and verses; but it was in a language of which I was wholly ignorant, and all intersected with red lines, and verses. A sensation resembling a stroke of electricity came over me, on first casting my eyes on that mysterious book, and I stood

[42] Roland Barthes's opening to *Camera Lucida* describes an analogous invocation of the uncanny regarding old photographs. Recalling his impressions upon viewing an 1852 photograph featuring a brother of Napoleon, he is struck by the fact that "'I am looking at eyes that looked at the Emperor'" (3).

motionless" (137). Robert's intellectual perception is that this text is in fact a Bible, but the sight of it causes "a sensation resembling a stroke of electricity" to invade him so that he questions the accuracy of his perception. This moment is clearly a recognition and reaction to the "strangely familiar" quality of the uncanny, closely associated with Burke's notion of the sublime, which elicits astonishment, "that state of the soul in which all its motions are suspended, with some degree of horror" (53). In this case, the sight of Gil-Martin's Bible renders Robert physically and mentally motionless, filling up all of his perception in the manner of the sublime. Moreover, Robert's description of the sensation as "electricity" is a term as slippery and suggestive as the concept of the uncanny itself. "Electric" can describe the abruptness of the reaction rather than the quality, although it also contains hints of both pain and pleasure. More such subtle and vague hints occur in the Editor's account of the excursion party to the grave: "I confess I felt a singular sensation, when I saw the grey stone standing at the head, and another at the feet, and the one half of the grave manifestly new digged, and closed up again as had been described" (228). The nature of this "singular sensation" is something ostensibly hidden that nevertheless produces the compulsion or duty to "confess" itself. It is simultaneously revealed and concealed. Its presence is invoked, acknowledged, but never named.

The masochism of this "pleasing pain" points toward the overtly sexualized nature of the antiquary's affective draw toward the relic.[43] This formulation lends a hint of necrophilia to the Editor's voyeuristic exhumation of Robert's grave and his

[43] Stephen Bann has argued that "[I]n the latter part of the eighteenth century (and not before), the discourse of the historical fragment is initiated as a discourse of part and whole, animated by a strong affective and even libidinal impetus" (137). Mike Goode has produced research on the prevalence in the late eighteenth century of the antiquary as a satirized figure that experiences sexual desire for historical objects and manuscripts, the stand-ins for a dead past, rather than for living people. According to Goode, "In the standard formulation, an antiquary does not just live among the dead; the past and its remains, even the act of examining and thinking about them, become a kind of replacement bedfellow" (68).

examination of Robert's perfectly preserved nether regions. Such evidence suggests that the true nature of the antiquarian aesthetic appreciation, rather than being the pure and disinterested aesthetic pleasure of the connoisseur or the similarly disinterested critical gaze of the scientist, is a sexualized, erotic pleasure: the antiquary is a necrophiliac. Extending this eroticism from the uncanny aura of the historical relic to the uncanny in general, the "electric" sensation that draws Robert toward Gil-Martin as he reads the text that resembles a Bible takes on a sexual dimension, as does Robert's description of the moment he first meets Gil-Martin: "As we approached each other, our eyes met, and I can never describe the strange sensations that thrilled through my whole frame at that impressive moment" (131).[44] Additionally, in a moment that undermines both the exalted nature of the uncorrupted, perfectly preserved nether regions of Robert's body and the disinterested sterility of the scientific gaze that examines his body, the Editor pauses to muse on the state of Robert's shoes. The exhumed relics that the excursionists divide amongst themselves mingle with the most abject of earthly materials: "There was one thing I could not help remarking, that in the inside of one of the shoes there was a layer of cow's dung, about one-eighth of an inch thick, and in the hollow of the sole fully one fourth of an inch. It was firm, green, and fresh; and proved that he had been working in a byre" (229). The Editor's acknowledgment that he "could not help remarking" on the presence of the excrement hints again at the compulsion to reveal that which should properly remain unnoticed and unremarked, an indication of the Editor's bad taste. It

[44] For a full discussion of male homosocial desire in a literary context, see Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men*. Sedgwick has a chapter discussing Hogg in which she point out the "genuinely erotic language of romantic infatuation" used to describe the relationship between Gil-Martin and Robert Wringham (103).

also produces an uncanny temporality, suggesting that the corpse has recently walked in the fields.

The antiquarian emphasis on material relics as testimonies of historical truth necessarily foregrounds the visual act as the primary mode of interpretation. The ideal form of evidence in this tradition is the concrete object that can be exhumed, examined, and appropriated as a possession or souvenir.[45] The excursion party that travels to Robert's grave is compelled to see for themselves the scene described in *Blackwood's*, to bear witness to its authenticity, and ideally the excursionists would like to appropriate pieces of the scene for themselves. Although the eye provides the mechanism by which the material object is interpreted, the tactile connection in which the witnesses are able to touch and take possession of the objects suggests that visual testimony is inadequate. Repeatedly the text calls into question the testimony of the senses, particularly vision, suggesting that only intuition points toward the truth. Characters in the text often experience spontaneous physiological responses that reveal truth while their senses as interpreted by the faculty of reason repeatedly deceive them. Hogg's novel complicates the Enlightenment emphasis on the senses as the sole access to truth, as the eye becomes an apparatus for an intuitive second sight that exceeds the power of strict empirical evidence. The eye holds a status as the primary sense through which characters in the novel interpret the material world. Embodying the two contradictory impulses in the text, the empirical and the intuitive, the eye allows them to inhabit a single space. In doing so,

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[45] As Swann demonstrates, the collecting frenzy was not limited to historical objects. Swann's text deals primarily with souvenirs and items of natural history collected and displayed in curiosity cabinets. According to Swann, the collecting vogue begins in the seventeenth century during the age of discovery as European explorers came into contact with unfamiliar cultures and geographies. Also in the seventeenth century, antiquaries shifted from collecting primarily textual artifacts to an interest in non-textual materials "such as coins, fossils, tombs, inscriptions, bones and ruins" (109).

the eye becomes a gateway or bridge between the two forms of authority, as when Robert sees the peculiar, vaguely Bible-like book possessed by his new friend (137). Later, when the Reverend Wringham rightly perceives that a change has overcome his adopted son, Robert "[imagines] that his eyes burnt like candles" (134). The eyes both perceive and reflect the truth before the reasoning mind interferes and reinterprets the testimony of sight in contradiction to what is later revealed to be the truth. In this manner, the novel complicates the notion that the perceiving eye can properly interpret the truth that accumulates within the authentic material object.

The questioning of visual testimony continues in the subplot concerning Mrs. Logan and Mrs. Calvert, in which Mrs. Logan, the long-time lover of the laird of Dalcastle, sets out to investigate George's death. Mrs. Logan, upon first seeing Gil-Martin in his guise as George Colwan, says to Mrs. Calvert, "Do you know that he is so like in every lineament, look, and gesture, that, against the clearest light of reason, I cannot in my mind separate the one from the other, and have a certain indefinable impression on my mind, that they are one and the same being, or that the one was a prototype of the other" (115). Her vague and indefinable impression suggests that it is precognitive and purely physiological rather than rational. Although the "clearest light of reason" argues for the impossibility that the deceased George Colwan has been resurrected in physical form, Mrs. Logan's intuition rebels against this conclusion and she rightly chooses to continue with her investigations. Mrs. Logan and Mrs. Calvert circumvent the conclusions of empirical reasoning by refusing to reconcile the dilemma before proceeding with their investigation. They acknowledge the seeming contradiction implicit in Gil-Martin's appearance as a deceased man, but they do not become shackled

by the logical quandary it presents. Rather, just as earlier in the novel when Mrs. Logan decides to believe Mrs. Calvert's assertions about her stolen belongings that seem to contradict logic, the women allow for the possibility that logic and the testimony of the senses are not the sole sources of truth. That the novel filters this question through two female characters foregrounds the cultural gendering of empirical knowledge and reasoning as masculine. The text suggests that these characters, as female, are not as bound by a value system that privileges empirical knowledge over other sources of testimony and are better able than their male counterparts to see through Gil-Martin's deceitful masquerade. The two women are the only characters to achieve this level of knowledge and insight into the events of the novel. In this way, the text challenges the concept that only empirical evidence and the processes of logic lead to knowledge of historical reality.

The conflict between visual testimony and empirical logic is not the only antiquarian tension echoed in the novel's plot. The current trend in the critical conversation concerning Hogg has circulated around the play between orality and the written--and particularly the published--word in Hogg's work, although the link has not been made to antiquarian discourse in Hogg. The narrative of exclusion in which antiquarianism is castigated and relegated to a lesser intellectual standing for its interest in local, folk histories and non-printed sources interestingly mirrors Hogg's experiences with the urban literary community in which he was simultaneously fetishized and ridiculed as the Ettrick Shepherd. The rootedness of antiquarianism within material culture can be discussed in tandem with its privileging of oral tradition because both the oral and the material remnants of the historical past are similarly marginalized as sources

for the grand historical narratives of the nineteenth century—and because they stand outside the literate, textual sources held by the intellectual elite as the appropriate receptacle of knowledge.[46] While antiquaries focus on material objects valued as historical relics and the testimonies of oral tradition and folklore as alternative locations for historical testimony, historians move toward a dependence on the written documents of institutional authorities such as churches and government offices. The oral and the material are both alternatives to the documentary evidence that accumulates within the texts produced by political and religious institutions. My conception of this link between the oral and the material is derived from Susan Stewart, who argues that "[o]ral traditions were thus seen as the abstract equivalent to material culture. Whereas oral tradition obviously cannot 'age' in the same sense that the physical artifact can, legends and tales were considered by antiquarians of the survivals school as examples of earlier stages of

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[46] This privileging of political history and of institutionalized, textual sources is a quality that ranges from early philosophical historians in the eighteenth century to their successors, the scientific historians of the late nineteenth century such as Freeman, Green, and Buckle. They all are inclined to an almost exclusive interest in the political life of the nation. Hegel and Kant say explicitly that politics form the only appropriate subject for history, with societies that do not possess a notion of the modern nation-state as conceived by the historian existing outside the realms of history. This idea appears in historians such as Hume and later historians such as Green whose attempts to formulate comprehensive histories of England mostly exclude ancient history before the Roman invasion, an area of great interest to antiquaries. Hume's *History of England* goes no earlier than the invasion of the forces of Julius Caesar, and Green's *Short History* begins with a few pages on ancient British history, but confines its observations to those derived from Roman histories of the early inhabitants of Britain and of the Germanic peoples. Reviving the ancient, unwritten history of Britain was confined to the efforts of antiquaries and archaeologists, a process described in detail by Smiles. This exclusion and relegation of ancient history to the practitioners of "lesser" modes of history derives not only from their Hegelian conception of the progress of races, but also on their focus on written documents, which tended to be political documents as they conceived of it. Although Green privileges literary sources as well as official political documents, noting in his preface to the *Short History* that he "devoted more space to Chaucer than to Cressy" (xvii), this gesture toward alternative sources of history was only partial. His wife in her introduction to a posthumous edition of the *Short History* explains "the scanty part played by Literature after 1660" in Green's text as owing to the necessity of limiting the history to 800 pages: "Something must needs be left out, and he deliberately chose Literature, because it seemed to him that after 1660 Literature ceased to stand in the fore-front of national characteristics, and that Science, Industry, and the like, played a much greater part" (xv). For the professional historians of the nineteenth century, then, there was very little history to be found outside politics and their own social science theories, and this history could primarily be found in the official documents of state and religious institutions.

civilization residing amid the discourse of the present" (142). The oral and the material were both seen by antiquaries to be an alternative and equally valuable source of historical truth. The dichotomy between the professional historian and the antiquarian impulse is expressed in the novel as a controversy between the recorded truth of national institutions and the cultural and folk memory of local (and often rural) areas. The novel extends this opposition to include the religious controversies in the text in which the text-based fundamentalism of the Wringham brand of Calvinism comes into conflict with the sacramental (and non-textual) Anglican tradition represented by the Colwans. In this sense, the religious controversy shares with antiquarianism a concern about the epistemological status of the text in contrast to other, traditional forms of knowledge.

Hogg's novel privileges oral and material traditions as alternative sources of truth because they are creatable by and accessible to those who are illiterate and therefore, more culturally pure.[47] This conception relies heavily in the fascination in Romantic discourse with the minstrel figure in the form of the unschooled, culturally authentic shepherd-poet—fictional figures like Wordsworth's Michael, and actual poets such as John Clare and James Hogg himself. The tension between the oral (perceived to harbor a greater claim to authenticity) and the textual (perceived to be somehow subversive or disconnected from the culturally authentic) pervades the novel. *A Justified Sinner*

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[47] Ian Duncan locates the point of tension between the oral and written for Hogg in the challenge that oral culture offers to the printed word as a source of authenticity. Karen Fang has suggested that Hogg's contentious relationship with *Blackwood's Magazine* and the metropolitan printing community leads him to offer a critique of magazine print culture and the English imperialism it represents. I share with Fang a reading of the novel in which the manuscript as material object intervenes in the controversy between the oral and the written as opposing modes of epistemological authority. However, I locate this tendency within the sphere of Hogg's antiquarian impulse that he shares with a larger Scottish antiquarian community, whereas Fang locates the significance of the manuscript as material object within a matrix of Hogg's anti-Unionist political tendencies in which he rejects the authority of the standard English-speaking metropolis. While I do not question the validity of Fang's interpretation, I argue that it does not exclude the existence of multiple political valences to Hogg's privileging of oral culture.

expands on this controversy by leveling a critique at scientific empiricism that is enveloped in the text's primary controversy between Anglicanism and Calvinism. The text mocks documentary empiricism in the hermeneutical controversies of the Reverend Wringham and Mrs. Colwan that deny the presence of truth outside the text, a practice that they encourage in the young Robert. Thus, the novel exhibits a preoccupation with the instability and untrustworthiness of the written word. Despite its obvious leaning toward a privileging of the oral and traditional mode of knowledge, the novel avoids coming down decisively in favor of an extremist position that rejects either mode of knowledge. Ultimately, the religious controversy dealt with in the text is only one manifestation among many of the ultimate question about the location of truth and the individual's ability to judge the source.[48]

The contrast between the two methodologies associated with historians and antiquaries is further highlighted by the status of the *Blackwood's* letter excerpted and inserted in the novel as the impetus for the Editor's excursion. Hogg began in 1817 as a co-editor of the magazine, along with John Gibson Lockhart and John Wilson, but his relationship with the magazine deteriorated. According to Adrian Hunter, Hogg's Ettrick Shepherd persona was hijacked by his two co-editors in an attitude of "contemptuous snobbery and double-dealing" (22). Lockhart and Wilson began to publish articles under Hogg's name that portrayed him as an ignorant and drunken clown, playing on urban prejudices regarding the countryside, as Hogg continued to submit articles authentically authored by himself. The letter detailing the discovery of the corpse was actually printed in *Blackwood's* in August 1823 and signed with James Hogg's name prior to the

[48] On a similar theme, see Meredith Evans's "Persons Fall Apart: James Hogg's Transcendent Sinner," for a discussion of the collision between law and morality in the novel.

publication of the novel. The Editor admits that the letter "bears the stamp of authenticity in every line," but remains suspicious of its truthfulness "so often had I been hoaxed by the ingenious fallacies displayed in that Magazine" (226). The Editor's instinctual trust in the authenticity of an account given by a rural shepherd paired with his suspicion of the urban intellectual scene represented by the magazine, enacts the text's own ambivalence about the conflict between tradition and folklore on the one hand and institutionalized knowledge on the other hand.

Hogg's novel often conflates the politically and religiously dangerous elements under a single umbrella in which such elements cast their subversive influence through means of the language of logic. The opposition between the Wringhams and the Colwans is cast in these terms, with the Wringhams representing coldly logical empirical knowledge and the Colwans representing the anti-empirical knowledge grounded in intuition and tradition. Set in contrast to the athletic and affable brother George, who was "much behind him in scholastic acquirements, but greatly his superior in personal prowess, form, feature, and all that constitutes gentility in deportment and appearance," Robert "was the best grammarian, the best reader, writer, and accountant in the various classes that he attended, and was fond of writing essays on controverted points of theology, for which he got prizes, and great praise from his guardian and mother" (62). Robert's temper initially is triggered by his contempt for the inferior intellectual powers of his brother and his mother. Robert despises "simplicity" (200), a characteristic that causes his growing murderous aversion toward his mother. Mr. Blanchard warns Robert of Gil-Martin; "[i]t is for his great mental faculties that I dread him," he declares (142). Robert's first murder comes about as a result of Gil-Martin's parodying of Enlightenment

logic to justify the killing of Mr. Blanchard: "If the man Blanchard is worthy, he is only changing his situation for a better one; and if unworthy, it is better that one fall, than that a thousand souls perish" (144). In this exchange, Gil-Martin deflects responsibility for the murder away from Robert by first suggesting that his death would only hasten the reward of the afterlife to a righteous soul, and then by shifting his reasoning to the weighing of two incommensurate and unknowable outcomes. Rather than becoming a tool for unveiling the governing logic behind questions of human morality, an Enlightenment project, logic here becomes a way of deferring and concealing moral truth. The novel repeatedly associates Robert's deference to textual authority with a propensity to twist logic into a tool of deception.

Whereas the textual in Hogg's novel tends to be misinterpreted or twisted into misrepresentations of the truth, non-textual sources of knowledge in the form of oral tradition or folk wisdom escape from the dangers of the textual. In the tale of Auchtermuchty, the congregation is swayed by the words of a mysterious preacher who "'read out his text from the Prophecies of Ezekiel'" and "'[f]rom these words he preached such a sermon as never was heard by human ears'" until "'[h]e finally made out the IT, mentioned in the text [predicting incipient destruction], to mean, properly and positively, the notable town of Auchtermuchty'" (192-3). The preacher produces a convincing textual misreading of the Bible (194) that, interestingly, is based on transposing the historically-specific Biblical story onto the historically-inappropriate context of eighteenth-century Scotland. The preacher is seemingly conjured by the authority of the text when his initial appearance occurs during a reading of the 119th Psalm. He appears "by the time [the clerk] reached the 77th verse" (192). The congregation continues under

the malevolent influence of the preacher even after Robin Ruthven, a figure representative of folk wisdom, tells the villagers "a plain and unsophisticated tale" that is discounted in favor of the devilish preacher's more sublime rhetoric. The religious extremism associated with Robert, Reverend Wringham, Gil-Martin, and the demonic Auchtermuchty preacher is associated in the novel with the use of subtle and complex language. Always, the lies promulgated by the villainous characters have about them the appearance of truth, but the listeners are dazzled and confused by convoluted language and logic. In contrast to the untrustworthy figures, moments such as Mrs. Calvert's sworn oath to Mrs. Logan as she stands in prison awaiting execution and Bessy's court testimony, in which the spoken word stands as the only guarantor of truth, hearken back to a pre-literate economy. When Mrs. Logan asks what "security" she can give for the truthfulness of her testimony, Mrs. Calvert answers, "You have none but *my* word," (93) a statement that by its very nature implies its orality. The spoken word recorded in written form takes on a legal status that links it to a different form of authenticity located in the political/juridical economy.

Although *A Justified Sinner* is a text intricately concerned with entering into an historically contextualized and authenticated debate about the Scottish religious controversies of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the text does not simply endorse any single side of the multiple controversies it enters. From this quality it derives its modern critical reputation as a proto-postmodernist text that provides no "closure." However, as Fredric Jameson notes in *Postmodernism or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, it is the possibility of historical authenticity that the postmodern

circumstance debunks.[49] Hogg's text questions the basis for our judgment of the historically authentic, but it does not challenge the ultimate existence of such a thing. Similarly, the antiquarian fervor of the manuscript's fictional discoverer and editor is tempered by the editor's frequent misreadings of Robert's memoir and the discrepancies between his, the fictional Hogg's, and Robert's accounts of events. Hogg's text undoubtedly warns against the nihilistic and anarchist behavior that would follow from a complete, postmodernist renouncement of authority, as evidenced by the violence that succeeds Robert's Calvinist extremism that ultimately denies his moral accountability to a greater authority.

Hence, *A Justified Sinner* advocates a rehabilitation of the notion of truth and authenticity in the very political and historical environment that has destabilized it. Although the novel does not presume to suggest that an ultimate authority for truth exists, it warns against extremism and self-assurance, describing the ideal mode of authority as an amalgamation of several sources of authority that enact a moderating influence on each other. Hogg's text envisions the location of truth as a point of intersection in which tradition, science, religion, the state, individuals, and any limitless number of other modes of authority converge. The concluding moment of *A Justified Sinner* at the site of Robert's grave encapsulates this vision in its representation of documentary empiricism, antiquarian fervor, religious ecstasy, and secular cynicism all enacting a limiting effect on the interpretation of Robert's manuscript. The wonder of the members of the excursion

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[49] "In faithful conformity to poststructuralist linguistic theory, the past as 'referent' finds itself gradually bracketed, and then effaced altogether, leaving us with nothing but texts" (18). Elsewhere, in the context of a discussion of Kafka's *The Trial* as an exemplification of the modernist/postmodernist transition, Jameson writes: "The postmodern must be characterized as a situation in which the survival, the residue, the holdover, the archaic, has finally been swept away without a trace. In the postmodern, then, the past itself has disappeared (along with the well-known 'sense of the past' or historicity and collective memory). Where its buildings remain, renovation and restoration allow them to be transferred to the present in their entirety as those other, very different and postmodern things called *simulacra*" (309).

party at the sight of Robert's uncorrupted lower body is tempered by the Editor's dismissive attitude toward the veracity of Robert's confessions with which the text ultimately ends. By extension, Hogg's readers are not offered a definitive answer to the nature of Robert's manuscript or the meaning of his narrative. Rather, the novel places the ultimate responsibility on the reader to judge the veracity of the text engaging them in an interactive antiquarian narrative experiment that presents a mixture of competing interpretations and authorities that repeatedly contradict and undermine each other. Essentially, the text takes the reader through an antiquarian exercise in historical interpretation. Especially in the final episode of the text, the reader is confronted with forming a conclusion about Robert's own account in the face of the Editor's cynicism, Hogg's *Blackwood* letter and subsequent dismissal, and various other eyewitness accounts passed down, misremembered, and reinterpreted in the intervening century. However, Hogg's text does not advocate a postmodernist relativism in which all truths are equally acceptable, nor does it describe a world without absolute truth. Rather, the worldview promulgated by this text suggests that truth and authenticity exist, but it is dangerous to be too certain that you know where to find them—a message directed toward not only the type of religious extremism discussed explicitly in the text, but also the urban elite who have marginalized his scholarship and fetishized it as quaint, as well as the public at large who have relegated antiquarianism to the same position in regard to historical knowledge.

In this examination of the confluence of gothic aesthetic expressions and antiquarianism, I have sought to establish that the two discursive forms share a set of similar fragmented narrative forms and tropes and that, through these expressions, gothic

literature and antiquarianism expose tensions within popular conceptions of the nature and purpose of historical knowledge. These tensions revolve around notions of authenticity, in which affective and empirical forms of knowledge collide, and the privileging of various sources of historical knowledge such as the material, the visual, the oral, and the textual. In the process, antiquarianism destabilizes Enlightenment notions of empirical truth.

Chapter Four: Nineteenth-Century Ruin Photography and the Antiquarian Eye

By the end of the eighteenth century, local British histories had already been established as the special province of antiquarian societies. Antiquaries produced microscopic histories of small, insular locales; the county history or topographical study is a trademark antiquarian historiographical pursuit. Rather than writing epic histories of the British nation as a whole, antiquarian topographical histories focused minutely on a particular county, or even a single ruinous structure. Antiquaries broke apart the nation into minute, segmented local units, whereas the histories of Hume or Macaulay, for example, united the nation under a single, authoritative and linear narrative of national origin. With political upheaval on the European continent preventing free travel, British tourists turned their notice inward and focused on the local ruins that had long been the interest of the antiquary, ridiculed for the seeming triviality of his solipsistic studies.

Gilpin's theory of the picturesque forms part of the discourse that emerges from the increasing popularity of tourism of ruins. Gilpin and, later, the Romantic poets build aesthetic theories about the relationship between the ruins and the observing figure that redefine the observer's stance toward the ruins as objects of visual contemplation. With these picturesque theories, British tourists have at their disposal an aesthetic mode of appreciation that departs from the particularizing function of the antiquarian mode of apprehending the ruin. The picturesque depictions of this relationship between observer and ruins in engravings, topographical narratives, and poetry, emphasize the melancholy distance between past and present. The figures in the ruined landscape situate the past as safely past. This mode of apprehension constitutes ruins merely in a dehistoricized aesthetic context rather than as a politically meaningful landscape. Antiquarian

visualizations of the stance of the observer in relation to ruins challenge the picturesque, nostalgic vision of the Romantics. The antiquarian subject position foregrounds the potential of the past to rupture into the present. Picturesque albums like William and Mary Howitt's *Ruined Abbeys and Castles of Great Britain* (1862) form a counterweight to antiquarian topographical albums by emphasizing a generalized, cohesive British identity built on the distanced aestheticization and interchangeability of ruins. In contrast, antiquarian albums, images, and texts point toward ruins as particularized sites of specific local histories, often the sites of violence that threaten the cohesion of British national identity.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, antiquaries fed a growing appetite among the public for visualizations of the past. Antiquaries and the various national and local societies of antiquaries were pioneers in emergent technologies of visual culture, commissioning engravers to record these material objects for posterity and further study and publishing topographical studies featuring images of ruins and relics.[50] Early photographers captured historical ruins and artifacts and thereby simultaneously fulfilled a desire to commemorate and capture historical knowledge. In addition to sharing with photography a similar set of questions about the representation of the past, antiquarianism evinces a specific interest in visual tools that could be used to record historical landscapes and objects. Before photography, various antiquarian societies were instrumental in recording historical objects in pre-photographic visual forms.

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[50] Much of the interesting work on antiquarianism has come from scholars working in the fields of art history and archaeology rather than literary studies, testifying to the antiquarian privileging of the material over the textual. However, most people agree that antiquarianism bifurcated in the nineteenth century into what became archaeology and philology. This philological strain is the remnant of antiquarianism's emphasis on the textual that I think has been ignored or forgotten in favor of its influence on material culture.

Recent scholars of nineteenth-century photography, including Jennifer Green-Lewis and Claire Lyons, have noted that antiquities and ruins form a popular subject of early photographs. The nascent technology required long exposure times that may partially explain the popularity of these static archaeological subjects. However, the technological limitations do not fully explain the popularity of ruin photography. The potential for photography to record and thereby halt the decay of these ruins is recognized early. In his speech at the French Academy announcing Daguerre's invention, Arago envisions the use of photography to conserve and consolidate knowledge of the past. He asks, "Is this invention one which will render a valuable service to archaeology and the fine arts?" and proceeds to detail the lost historical treasures of the Middle East:

> While these pictures are exhibited to you, everyone will imagine the extraordinary advantages which could have been derived from so exact and rapid a means of reproduction during the expedition to Egypt; everybody will realize that had we had photography in 1798 we would possess today faithful pictorial records of that which the learned world is forever deprived of by the greed of the Arabs and the vandalism of certain travelers.
>
> To copy the millions of hieroglyphics which cover even the exterior of the great monuments of Thebes, Memphis, Karnak, and others would require decades of time and legions of draughtsmen. By daguerreotype one person would suffice to accomplish this immense work successfully. (15)

Arago's report envisions photography, not as a meager replacement for direct examination of the historical artifact, but as a superior form of historical information in that it not only is "faithful" to the original, but is also permanent in a way that the original monuments can never be. In Arago's view, the photograph records a specific moment in time that never wastes away, becoming a permanent historical document of the constantly decaying original. In fact, the value of the photograph increases as the original artifact decays. Arago's view, however, denies the status of the photograph as a material object that ages and accumulates an aura of historicity as it does so. Arago conceives of the photograph as a timeless, eternal document that seemingly does not accrue a sense of age. The photograph is not itself an historical artifact, although it does record historical artifacts. Arago's viewpoint emerges from the impression that the photograph provides a transparent window on the past. Arago articulates an ideal in which photography will provide the type of distance from the past that will allow for an objective, detached perspective from which to evaluate historical meaning.

The discourse surrounding photography cannot be separated from the idea of history in this time period because, as Green-Lewis notes, "Simply put, and despite its later rhetorical and imaginative association with modernity, photography was from its earliest days understood to convey the look of the past" (26). Fragments, and particularly ruins, are often discussed within an aesthetic context as lending a desirably Romantic affective charge to the viewer. This chapter addresses the role of the fragment in an epistemological context in which it produced much more tension than in its aesthetic context: its role in the debate about how history should be known, represented, and

rendered into narrative.[51] Nineteenth-century photographs of ruins—the type that were extremely popular in topographical albums—reveal how an "antiquarian eye" offers an alternative, less distanced stance of the individual in relation to the past. I set this antiquarian eye in contrast to a topographical album by William and Mary Howitt that promotes a picturesque vision of the ruins in which the photograph becomes an emblem of the desire to keep the past as past—to keep history at a safe distance. At the end of the century, this desire has been left unfulfilled, as M.R. James's *Ghost Stories of an Antiquary* points toward the failure of photography to gratify this desire to situate the past as safely past. Instead, the potential for history to erupt into the present becomes a catalyst of terror.

James's short stories point toward a divergence between a Romantic notion of the past akin to nostalgia or melancholic mourning, and an antiquarian impulse that looks to the past as something that can and does rupture into the present. James uses this idea of rupturing as something that is ripe for exploitation in his horror stories, which are directly descended from Walpole's Gothic tradition. Gothic literature, in fact, relies heavily on this convention of the past erupting into the present, the return of the repressed. Romanticism and antiquarianism are two modes of understanding that speak to each other in many ways, but they are not completely synonymous.[52] Operating from the premise that Romanticism is a multivalent term, I distinguish between two different Romantic modes of apprehension. In keeping with a Romantic emphasis on the perceiver rather

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[51] For a detailed discussion of how ideas about visual representation influence narratives and how language becomes increasingly informed by the visual, see Jennifer Green-Lewis, *Framing the Victorians*, Nancy Armstrong, W.J.T. Mitchell, and Rosemary Mitchell.

[52] For more on the convergence of Romanticism and antiquarianism, see Katie Trumpener or Stephen Bann, *Romanticism and the Rise of History* and *The Clothing of Clio: A Study of the Representation of History in Nineteenth-Century Britain and France*.

than the perceived, the antiquarian eye expresses a particular manner in which the subject is positioned in relation to the past. In terms of the way that it threatens the unity of the present self, distinct from and reflecting backward on the past, antiquarianism diverges from a picturesque Romantic tradition that mourns the past as something glimpsed but ultimately lost forever.

I. The Figure in Early Ruin Photography

Examples of ruin photography, and in particular the use of human figures within those images, suggest the variety of stances or perspectives from which people viewed the past. Charles Merewether articulates the standard narrative of the manner in which the nineteenth century envisioned the function of photography in relation to recording historical artifacts as a "modern technology [that] made sense of ruins . . . by framing ruins as something we know is behind us" (26). Much like Arago's predictions to the French academy, this view of photography strives toward the illusion of distance and objectivity from the visceral, material presence of these remnants of the past. This conception of photography, in which the photograph emotionally distances us from the scene of the historical ruin, moving the image into the realm of detached objectivity and hindsight, is set at odds with what I am calling an antiquarian eye, in which the photographic image becomes more real, visceral, and immediate than the original. These two ways of describing photography correspond to the oscillating notions about the proper stance of the historian toward the past, indicating that the problem of perspective is one that consumes and troubles people as they grapple with describing how the individual should be situated in relation to the past.

Nineteenth-century photographic images drew on a variety of pre-existing artistic conventions, particularly an uneasy mixture of the topographical and picturesque traditions. Topographical albums combine antiquarian local histories and travel writings with artists' engravings and, later, photographs to produce texts that are themselves valued as material artifacts. They grapple with their own status as texts, triangulating the photographic images contained within its pages, the written narrative, and their own status as an aesthetic object. Topographical texts are commonly advertised in their time and described even today as "elegant"—they are privileged as aestheticized objects rather than as purely informational or entertaining texts. Walter Scott collaborated with J. M. W. Turner, among others, to produce a series of topographical texts in this style. In the prefatory advertisement of an 1848 prose-only edition that brings together Scott's accompanying text to the *Provincial Antiquities and Picturesque Scenery of Scotland*, the original illustrated volumes are described as an "elegant Collection." Similarly, the exhibition program from a 1999 exhibition at the National Gallery of Scotland entitled *Turner and Sir Walter Scott* and featuring newly recovered watercolors that Turner contributed to the *Provincial Antiquities,* refers to Scott's illustrated topographical albums as "an elegant serial" (Thomson 12) and "a lavish picture book" (Thomson 15). Besides serving as an antiquarian expression of the intertwined relationship between the textual and the material, topographical albums demonstrate the manner in which antiquaries, prior to the invention of photography, are thinking about the possibilities that visual expression provides for questions of historical epistemology, possibilities that include opening up historical study to the realm of aesthetic and subjective responses to self-consciously artistic and literary historical studies. They also demonstrate how visual

images, and photography in particular, complicate the question of how history can and should be transformed into a written narrative. They move history into the realm of art and literature, going against the prevailing winds that place proper historical practice more appropriately within the purview of science. Antiquaries and antiquarian writing are by turns described in contemporary accounts as sentimental, like a picturesque landscape viewed through a Claude Lorraine glass, and "Dryasdust," to use the term Scott gives to one of his frame narrators that becomes widely adopted to describe the just-the-facts, chronicle style of historiography. "Topographical historian" is often used as a synonym for the antiquary, further solidifying the link between the historical practice of topographical writing and the artistic practice of topographical illustration. For example, Walter Scott conflates the two terms in his opening to the "Essay on Border Antiquities," in which he explains that the separate elements that meet in the border country "unite to render these regions interesting to the topographical historian or antiquary" (4).

Images featured in William and Mary Howitt's 1862 topographical album *Ruined Abbeys and Castles of Great Britain* are typical of ruin photography in this time period. The Howitts' album is one of many that function as tourist guidebooks that are popularized as British tourists inspired by the theories of William Gilpin go in search of picturesque scenery.[53] In "Lanthony Abbey," a photograph by Francis Bedford, a female

[53] William Gilpin's theories of the picturesque influenced visual and landscape artists and inspired picturesque travel writings and tourism. His theories are laid out in *Observations on the River Wye and several parts of South Wales, etc., relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty; made in the summer of the year 1770, An Essay on Prints* (1768), and *Three Essays: On Picturesque Beauty; On Picturesque Travel; and on Sketching Landscape: to which is Added a Poem, On Landscape Painting* (1792). Gilpin's theories, much like Burke's envisioning of the sublime and beautiful, privilege human affect over reason in the definition of aesthetic categories. The simplest definition provided by Gilpin of the picturesque is that given in the glossary of his *An Essay on Prints:* "a term expressive of that peculiar kind of beauty, which is agreeable in a picture" (qtd. from 3rd edition, xii). In his *Three Essays,* Gilpin spends much time distinguishing his category of the picturesque from Burke's beautiful and sublime. As Gilpin describes the picturesque, it seems to overlap a bit with both of Burke's aesthetic categories. A sampling of qualities that

figure gazes in contemplation at the ruins. The temporal separation between the figure and the ruins is emphasized by the contrast between the decayed structure and the figure in impeccable contemporary clothing [See Figure 2]. The Howitts' album is filled with images of ruins populated by figures of tourists who promenade around the decaying landscape. Picturesque landscapes often featured either local people or tourists inhabiting the landscape in a natural way, essentially blending in as a component of the overall subject.[54] This is a Gilpin-inspired, picturesque use of photography that emphasizes the melancholy distance between past and present.

The tourists in these ruin photographs are often not looking at the ruins. The figures blend in as a part of the landscape as they gaze ahead or away from the ruins. Additionally, the figures lounging or strolling comfortably in the ruined landscape essentially lay claim to the ruins as historical objects that can be successfully assimilated aesthetically through the framing of the images, as well as politically. In "Carisbrooke Castle," also from the Howitts' album, the figures lounge around the ruined landscape, turning it into a place of recreation and, in doing so, they lay claim to the landscape and appropriate the ruins for present purposes taken out of the historical context from which the buildings emerged [See Figure 3]. The recreational attitude of the young men in "Carisbrooke Castle," like the contemplative female figure in "Lanthony Abbey,"

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distinguish Gilpin's picturesque as outlined in his essay *On Picturesque Beauty* include ruggedness (6-7), variety, contrast of light and shade (20), and "the happy union of simplicity and variety" (28).

[54] Gilpin writes in his essay *On Picturesque Travel* that "the picturesque eye is perhaps most inquisitive after the elegant relics of ancient architecture; the ruined tower, the Gothic arch, the remains of castles, and abbeys. These are the richest legacies of art. They are consecrated by time; and almost deserve the veneration we pay to the works of nature itself" (*Three Essays* 46). In his essay *On Sketching Landscape*, he notes that "a figure, or two, may be introduced with propriety. By figures I mean moving objects, as wagons, and boats, as well as cattle, and men. But they should be introduced sparingly" (77). These figures are an element of composition functioning "to break a piece of foreground—to point out the horizon in a sea-view—or to carry off the distance of retiring water by the contrast of a dark sail, not quite so distant, placed before it," (77) and they must not detract from the main focus with too much "finishing" of detail (78).

Figure 2: "Lanthony Abbey" by Francis Bedford. *Ruined Abbeys and Castles of Great Britain,* William and Mary Howitt, 1862. Image courtesy of Michigan State University Library Special Collections

Figure 3: "Carisbrooke Castle" by Maclean and Melhuish. *Ruined Abbeys and Castles of Great Britain,* William and Mary Howitt, 1862. Image courtesy of Michigan State University Library Special Collections.

constitutes history as indubitably separate from the present, existing only as an aesthetic, rather than a politically meaningful, landscape.

Claire Lyons has argued that tourist photography featuring British tourists mounted atop ancient ruins in the Middle East visually encapsulates the colonialist project.[55] Similarly, Anne Janowitz argues that the manner in which local ruins were framed in ruin poetry situated the individual's relationship to the local and national histories to which the ruins pointed. This relationship served the purpose of depicting British nationalism as natural and organic rather than constructed in order to suppress regional loyalties. Janowitz argues that Gilpin's theories serve the project of British nationalization because they situate the ruin as an organic part of the natural landscape rather than a product of colonized human hands. Building from Gilpin's description of the ruin as being "[r]ooted for ages in the soil, assimilated to it, and become, as it were a part of it," Janowitz argues that "[w]hat is true for the artifact is true for the nation: in the eighteenth-century ruin sentiment the cultural entity (Britain) was also forged as inextricable from the natural entity (countryside,) not merely superimposed but blended, and the nation came to be understood *as* nature" (5). Gilpin's picturesque allows tourists to view the ruins in a manner that naturalizes and, thus, dehistoricizes the sites. The ruin becomes a site of tension between nature and culture, in which the natural must predominate for the success of the nationalist project. This outcome effaces the work and intervention of human hands in the shaping of the landscape. The result emphasizes the feeling that the ruins are eternally ancient—they have never lived in a vital present—and, conveniently, distances the individual in the present from the often violent events that the ruined architecture commemorates—violence that was often an indication that a shared

[55] See Claire Lyons's essays in *Irresistible Decay* and *Antiquity and Photography*.

sense of nationalism was not always a given.[56] Unless they employ the mediation of picturesque and Romantic theories, antiquarian topographical histories fragment a cohesive British national history into local loyalties.

In *Ruined Abbeys and Castles,* the antiquarian challenge to the cohesive national identity is muted by the Howitts' appropriation of a distanced, aestheticized tone rather than an antiquarian immediacy. The contemplative and picturesque stance evident in the visual images also appears in the narration. The Howitts conclude their album with the following soliloquy that emphasizes temporal distance that dulls the tempestuous political realities of the past, leaving only the beauty of the ruins: "And now, from these fallen haunts and tabernacles of the past spiritual dynasty, come up more reconciled and musical voices. The wrath and the resentment have died out, and we remember only the beauties and the benefits" (228). The Howitts owe a huge debt to Wordsworth, whom they frequently cite in their album, in looking to ruins as the source of a "serene and blessed mood" ("Tintern Abbey," line 41). They, in fact, reproduce Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey poem in its entirety, presented as vital context for viewers to appreciate the scene of the ruins. The Howitts include several photographs of Tintern Abbey in their album. In "View from Chapel Hill" [See Figure 4], the figure's physical distance, looking at the ruins from afar, reproduces Wordsworth's own distanced apprehension of the ruins in his poem.

This distancing produced by the presence of modern figures in their photographs is contrasted and perhaps paradoxically enhanced by the survival of certain aspects of the

[56] Janowitz examines the popularity of literary representations of ruins in Romantic poetry as an expression of the consolidation of British nationalism. She notes how the presence of ruined castles in subdued territories such as Scotland and Ireland complicated this process of consolidating a national, British identity by reminding locals of a violent and oppressive past (3-4).

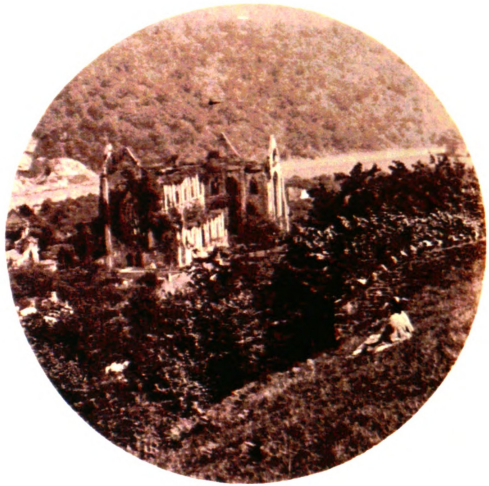

Figure 4: "View from Chapel Hill" by W.R. Sedgfield. *Ruined Abbeys and Castles of Great Britain,* William and Mary Howitt, 1862. Image courtesy of Michigan State University Library Special Collections.

past into the present time. The authors note "[t]he visitor will be agreeably surprised to see the nave converted into a parish church, where divine service is still performed" (4). That these services are "still" performed heightens a sense of loss and nostalgia in that some fragment of the past exists in the present moment. The remnant that remains is the element that points toward the greater part of the past that has been lost irrevocably. The word "still" recurs incessantly through these pages, even in close proximity to the passage just cited: "In different parts of the nave still stand five lofty cylindrical columns" (4), "In the fields near still exists the priory barn" (6), and "These old squires and knights are said to have been buried upright; and if we were to believe Wordsworth, you might still see them through the chinks in the floor standing grimly in that position" (5). The survival of such fragmentary ruins serve to remind the viewer more of what has been lost than of what remains, emphasizing the transitory nature of the ruins rather than their permanence. In doing so, the Howitts construct the ruins as sites of political turmoil that has long been safely suppressed and covered over in the present, thereby reifying the strength of British national cohesion.

The cover of the Howitts' album immediately conditions the reader to view the ruins within a generalized notion of British identity [See Figure 5]. The topographical album announces that it will not be read with the particularizing function of antiquarian topographical histories. First, the title itself, emphasizing that the ruined castles and abbeys are "*of Great Britain*" contrasts with conventional antiquarian titles such as John Hutchins's *History and Antiquities of Dorset* (1774), and William Barrett's *The History and Antiquities of the City of Bristol* (1789), to name just a few representative examples. The Howitts place their ruins within a national context that subsumes all the individual

Figure 5: Cover Image, William and Mary Howitt, *Ruined Abbeys and Castles of Great Britain*. Image Courtesy of Michigan State University Library Special Collections.

sites within a coherent nationalistic project. It is a particularly beautiful book of this genre, with a green leather cover embellished with gilt heraldic designs surrounding a round photograph of Conway Castle. The use of a photograph as the centerpiece of the cover is unusual, and it moves the photographic image into the realm of the purely artistic rather than the documentary or scientific. The photograph's function within the cover is absolutely decorative. It is the centerpiece of the green and gold heraldic designs, suggesting that the ruined castle functions in a similar aesthetic manner. Significantly, although the photograph is duplicated within the pages of text and identified there as Conway Castle, it contains no such identification on the cover. As such, the photograph is not meant to act as a source of information about its content. It is encircled only by the title of the volume. The photograph on the cover stands in as a general representation of all the castles and abbeys within the album and, in doing so, conditions the readers before they open the cover that all the photographs contained within should be read in a similar manner, decontextualized from the specificity of local history and subsumed within a generalized narrative of British history.

The Howitts' description of picturesque solemnity, coupled with their distanced aestheticization of the landscape, stands in contrast to the more unrestrained affect of photographs produced by D.O Hill and Robert Adamson.[57] Better known for their portraiture, the Hill and Adamson partnership also produced an image remarkable for the manner in which it both participates in picturesque conventions and also offers a

[57] D.O. Hill was a successful landscape artist who produced popular topographical albums such as *Sketches of Scenery in Perthshire drawn from Nature and on Stone* (1821-23) and contributed illustrations to editions of Scott and Burns. Between 1843 and 1847, Hill partnered with Robert Adamson as pioneers in the new photographic technology invented by Fox Talbot. For more biographical information on the Hill and Adamson partnership, see Colin Ford and Sara Stevenson.

dramatically different vision of the individual's stance in relation to the ruined landscape. The Hill and Adamson calotype "View of Cardinal Beaton's Castle, St. Andrews" (circa 1843) features a dramatic landscape of rock and water in the foreground and surrounding the ruins [See Figure 6]. The image emphasizes the position of the historical artifacts within the milieu of their natural surroundings, focusing as much on context and local environment as on the ruins themselves. I do not propose that this image is in perfect opposition to ones such as "Lanthony Abbey" in the Howitts' album. Both, for example, are inspired by Gilpin's theories of the picturesque. Like the images from the Howitts' album, the emphasis is less on using the accuracy of the photographic image to capture raw historical data than on aestheticizing the historical ruins within a self-consciously imaginative (rather than realistic) artistic tradition. However, looking at the employment of the picturesque convention of the human figure in the Hill and Adamson photograph reveals that it offers a different take on the past—that of an "antiquarian eye."

A small figure of a man is located close to the center of the image, crouched in an uncomfortable position on the rocks, facing away from the photographer and looking up toward the ruins [See Figure 7]. Although small figures settled within the landscape are a popular convention of the picturesque, this figure stands out in a conspicuous way. The man sits in an uncomfortable crouch and wears inappropriately formal dress for lounging against the dirty rocks. The awkwardness of his physical position, along with his formal physical appearance, prevents him from blending in as a natural part of the landscape. Additionally, his position in the center of the image suggests that he competes with the ruins as an object of focus. The centrality of the man's presence implies that the subject of the photograph is the dialogical relationship between the individual figure and the

Figure 6: "View of Cardinal Beaton's Castle, St. Andrews." Robert Adamson. Circa 1843. Gernsheim Collection, Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, The University of Texas at Austin.

Figure 7: Detail from "View of Cardinal Beaton's Castle, St. Andrews." Robert Adamson. Circa 1843. Gernsheim Collection, Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin.

ancient ruins rather than the ruins themselves, taken out of the context of such personal scrutiny.

Contemporary observers would have been aware of the castle's prominent place within Scottish history. Cardinal Beaton's Castle derives its name from Cardinal David Beaton, who in 1546 was gruesomely tortured and then hung from a castle window by local Protestant landholders in retaliation for his burning a Protestant preacher at the stake, also on the site of the castle. Besides the local resonance of these events, the castle site connects to larger and long-lasting national events, particularly Beaton's guardianship of the infant Mary Queen of Scots and his refusal to permit a marriage alliance between Mary and the son of England's Henry VIII. These events are only one portion of a long and violent history that imbues the site with a romantic, affective charge that also privileges an antiquarian emphasis on local history. The title handwritten on the back of the print points toward this privileging of local historical knowledge in its substitution of the more historically evocative and locally meaningful name "Cardinal Beaton's Castle" for the more common geographical name "St. Andrews Castle," derived from the name of the adjoining town.

Because of the historical events associated with the site, the figure's crouching position evokes the secretive approach of the Protestant leaders as they broached the castle walls to assassinate Cardinal Beaton. In doing so, the image challenges the pattern Janowitz establishes as conventional in ruin poetry of the period in which the treasonous events associated with the site remain conveniently distanced and aestheticized within the past. The Hill and Adamson photograph of Cardinal Beaton's Castle challenges the separation of past and present through the ominous crouching figure that reenacts the

breaching of the castle even as his clothing emphasizes temporal distance. The figure allows the past to bleed into the present, or at least to call into question the neat separation of the two. This figure in the landscape encapsulates an antiquarian subject position within the image, particularly in terms of my previous assertions that the antiquarian impulse lingers on the hypersubjectivity of the antiquarian subject in relation to the historical object of study. This intense focus on the antiquarian subject is mirrored in the depiction of antiquaries as exhibiting an intensely affective, sentimentalizing interest in the past rather than a more distanced interest, whether this distance derives from a position of romantic nostalgia or objective analysis. The antiquary (and by this term, I always mean to refer to the *figure* of the antiquary) exhibits an intense hyper-subjectivity that threatens Enlightenment ideals about the appropriate stance of the historian as objective expert and, by extension, epistemological notions about the proper way to access knowledge of the past.

Just as the figure in "View of Cardinal Beaton's Castle" embodies an antiquarian subject position, the photographer also serves as a site of speculation concerning the proper stance taken in orientation to the past. Much like the debate about whether the historian is properly a shaper of the historical record or a recorder of facts, the photographer calls into question the nature and use value of his medium. Whether the ideal historian is like Hume in the eighteenth century, who talks in general and universalizing terms without the use of primary evidence, or like Leopold von Ranke and those who came after him who focus on the use of archival materials, this appropriate or legitimated historical stance is one in which the historian effaces his identity as a

fashioner of a text and is instead a conduit of historical fact.[58] The illusion of objectivity maintained by historians, set in contrast to the antiquarian hyper-subjectivity, identifies the role of the subject as a central point of contention in the discourse surrounding historical epistemology in this period.[59]

The antiquarian subject-position in reference to the historical past neither conforms to an objective and authoritative separation of historian from the past, nor emphasizes an attempt to completely immerse oneself in the past. It occupies an ambivalent space—one that calls attention to the tensions between a submersion within the historical past and an objective distancing and, in doing so, foregrounds the simultaneous impossibility of breaching the distance between past and present and yet the compelling desire to do so. The small figure in Adamson's photograph signifies this tension. He is simultaneously a part of the historical landscape and also conspicuously does not belong. Additionally, the positioning of the ruins within a distinct landscape that situates it as an atmospheric scene emphasizes the aestheticization of the ruins, pointing toward the guiding hand of an artist who has self-consciously shaped the scene. The partnership of Hill and Adamson, in which Hill with his extensive artistic training directed the scene for the mechanical-minded Adamson, makes this split identity of the photographer even more apparent.

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[58] Richard Schoch characterizes the Rankean empirical historians: "It was as if no one actually wrote history, since the historian was an assiduous yet still passive scribe who arranged primary documents without imposing any extrinsic interpretation upon that arrangement. The professional nineteenth-century historian was thus a kind of ghostwriter whose feigned absence from within his own narrative was the precise guarantor of its authenticity" (27-8).

[59] On this issue of the historian's appropriate subject-position, see also Nietzsche's writings in *Untimely Meditations*. In his essay "On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life," he critiques views in which "What is then preferred is that which produces no emotion at all and the driest phrase is the right phrase. One goes so far, indeed, as to believe that he to whom a moment of the past *means nothing at all* is the proper man to describe it" (93). Also, "These naïve historians call the assessment of the opinions and deeds of the past according to the everyday standards of the present moment 'objectivity': it is here they discover the canon of all truth; their task is to adapt the past to contemporary triviality. On the other hand, they call all historiography 'subjective' that does not accept these popular standards as canonical" (90-91).

Similarly, a comparison between the image of Cardinal Beaton's Castle with another one in the same series of photographs taken by Hill and Adamson highlights the tensions between the topographical and picturesque conventions in antiquarian imagery. The photograph "St. Mary's Chapel, St. Andrews" (circa 1843) again features an historical ruin as its subject matter [See Figure 8]. This image, however, is neither placed within a landscape nor follows other conventions of a picturesque tradition. The photograph of St. Mary's Chapel divorces the historical object from an atmospheric and picturesque landscape. The narrow focus here on the architectural ruin itself aligns it with a topographical tradition that emphasizes accuracy for the purposes of historical documentation and information. According to Lucy Peltz, antiquarian engravers such as George Vertue and John Thomas Smith privileged accuracy, emphasized points of view that were either on the same plane as the ground or were bird's eye, overhead views, and eschewed picturesque additions such as evidences of dilapidation or objects overgrown with ivy.[60] These two photographs by Hill and Adamson illustrate antiquarianism's two representational impulses, the documentary and the picturesque. The photograph of Cardinal Beaton's Castle follows picturesque conventions in that it is taken from a low point of view, a technique suggested by Gilpin to increase the impression of the sublime, while the photograph of St. Mary's Chapel is taken from a point of view parallel to the ground. Additionally, the more modern fence encircling the chapel emphasizes that this

[60] According to Peltz, antiquaries even eliminated existing signs of age in order to present objects in their supposedly original form: "Antiquarians preferred to see the antique object *intact*; as a 'truly magnificent . . . structure [which] was not that which most showed its age but that which through careful . . . refurbishment retained a fresh appearance in defiance of time.' Representations encouraged this desire for a 'gloss of perfection' which enabled the viewer to imagine the subject in its prime" (482). I do not completely ascribe to the assumption of Peltz's argument that seeks to reinscribe the idea that antiquarianism can be neatly categorized under a single set of characteristics that include the pedantic privileging of accuracy and detail. However, her argument describes one side of the oscillation of antiquarian discourse between two opposing poles.

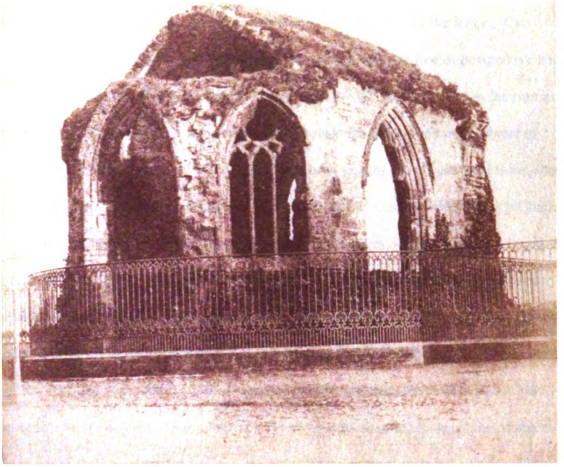

Figure 8: "St. Mary's Chapel, St. Andrews." Robert Adamson. Circa 1843. Gernsheim Collection. Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, The University of Texas at Austin.

ruin has been divorced from its original function as a place of religious worship and has been differently consecrated as a preserved historical site, protected and separated from a vital present by the physical separation effected by the presence of the fence. The absence of a tourist figure contemplating the ruin along with the line of perspective and the lack of a contextualizing landscape suggest that this photograph situates the ruin as an object of scientific study by the viewer of the photograph rather than as an object of picturesque, Gilpin-inspired tourism. Although both images are of historical ruins, the contrast of form between the images of Cardinal Beaton's Castle and St. Mary's Chapel highlights the two divergent and complementary trajectories of the antiquarian impulse.

In *Ruined Abbeys and Castles* the Howitts immediately distance their album from antiquarian albums of the same genre, and they see photography as the tool that allows them to do so. The text opens with a demonstration and discussion of the topographical or "dry" writing style that the Howitts associate with antiquarianism. They propose to bring in a more picturesque or pictorial style of writing. In this album, photographs take the place of the engraved drawings of earlier antiquarian topographical albums. The Howitts' preface heralds this technological change as an advancement in the efforts toward greater accuracy in the illustration of topographical albums:

> In this volume the Publisher has availed himself of the accuracy of Photography to present to the reader the precise aspect of the places which, at the same time, are commended to his notice by the pen. It appears to us a decided advance in the department of Topography, thus to unite it to Photography. The reader is no longer left to suppose himself at the mercy of the imaginations, the caprices, or the deficiencies of artists,

> but to have before him the genuine presentment of the object under consideration.

Within the purview of this album, imaginative constructions by artists that potentially embellish a landscape beyond its natural attributes are seen to undermine the topographical project. Interestingly, however, the Howitts feel that this type of imaginative construction is vitally necessary within the text, turning against the typical topographical writings of the day. To illustrate their point, the authors open with a short section written in the topographical style describing their first subject, Bolton Priory, and then immediately criticize this style before providing a taste of the more lyrical, expressive text that is to come. The authors give a detailed history of the structure and the circumstances surrounding its construction, citing their sources as they proceed. A short excerpt will serve to illustrate the style and authoritative tone:

> Bolton, (says Dugdale, carefully copied by the 'Magna Britannia' of 1731,) [was] a monastery of regular canons of St. Augustine, founded in 1120 by Robert de Romeli, Lord of Skipton-in-Craven, and Cecilia his wife, daughter and heir of William de Meschines, Lord of Coupland in Cumberland, at Emesey, and by them sufficiently endowed. It was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin and St. Cuthbert the bishop; and Cecilia, in her widowhood, gave for the soul of her husband, and Ranulph and Matthew, her sons, her whole lordship of Childewick, with the mill and soke thereof, as also of Siglesden and Harwood, with the suit thereof. (1-2)

The Howitts' method of narration exhibits the hallmarks of the topographical style, featuring an obsessive insertion of historical authorities that punctuate and interrupt the syntactical flow of the sentence. We learn parenthetically that the facts about Bolton derive from the historian Dugdale, who in turn "carefully copied" them from a primary source. What follows is a list of names that traces the genealogy of the site in the old-fashioned "chronicle" style of history from the Middle Ages (that, perhaps not coincidentally, seems reminiscent of historical genealogies of the Old Testament). The elaborate syntactical structure is not meant for beauty of expression. Rather, the circuitous phrases and repetition of the legalistic adverb "thereof," emphasize the authoritative and factual nature of the subject matter rather than the aesthetic pleasure to be derived from viewing the scenery at Bolton Priory.

After a demonstrative prelude written in this dry style, the authors then muse on the style of the topographer that they have chosen to adopt in the opening pages:

> Here the reader has the whole skeleton history of the priory of Bolton, near Skipton-in-Craven, in the style which down to near our own time prevailed amongst topographers; and which often prevails amongst them now. This was the genuine Dryasdust system, by which you got the bare bones of the chief facts, and nothing but the bare bones; no flesh, no muscle, no skin, no beautifying colour and life. Topographers till the time of such men as Surtees of Durham, Whitaker the historian of Craven, Baker of Northampton, etc., seemed to imagine that nothing was worthy of record but the driest of facts and genealogies. All those environments of scenery which are the life-blood of every place, were left out, and instead

> of a living presence we were presented with a corpse. Who would imagine that in Bolton we had one of the most charming spots, mingling the loveliest art with the loveliest nature that England or any other county can show? (2-3)

The Howitts echo the same biological tropes used by Horace Walpole in a letter written to Rev. Cole on 1 September 1778, over 80 years earlier: "The antiquarians will be as ridiculous as they used to be; and, since it is impossible to infuse taste into them, they will be as dry and dull as their predecessors. One may revive what perished, but it will perish again, if more life is not breathed into it than it enjoyed originally" (*Correspondence,* Vol II. 116). The Howitts liken dry antiquarian writing to a dry, bloodless corpse or skeleton, lacking a vital stylistic component that creates good writing. Similarly, the organic tropes employed by Walpole, in which antiquarian writing is conceived of as a dead, lifeless zombie, form part of a larger and enduring discursive trend in which antiquarianism is linked to the organic and biological rather than the mechanistic. This trend connects to Janowitz's observation in her study of England's ruins that within the romantic mode of history, ruins become equated with nature as their process of decay appears to reconstitute the work of human culture back to the realm of nature and the organic. It also has resonance for the oscillating tropes of dry sterility and "wet," or abundant sentimentality, used in reference to the figure of the antiquary as noted by scholars such as Mike Goode.[61]

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[61] See also an interesting article in *The Atlantic* in November 1918 by William Roscoe Thayer entitled "History—Quick or Dead?" in which Thayer responds to a negative review of his recent biography of an Italian historical figure. The critic complained that Thayer's biography made his readers "feel the passions of the persons great and small who played in the drama of the Risorgimento" and that "This is not History" (635). In response, Thayer explains that there is a divide between what he calls fact-based, "dead" history set in contrast to his "quick" more subjective, lyrical form of historiography. Besides fitting into the organic tropes mentioned above, this article demonstrates that the debate about the correct, appropriate

After leveling these accusations against antiquarian writing, the Howitts then continue to give their own version of a "good" history of the site:

> But let us look a little at the ruins of the priory before taking in the whole picture. The ruins, surrounded and mingled with magnificent trees, present a most exquisite combination of towers, lofty broken arches and gable, with projections and windows of most varied character, draped with ivy, and standing on its low green sward in a noble monastic solemnity. The different portions of the building display every successive style from the Norman down to the decorated, the final order of Anglo-Gothic. It is evident at a glance that it has been the work of successive hands, and successive ages. To comprehend the whole, the visitor must examine the details for himself. (3)

After this explanatory and descriptive transition to the narrative style the Howitts approve, they backtrack to the "skeletal" facts they already reviewed and this time linger on the details, interspersing anecdotes and descriptive passages to illustrate the history they had previously summarized in chronicle style.

Ruined Abbeys and Castles addresses the issue of narrative style, perhaps because the Howitts seem to believe that the photographic illustrations remove the burden of accuracy from the text and free them up for more narrative experimentation in a lyrical style. Their text supplements the photograph in that each medium contributes to the project of rendering a physical place into historical narrative. Different reactions to photography and different conceptions of what the essential nature of the new medium is

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form of historical representation is one that is not contained within the temporal or national boundaries of my argument.

mean that people such as the Howitts and others struggle with what implications their photographic illustrations have on their written narratives. Some antiquaries such as William Bryans deal with the new photographic technology by eliminating presumably superfluous textual description, relying solely on short, descriptive captions in his 1858 topographical album *Antiquities of Cheshire*. The Howitts choose instead to incorporate a stylistic adjustment in their prose. This oscillation between paucity and abundance is characteristic of the productive tension of antiquarian discourse that produces such seemingly disparate styles and narratives as imaginative historical fiction and dry, just-the-facts, chronicle histories. Both are extreme reactions to the struggle to figure out how to narrativize historical knowledge.

As the Howitts conclude *Ruined Abbeys and Castles*, we learn that their conception of the project of the text has been largely formed by the presence of the photographs as a necessary supplement to the inadequacy of their written words. They conclude with a description of what their words lack for the reader—an element that can adequately transmit the feeling of sublimity produced by the ruined architecture. This sublimity, the Howitts argue, is limited or removed in the process of aestheticizing the scenes with "the eye of poetry and pictorial effect":

> We are so accustomed to regard these with the eye of poetry and pictorial effect, that we almost forget at times the stupendous power of which they are the signs, and of the great conflict and victory of which they preserve the remembrance. How little do we now realize the state, and the veneration amounting to terror, with which these superb palaces and temples of a gigantic priesthood were surrounded! With what feelings an

> ignorant and simple population gazed on their sculptured towers and quaintly-chiselled pinnacles, and at the sound of their matin or their vesper anthems prostrated their souls before an overshadowing dread which drew its triple force from the powers of earth, of heaven, and of hell. (225)

The Howitts feel that the aestheticized language they have adopted in the text distances their readers from the sublimity felt by the people of the past when they gazed on the same scenes with "veneration amounting to terror." They proceed with the repeating phrases "How little do we now realize," "How little feel we," "We no longer see," "No longer . . . do we behold," "No longer do we drop . . . on our knees," (226-227). They end with the statement that encapsulates the project pursued within the text, "We can talk of it, but we cannot feel it. It is beyond words, beyond the subtlest force of re-creative imagination" (227). Because their project is something that is "beyond words," photography holds out a promise in the text that would provide something that written narrative is incapable of capturing. This promise, however, does not correspond to the Burkean sublime. It is a tamed version of the sublime, one that covers over the terror of past political turmoil spilling into the present. The conventions of the picturesque in these images thus contain the violence associated with these physical places. As M.R. James demonstrates in his antiquarian ghost stories, however, the stability of this containment of the past is less than assured.

II. An Antiquarian Take on the Photograph

Gilpin's theory of the picturesque provides a theoretical matrix for reading images of ruins. The theory of the picturesque carries over from the pre-photographic era and

continues to hold an important position in the composition and interpretation of photographic images. I have described the picturesque as a mode that is not completely at odds with the antiquarian perspective on the past, but that it is often deployed as a method of suppressing the dangerous tendencies of antiquarianism to challenge the authority of a nationalist historical narrative. In his essays on photography, Oliver Wendell Holmes provides an alternative interpretive matrix for considering the function of photography, one that emphasizes an antiquarian eye in contrast to the muted effect of the picturesque. Holmes does this by conceiving of the photograph as a direct, material link to the object depicted rather than as a method of distancing and aestheticizing the photographic subject.

In his 1859 essay "The Stereoscope and the Stereograph," Oliver Wendell Holmes articulates the materiality of the photograph in a vivid manner, building on the mechanics of producing the photographic image as an organic, chemical trace of its subject. He describes the action of photography as one in which the camera captures an invisible film being shed from material objects. Holmes cites the philosopher Democritus's belief that "all bodies were continually throwing off certain images like themselves, which subtile emanations, striking on our bodily organs, gave rise to our sensations. . . . Forms, effigies, membranes, or *films*, are the nearest representatives of the terms applied to these effluences. They are perpetually shed from the surfaces of solids, as bark is shed by trees. *Cortex* is, indeed, one of the names applied to them by Lucretius" (72). For Holmes, this material, organic trace of reality forms a central component of photography's power to amaze him. He repeats this conception of photography as the capturing of a material "film" being shed by concrete objects in the landscape in a

subsequent essay, "Sun Paintings and Sun Sculptures." Building on a grisly comparison of portraiture to the flaying of human skin, he encourages people to replace physical travel with stereoscopic tourism. "We are now flaying our friends and submitting to be flayed ourselves, every few years or months or days . . . We lift an impalpable scale from the surface of the Pyramids. We slip off from the dome of St. Peter's that other imponderable dome which fitted it so closely that it betrays every scratch on the original" (13). He then encourages the practice of stereographic tourism as an adequate replacement for travel for the very reason that the experience of viewing a stereograph, a nineteenth-century curiosity in which two identical but slightly-offset images are looked at simultaneously through a viewer, exceeds that of being physically present at the scene. He concludes his essay on the stereograph with a grand pronouncement on what the new technology will bring for the future:

> Form is henceforth divorced from matter. In fact, matter as a visible object is of no great use any longer, except as the mould on which form is shaped. Give us a few negatives of a thing worth seeing, taken from different points of view, and that is all we want of it. Pull it down or burn it up, if you please. . . . Every conceivable object of Nature and Art will soon scale off its surface for us. Men will hunt all curious, beautiful, grand objects, as they hunt the cattle in South America, for their skins, and leave the carcasses as of little worth. (80-81)

In Holmes's envisioning of what the future holds, photographs render the original objects as useless as a discarded animal carcass. The photographic representation exceeds the original to such an extent that he declares we can "pull it down or burn it up, if you

please." Holmes envisions the photograph as a receptacle for organic traces, scales, or flayed layers of skin shed from the original. The photograph, in this sense, is not a representation of a separate original subject, but is actually a material, even an organic, artifact in its own right. Encapsulated by Holmes's declaration that "form is henceforth divorced from matter," the idea of photography enabled a more self-conscious attitude among historians about the status of their sources as forms of media rather than simple containers or receptacles of knowledge. It also privileges the immediacy provoked by the photograph rather than the distance between viewer and viewed.

The goal of capturing "solidity"—the impression of a fully realized representation of the lived past—in photography is one that Holmes articulates in an unusual way. The stereoscope achieves the elusive goal of solidity. Of the stereoscope, Holmes writes:

> We see something with the second eye, which we did not see with the first; in other words, the two eyes see different pictures of the same thing, for the obvious reason that they look from points two or three inches apart. By means of these two different views of an object, the mind, as it were, *feels round it* and gets an idea of its solidity. We clasp an object with our eyes, as with our arms, or with our hands, or with our thumb and finger, and then we know it to be something more than a surface (75).

Holmes envisions a "solid" truth deriving from a nonlinear and multidimensional combination of two different perspectives, a departure from the epistemological stance in which there is only one single linear perspective on truth. The two glimpses provided by the stereoscope are two visual fragments that add up to something more than what is provided by a single image. Holmes's vision of the stereoscope provides an analogy for

one of the enduring interpretive problems within antiquarian historical methodologies. Detractors characterize antiquarianism as a methodology that is interested in fragments without a sense of a coherent, governing theory or narrative. Holmes's stereoscope serves as an embodiment of an alternative way of viewing antiquarian history—the idea that all of these fragments or glimpses, looked at holistically, do together form a coherent picture of the past, but one that does not necessarily conform to a linear notion of historical narration.

Holmes stands in contrast to contemporary theorists of photography such as Lady Eastlake, who want to interpret photography according to its success or failure at conforming to previous existing artistic conventions. Holmes praises the photograph for the lack of distinction between important and inconsequential details:

> This distinctness of the lesser details of a building or a landscape often gives us incidental truths which interest us more than the central object of the picture. . . . We have often found these incidental glimpses of life and death running away with us from the main object the picture was meant to delineate. The more evidently accidental their introduction, the more trivial they are in themselves, the more they take hold of the imagination" ("The Stereoscope and the Stereograph" 79).

Lady Eastlake judges photography according to its conformity to the expectations of artistic convention. Holmes, in contrast, emphasizes qualities that demonstrate an "antiquarian eye." These different modes of interpreting photography can be likened to the descriptions of antiquarian historical treatises as trivial collections of historical anecdotes and details without the mediation of a clear and progressive narrative or

historical interpretation. Eastlake and Holmes's efforts to grapple with the ontological status of the photograph demonstrates that, like antiquarian historical writings, photographic images are judged according to their conformity to previously existing interpretive matrices.

III. The Antiquarian Ghost Stories of M.R. James

In M.R. James's short stories, narrated by various antiquaries, the past unexpectedly comes alive and erupts into the present precisely in a way that disrupts the distanced stance sanctioned by both Enlightenment and Romantic ideals. James's short horror stories are distinguished by their use of sudden, visceral, and unexplained visual imagery at climactic moments in their plots. These images appear with little context and often disappear without much more explanation. The Jamesian pricking detail is similar to Holmes's ideas about photography. The characteristic element of James's stories, similar to Holmes's privileging of the unexpected "incidental truth," are pricking moments of visceral, fragmentary details decontextualized from the laws of narrative logic.[62] Holmes's conception is translated into an element of narrative form that becomes part of the expression of the antiquarian impulse in these texts.

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[62] Holmes's idea also calls to mind a comparison to Barthes's *punctum* that is the element of the photograph that "will break," "punctuate," or "prick" the observer. According to Barthes, "it is this element which rises from the scene, shoots out of it like an arrow, and pierces me" (26). The examples Barthes gives of the *punctum* seem like details or fragments—"boy's big cloth cap, another's necktie"—but he values them for the way in which they seem to open up an entire imagined and coherent world of knowledge behind the photographic image that remains firmly in the realm of affect rather than intellect. "In order to perceive the *punctum*, no analysis would be of any use to me (but perhaps memory sometimes would, as we shall see): it suffices to say that the image be large enough, that I do not have to study it (this would be of no help at all), that, given right there on the page, I should receive it right here in my eyes" (42-3). Barthes privileges the illusion of direct and unmediated affective knowledge (in contrast to intellectual knowledge) that the *punctum* seems to provide.

Whereas the methodical uncovering and narration of the national past is typically implicated in the nationalist project (one in which James's academic work participated), his fiction suggests that the strength of the nation rests in preserving an antiquarian relationship to the past, one that privileges local, oral histories.[63] James operates within the tradition of antiquarian/gothic writers established by Walpole and Scott, and his ghostly short stories at the turn of the twentieth century represent a continuation of the antiquarian impulse. Beginning with his collection *Ghost Stories of an Antiquary* in 1904 and continuing through several more volumes into the 1920s, M.R. James uses his stories to fictionalize some of the ideas about history and knowledge that form the basis of his academic career as Provost of Eton (1918-1936), cataloguer of ancient and medieval manuscripts, and amateur archaeologist. James's scholarly work in the discovery and attribution of medieval manuscripts, as well as the recovery of folklore and oral tradition, is discursively continuous with the gothic terror of his antiquarian ghost stories. The fact that his protagonists are typically either private scholars or university professors who encounter terrifying circumstances in the course of their academic work ties together James's academic and fictional writings. Although his popular fiction and his academic work are not performing the same function, they engage in the same conversation. Scholars, however, have strangely divorced James's academic work, which is legitimized

[63] Just as all gothic novels do not exhibit an antiquarian influence, all ghost stories are not antiquarian. Several studies of the English ghost story have acknowledged a particular antiquarian strain of the ghost story, however. Julia Briggs briefly gestures toward such an acknowledgment in *Night Visitors* when she refers to "a type of ghost story in which the strong atmosphere of a particular place (or object) is used to summon up the past" (61). Briggs nonetheless chooses to divorce M.R. James's stories from their antiquarianism as evidenced by the title of her chapter on James, "No Mere Antiquary." In more explicit terms, Jack Sullivan identifies the "antiquarian ghost story" as a recognizable and thematically coherent category. Sullivan, however, argues that M.R. James originates this form rather than drawing connections between James and an earlier antiquarian tradition. Further, Sullivan believes that only M.R. James practices this form in its best and purest form, tracing the failure of James's predecessors to fully realize the artistic achievements evident in James's stories. In doing so, Sullivan not only fails to recognize James's predecessors, but also fails to establish a clear line of succession after James. For Sullivan, James stands as a talented anomaly oddly separated from a clear antiquarian tradition.

within the disciplinary boundaries of academia, from his popular ghost stories. Standard biographies of James barely mention his fiction.[64] James's stories exhibit a complicated relationship to his historical scholarship, emphasizing the unknowable, the fragmented, and the constructed nature of historical narratives. The barely-glimpsed specters of James's fiction are the material manifestations of the epistemological limits of empirical historical inquiry.

Whereas photographs in *Ruined Abbeys and Castles* use picturesque conventions to disguise the violence of the ruined sites, James's story "The Mezzotint" features an engraving, subsequently photographed, in which the boring typicality of convention turns out merely to disguise violence that has not been domesticated. At the beginning of the story, Williams, the director of a university art museum, has received a shipment of topographical pictures from a London art dealer to consider purchasing for his university's collection. The shipment contains a note from the dealer suggesting that Williams might be especially interested in one particular mezzotint. This mezzotint, which features a manor house of unknown origin and location, does not appear out of the ordinary to Williams, especially given the inflated price, and he plans to return it to the dealer. Over the course of the evening and the next day, Williams and several witnesses note that the mezzotint changes. First they see a mysterious figure in the corner, barely entering the frame. Williams assumes he simply overlooked it at first. After several hours, the figure now appears halfway across the yard walking toward the house. It is "crawling on all-fours towards the house, and it was muffled in a strange black garment with a white cross on the back" (43). Later, the figure is gone, but one of the windows in

[64] On the effacement of James's ghost stories from the historical record, see for example Richard William Pfaff's standard biography of James or the more recent *The Legacy of M.R. James*, Ed. Lynda Dennison.

front of the house is opened. Lastly, the figure appears walking toward the spectators. It is a skeletal figure with a "white dome-like forehead and a few straggling hairs" and it carries a baby, ostensibly snatched from the home, in its arms. Shortly afterward, the mezzotint image reverts to its former state, without the mysterious skeletal figure.

Throughout the narrative, the characters feel that they are witnessing a horrific event that occurred in the past. Despite their feelings that these events are historical in nature, they attempt several methods to halt the progression of the image. Williams writes, signs, and dates a detailed description of the image. Later, he asks his friend Nisbet to write and sign a similar description of the image. Their written testimonies are an attempt to limit the proliferating horror of the shifting image by containing it within the bounds of narration. The full horror of the image is dawning on Williams and he develops a plan to gather testimony from another witness and "then I must get the thing photographed before it goes further" (46). At this point in the text, the protagonists suggest that photography has the ability to halt the progress of the shifting mezzotint "before it goes further," thereby providing an opposing technological force to the image that refuses to be contained within the static past. They attempt to control the mezzotint through the mediation of textual and photographic recording, attempts that are unsuccessful as the image continues to shift. The horror emerges from the fact that the past is supposed to be frozen, contained, even captured in the sense that photography captures an image and, in doing so, the act of photography constructs that image as immediately, irrevocably in the past. When photography does not function this way, panic ensues among the witnesses in James's story.

In the end of "The Mezzotint," they piece together the mystery of the engraving from a combination of their own witnessed accounts, the fragmentary label on the back of the artifact, a short entry from a local guide-book, and an oral account of local legend. Their detective work is predicated on their assumption that, even though they sense that this paranormal kidnapping occurred in the past, by figuring out the location and by attempting to halt the image's progression, they can actually intervene in a historical event. The antiquaries here move toward a vision of the past that is not actually past—a stance that invites a sense of horror about history rather than a Romantic sense of nostalgia for what is lost. Their multiple attempts to record and account for the past events they witness unfolding in the image suggests that stories (or history itself in a grander sense) are not told by people about objects. The objects tell their own stories. Williams, Nisbet, and their friends, despite their efforts to take active control of the situation, are really just passive observers of a past that demands their attention rather than having the ability to lay claim to the past and mold it as they see fit. Neither the topographical image nor the physical site of the kidnapping can be assimilated under the rubric of picturesque or historiographical conventions.

The story uses a type of image common to antiquarian topographical albums like the Howitts' *Ruined Abbeys and Castles* to explore questions of historical authentication and the permanence of the historical record. The seeming ordinariness of the mezzotint, similar to many others that "may be seen in a good many old inn parlours, or in the passages of undisturbed country mansions" (39), heightens the horror of the mysterious events that occur next. The image's boring typicality, which almost convinces the protagonist Williams to reject it as a purchase, is a temporary disguise for the

supernatural crime it later depicts. By the end of the story, the image has returned to its former banality. The changing image suggests that the most prosaic historical record (whether visual or textual) already contains something exotic and potentially dangerous, like the violence evoked by the crouching man in the Hill and Adamson photograph of Cardinal Beaton's Castle. This danger derives from the sense in James's stories that the past is not only channeled through these material objects, but also that the past forcefully bursts through the objects, demanding attention from unsuspecting observers who may have assumed that a neat divide exists between the present and the past. The mezzotint is still alive in a certain way. The historian cannot control these texts/objects and the presumably dead past therefore erupts into the vital present.

Demonstrating that James has more than a passing interest in the idea of photography, this pattern of photographing a dangerous historical text/object also occurs in his earliest story. "Canon Alberic's Scrapbook," written in 1894 and appearing in the *National Review* in March 1895, was part of the compilation *Ghost Stories of an Antiquary*, which also included "The Mezzotint." Both of these stories are linked by reference to the scholar Dennistoun, whose interest in visual representations of historical objects and architecture drives the narratives. In typical Jamesian fashion, however, Dennistoun is not the direct narrator. The stories are told secondhand through an unnamed friend. The stories also contain elements that link them thematically in terms of how they complicate the idea of visual representations of the past and how photography provides an alternative mode of capturing historical information.

In "Canon Alberic's Scrapbook," Dennistoun has traveled to France with a group of friends. He journeys ahead of his friends in order to devote extra time for studying St.

Bertrand's Church in the small village of St. Bertrand de Comminges, noting that while his friends would be satisfied with a brief tour of the church the following day, his curiosity exceeds theirs. He spends a day in the church supervised by the sacristan, an old man in whom Dennistoun notes "a curious furtive, or rather hunted and oppressed, air which he had" (2). Dennistoun has "proposed to himself to fill a notebook and to use several dozen plates in the process of describing and photographing every corner of the wonderful church" (1), a task that he fulfills during the course of the day despite the strange and unwanted supervision of the sacristan. As the sun begins to set, Dennistoun and the sacristan leave the church and the sacristan asks Dennistoun if he would be interested in looking at an old book in his possession. This book is Canon Alberic's scrapbook, a textual artifact of great value filled with leaves from ancient Christian manuscripts. Dennistoun purchases the scrapbook for a bargain, intending to take it back to Cambridge, his university. The scrapbook, however, contains a disturbing drawing by Canon Alberic himself of a demon confronting King Solomon in his court. That evening, the demon appears in Dennistoun's room, indicating that it is somehow connected to possession of the book. The innkeeper's servingmen burst in and drive away the demon.

Similar to the characters in "The Mezzotint," Dennistoun decides that photography has the ability to limit or control the historical record. At the end of the story, we learn that "[t]he book is in the Wentworth Collection at Cambridge. The drawing was photographed and then burnt by Dennistoun on the day when he left Comminges on the occasion of his first visit" (18-19). Although there is no direct explanation for this course of action, the first assumption is that the drawing has important historical value that must be recorded, so that is why a photograph is taken.

Secondly, the original drawing contains a dangerous power over viewers, sometimes summoning the physical manifestation of a demon, and so it must be destroyed. Lastly, the implication is that photography as a mode of representation would somehow eliminate the spiritual or affective power of the original image while simultaneously preserving important historical information. Essentially, this view of photography suggests that it provides dry, scientific information without the complication of provoking an emotional response. The text explains, however, that photography does not limit the power of the image, with subsequent eyewitnesses describing the photograph as disturbing.

The story complicates Dennistoun's simplistic view of photography as existing in the realm of documentary or objective knowledge as indicated by the narrator's description of the morphology expert's reaction to the sight of the photographic image. We first learn of the existence of a photographic image of the notorious demon engraving halfway through the story, when the narrator interjects that the drawing no longer exists but that he possesses a photograph of it. The text then delivers an elaborate description of the image, and of the effect the photographic image has on viewers:

> I entirely despair of conveying by any words the impression which this figure makes upon anyone who looks at it. I recollect once showing the photograph of the drawing to a lecturer on morphology—a person of, I was going to say, abnormally sane and unimaginative habits of mind. He absolutely refused to be alone for the rest of that evening, and he told me afterwards that for many nights he had not dared to put out his light before

> going to sleep. . . . One remark is universally made by those to whom I have shown the picture: "It was drawn from the life." (11-12)

The sight of the photograph, rather than providing documentary data to the morphology expert, produces a severe affective reaction that limits the morphologist's powers of analysis and, in the case of the scholarly narrator, limits his rational ability to describe the image in words. The morphologist's inability to speak is echoed in the narrator's inability to describe the photograph to the reader. It cannot be assimilated into narrative or contained by aesthetic conventions.

These stories by M.R. James, as well as the photograph by Hill and Adamson, suggest not only a divergence from the neat dichotomy between Enlightenment and Romantic stances toward the past. They also suggest an alternative conception of photography that diverges from the familiar Benjaminian conception of photography as symptomatic of a distinctively modern, forward-looking perspective. This stance, which I call the "antiquarian eye," has much more in common with Roland Barthes' notion of the photographic *punctum*, the fragmentary detail or element in the image that "will break," "punctuate," or "prick" the observer and that opens up the perception to an entire lived experience beyond the frame of the image. The antiquarian conception of the photograph as a material object that accrues an affective aura is an indication that the modernist conception of the photograph, in the Benjaminian sense, as a "mechanical reproduction" that functions to eliminate the aura of the original artifact is one that departs from the antiquarian stance. The notion of the photograph as mechanical reproduction has partially eclipsed this alternative outlook on the manner in which people conceived of photography as defining a particularly antiquarian eye on the past.

Chapter Five: George Eliot's *Romola* and the Dignity of History

I. A Different Kind of Historical Novel

In this chapter I offer Eliot's *Romola* as an example of the manner in which the historical novel as a genre becomes a site of narrative conflict among antiquarian and various academic modes of representing history. Philippa Levine has written of the process within the university system in which forms of knowledge become specialized and institutionalized within the course of the nineteenth century. *Romola* (1862-3) appears precisely at the time that history as a discipline is supposedly becoming more defined and contained within the boundaries of the university and in the hands of professional historians. However, the novel's ambivalence about the purpose of history and the appropriate stance that should be taken by the writer relative to the past, presented in condensed form in the Proem's movement through different narrative lenses, reveals that these questions have not been resolved. The novel never settles on one perspective on the past, showing that a single, fixed, and sanctioned notion of history has not emerged. History continues to be a site of conflict within the culture at large, even as the University system progresses toward a more unified set of historical methodologies and an authoritative narrative voice. The idea of history and how historical knowledge should properly be pursued and rendered into narrative may be increasingly rigid within the university as Levine persuasively argues, but this novel reveals that outside of the professional walls of the academy, these ideas are still unstable.

The spectator that appears as a convention in ruin photography is a surrogate who models various stances the writer of history can take toward the past. Just as the photographs in the previous chapter exhibit an unstable mixture of different aesthetic

conventions calling into question the potential for a pure, uncomplicated, and easily defined stance or perspective on the past, writers of histories and historical novels also demonstrate a tendency to constantly shift or jump around from one stance to another within a single text. George Eliot begins her historical novel *Romola* with a fictionalized introduction, the Proem, which features rapid shifts in perspective from an angel of the dawn sweeping over the fifteenth-century Florentine landscape, to "our imagination" as readers, and then to the time-traveling spirit of a Florentine man, who has come from 1492 to witness the city in the present day. The narrative voice in this prefatory space moves from a distanced, descriptive mode, to addressing the resuscitated spirit of the Florentine man, to addressing the readers. These changes in narrative point of view and voice introduce the Florentine landscape in the Proem and indicate various modes or perspectives on the interpretation of history. This shifting represents an ambivalent attitude about the possibility of a stable narrative perspective in the historical novel. *Romola* demonstrates Eliot's struggle to gain satisfaction from any one single narrative perspective and mirrors the larger phenomenon in the time of divergent trajectories of historical practice that never coalesce into one single idea. Although antiquarianism by the time of *Romola*'s publication had already accumulated a long history of negative cultural associations, Eliot's novel reveals that antiquarianism can never be completely ejected from the landscape of historical inquiry, just as it is never completely ejected from the novel *Romola.*

The Proem first presents Eliot's narrative as emerging from the vision of the "angel of the dawn" floating above the landscape and the narrator notes that, conceived from the perspective of epic time, the topographical perspective has not changed in the

intervening centuries.[65] The angel sees "nearly the same outline of firm land and unstable sea" and that, further, much of the architecture of the city, the "domes and spires," are similarly familiar to the spirit (1). The spirit subsumes architecture under the same rubric as the geological topography of the landscape, operating from the same premise that Anne Janowitz has argued is an important function of nationalism: the assimilation of architectural ruins to the realm of nature rather than culture, distancing them from the volatility of political history. The Proem explains that the physical topography connects to an unchanging, universal human nature that "remind[s] us that we still resemble the men of the past more than we differ from them" (1-2). This statement of the essential resemblance between past and present applies only to the melancholy sentiments inspired by the geographical and architectural remains, which relies on the same conventions that are so vital in Romantic poetry and picturesque albums. These elements of resemblance that endure through time are in the tradition of Shelley's "Ozymandias": the material remains point toward the endurance of human pride at the same time that they render obsolete a dangerous political history. In this Romantic mode, we continue in our common humanity to experience the same emotions through time, but human institutions fade away.

The Proem critiques this vision of the historical novel by saying that "it is easier and pleasanter to recognize the old than to account for the new" (3). The physical features of the landscape, accruing the ruined architectural evidences of the passage of time,

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[65] My use of the term "epic time" in this case refers to antiquarian interest in what other historians consider prehistorical. As historians come to depend more heavily on the primary textual documentation produced by modern institutions, the study of preliterate history (and pre-Roman Britain) becomes the specific province of the antiquary. An alternative definition of this term "epic time" could be associated with the eighteenth-century interest in "universal history" such as that practiced by Hume or Hegel. This is not the sense in which I use the term "epic time" above.

belong to antiquarian history much as the sentimental landscape topographies and travel guides of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries owe a debt to antiquarian scholarship. By the time Eliot is writing *Romola*, the popularity of Gilpin-influenced travel writing and antiquarian local topographies has solidified the association of antiquarianism with this particular interest in the physical landscape. At this early point in the novel, Eliot characterizes the type of antiquarian perspective on the landscape modeled by the angel of the dawn as easy and pleasant, implying at the same time that it is not important or worthy because it does not exist in the realm of volatile public institutions.

After the Angel of the dawn sweeps over the topography, the Proem then invites the readers to imagine a "resuscitated Spirit" of a fifteenth-century Florentine man who silently witnesses the city in the present day. This shift in narrative perspective is subtle and one of several sudden shifts in perspective and voice in the Proem. While the Angel of the dawn sees an unchanging landscape viewed from far above, the resuscitated Spirit takes a step closer to Florence, standing on a hill outside the city gates. Unlike the Angel, the Spirit can see some changes such as the absence of the "seventy or more towers that once surmounted the walls," but his perception refuses to note this absence—"his eyes will not dwell on that blank" (2). Instead, the spirit thinks that the architectural elements that do remain—the Old Palace, the familiar bell towers, and the great dome—indicate continuity with his own time. He imagines that the buildings, people, and their conversation on the streets, are much as they were in his time. The narrative then ventriloquizes the thoughts of the Florentine spirit, who asks "Were not gems medicinal, though they only pressed the finger? Were not all things charged with occult virtues?" (5). This ventriloquism acts as a counterweight to the historical sameness seen by the

Angel and the Spirit because it emphasizes a difference in mindset between the superstitious Florentine man and the rationally enlightened readers. The Spirit wonders "How has it all turned out?" (7), thinking to investigate this question by entering the city. The Spirit announces that "'There is knowledge of these things to be had in the streets below ... The changes have not been so great in those uncounted years. I will go down and hear—I will tread the familiar pavement, and hear once again the speech of Florentines'" (7). The narrator, however, forbids the Spirit from entering the city to satisfy this curiosity. The narrative voice shifts from addressing the readers to directly speak to the Spirit, warning him to avoid wandering Florence in pursuit of such dangerous knowledge:

> Go not down, good Spirit! for the changes are great and the speech of Florentines would sound as a riddle in your ears. Or, if you go, mingle with no politicians on the *marmi*, or elsewhere; ask no questions about trade in the Calimala; confuse yourself with no inquiries into scholarship, official or monastic. Only look at the sunlight and shadows on the grand walls that were built solidly, and have endured in their grandeur; look at the faces of the little children, making another sunlight amid the shadows of age; look, if you will, into the churches, and hear the same chants, see the same images as of old ... These things have not changed. (7)

While the narrator essentially excludes the Angel of the Dawn and explicitly forbids the Florentine Spirit from examining "how it has all turned out," the readers will be invited into the gates of the city to hear the speech of the people on the street as chapter one begins.

What the narrator's warning to the spirit demonstrates is that at this point in the novel, George Eliot is endorsing a specific vision of history—those elements that measure change over time—as residing primarily in the realm of politics, commerce, and scholarship, all playing important parts in the public life of the nation and accruing the "dignity of history." This definition of history relies on Comtean theories that modern institutions drive progress and, therefore, if the purpose of history is to trace the causes and effects of change in the modern era, one should look to these public institutions. Those portions of life that seem more intimate and private—personal religious devotion, the "faces of the little children"—are depicted as static elements that the awakened Florentine spirit would find unchanged and, hence, they are not a part of the moving stream of history. The elements that are safe for the resuscitated spirit to enjoy all relate to human sensations rather than analysis: the sunlight and shadows, the chants and voices in the church. Eliot pairs these personal elements with architectural scenery, "the sunlight and shadows on the grand walls," indicating that these antiquarian material remnants of the past are similarly separate and untouched by the grander notion of history. The Angel and the Spirit inhabit a topographical, antiquarian eye on the past implicitly critiqued here for seeing only those portions of the present that remain unchanged and refusing to acknowledge that which has changed—recall the Spirit's refusal to "dwell" on the "blank" where the missing towers should be. By refusing to take note of the changes, the antiquarian eye of the Spirit breaks down the barriers between past and present in a manner that is deemed unacceptable by the narrator. In forbidding the Spirit from moving into the present day by entering the city gates, the narrator expresses the same impulse to divide past from present that becomes the source

of horror in M.R. James's stories. This resuscitated Spirit must not move into the present day by entering the city. We as readers are invited into the Florentine past in the first chapter, but the Spirit of the past is barred from entering the present.

While the Proem warns the Florentine Spirit to turn away from entering the city to avoid a sense of disorientation by all the changes that have occurred within the active stage of history, the first chapter leaps right into this arena by placing the reader into the middle of a street scene as men debate the issues of the day. The suggestion is that the Spirit does not have the necessary distance to adequately absorb the implications of historical change. At this moment, Eliot aligns her historical novel with historiography such as that practiced by Macaulay and other whiggish historians who find the value in the study of history within the question asked in her Proem, "How has it all turned out?" Answering this question requires the writer to assume a stance of distanced and authoritative hindsight, along with the ability to connect past and present in a progressive, cause-and-effect narrative timeline. After introducing this question in the Proem, the narrative begins to put this purpose into practice in Chapter One. At this early point in the novel, Eliot displaces sentimentality onto the Spirit in the Proem before abruptly abolishing him from the narrative. However, just as the Proem exhibits an underlying oscillation among various voices and perspectives that is never fully resolved, Eliot's novel as a whole exhibits the same resistance to a single, standardized notion of historical perspective. The antiquarian Spirit is never completely abolished from the novel. At times the novel appears to warn against an antiquarian stance toward the past, evoked most clearly in the character of Bardo, but at other times the narration evokes sympathy and interest in an antiquarian outlook. Similarly, while the Proem briefly privileges a

Comtean emphasis on human institutions as the driving force of history in the modern era, many critics have read the novel as a whole as a critique of Comtean conceptions of history. [66] These competing notions of historicity are embodied within particular characters, but they are also present in the instability, and even contradiction, of the narrator's representation of the act of narration.[67]

Despite the fictional quality of the Proem, it ultimately still functions in the same way as the prefaces of other historical novels, containing an implicit positioning of the narrative within the genre. Eliot follows other historical novelists in using the prefatory space in the novel as an opportunity to define and control the narrative before it begins. The Proem, which sets the scene of the novel by imagining how a reincarnated spirit of the past might view present-day Florence, departs in form from the prefaces of other historical novelists who use this space as an opportunity to justify and define their narrative project. Eliot's Proem is fictional and self-consciously literary in nature, presented as coextensive with the narrative, rather than a space in which the novelist steps outside the bounds of fiction to directly address the reader. *Romola's* fictionalized introduction suggests an impulse toward narrative cohesion in which the fiction defines itself within its own boundaries rather than having the author address the readers in a formal preface. Eliot's impulse toward unity and the novel's incessant deconstruction of this unity is already encoded in the relationship between the Proem and the main body of

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[66] See Nancy Paxton and Sally Shuttleworth.

[67] Shuttleworth notes that "Attitudes to history in the novel . . . are both complex and contradictory" (107), and that "Romola's dilemma concerning her relationship to history is also that of her author" (99). Shuttleworth's chapter on *Romola* mostly deals with how the novel reveals Eliot's ambivalent attitude toward Comte's theories, but she also mentions that the novel can be read as similarly ambivalent toward Hegelian theories of history (106).

the novel; although they are unified in their shared fictionality, the Proem stands outside the main plot of the novel, resisting assimilation into the stream of the primary narrative.

In a letter to her publisher, Eliot discusses G.H. Lewes's suggestion that she write a different kind of historical novel and depart from the established conventions of the form. Writing to John Blackwood in a letter dated 28 August 1860, Eliot states: "Mr. Lewes has encouraged me to persevere in the project, saying that I should probably do something in historical romance rather different in character from what has been done before" (Haight 3: 339). Blackwood responds to Eliot that he has confidence in her power to depart from other specimens of the genre: "Savonarola and his times is a splendid subject for you, and you have such a power of imparting reality to every thing you write that your Romance will not read like Fiction. I expect that you will return Historical Romance to its ancient popularity" (Haight 3: 340). In writing an historical novel that "will not read like Fiction," Blackwood foresees that Eliot will move the form into the realm of historiography through her "power of imparting reality." She also writes to Sara Hennell on 14 July 1862, "I myself have never expected—I might rather say *intended*—that the book should be as 'popular' in the same sense as others" (Haight 4: 49). At this point in the century, the historical novel is a denigrated form, the realm of hack writers like G.P.R. James and William Harrison Ainsworth.[68] In her letter to Sara Hennell, Eliot's intention to avoid a "popular" audience with this novel signals an

[68] The popular mid-century historical novels of G.P.R. James and William Harrison Ainsworth continue to be marginalized by modern literary critics as a disposable populist form. These novels emphasize historical atmosphere more than exhaustive historical research. Echoing Lukacs's antipathy to "costumery," Andrew Sanders complains that "Ainsworth was little more than a reviver of old clothes, and his novels were destructive of the real potential of historical fiction. In considering whether or not that potential was ever realized in the Victorian novel, it is essential to look beyond the model that Ainsworth left" (46). There is no recognition of Ainsworth's work as reflecting something going on culturally at the time concerning ideas about representing the past. The novels of James and Ainsworth were immensely popular, but Sanders reduces their novels to a question of high and low quality.

intention to distance her novel from the conventions and audience of the historical novel and thereby dignify the form.[69]

Eliot accuses women in particular of degrading the historical novel in her essay "Silly Novels by Lady Novelists," first appearing in the *Westminster Review* in October 1856. Eliot refers to these "least readable of silly women's novels" as "the *modern-antique* species" (320), a term popularly applied to antiquaries, namely in satires such as John O'Keeffe's 1791 play "Modern Antiques" and Thomas Rowlandson's 1811 cartoon of the same title. These satires linger on both the sexual humiliation of the antiquary and his propensity to mistake forgeries for genuine objects. Eliot links this term, typically applied to men whose particular brand of historical study emasculates them in these satirical portrayals, to "lady novelists." Such a usage suggests that Eliot's novel *Romola* emerges from an awareness of the gendering of different modes of historical knowledge. Eliot's announcement in her letters that she wants to do something "different" and her earlier linking of historical novels with the "modern-antique," a term loaded with gendered associations to antiquarianism, suggests that her novel will reject antiquarian influence. Despite the strong, clear opinions about the historical novel that Eliot expresses in this essay and in her letters, the novel *Romola* is much more ambivalent than Eliot's statements would indicate, suggesting a lack of complete satisfaction with any one particular mode of history.

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[69] Perhaps Eliot's effort to distance her novel from a popular audience succeeds to a certain extent. In a 1966 article on *Romola*, David J. Delaura notes that the novel's readers are a step above the typical audience for historical novels: "Romola's struggles with doubt and despair bring up the figure of a typical Victorian intellectual, and no doubt this fact helps to explain the novel's popularity among serious readers" (230).

George Eliot looks to Bulwer-Lytton's Preface to *Rienzi* (1835) as a model for writing an historical novel.[70] Similar to Eliot's call for something "different in character" and not "popular" in a typical sense, Bulwer-Lytton explains in his Preface that he was compelled to write *Rienzi* because upon reading "the original authorities from which modern historians have drawn their accounts," he came to the conclusion that "a very important period [had been] crudely examined" and that he intended to create "a more serious work upon the life and time of Rienzi" (vii-viii). It is interesting that in this case, rather than complaining of literary predecessors such as Eliot does in her essay, Bulwer-Lytton launches the same accusation—crudity and a lack of seriousness—at the work of historians. It is an indication that Eliot and Bulwer-Lytton do not see a clear-cut difference in the purpose and proper outcome of works of historical fiction and historiography, in keeping with the fact that they are writing just prior to the push toward professionalization within the academy. For Eliot and Bulwer-Lytton, both history and historical fiction should be held up to a single set of standards centering on the "serious" treatment of the subject matter and reliance on what Bulwer-Lytton calls the "original authorities" (vii).

In keeping with these principles, Eliot and Bulwer-Lytton both emphasize the presence of primary source materials and, in Eliot's case, archival research, as the backbone of their novels. In his 1848 second preface to *Rienzi*, Bulwer-Lytton points to the high esteem in which his novel is held and argues that it is a testament to his methods: "a faithful narration of historical facts" gathered from "study[ing] diligently the materials as history" (xi). Bulwer-Lytton notes that the novelist, already having the materials that form the "dry character of historian," is freed to focus on "the inner, not outer, history of

[70] See Lawrence Poston, John Amos Huzzard, and Frederick R. Karl's biography of Eliot (365).

man—the chronicle of the human heart." Bulwer-Lytton sets up the continually repeating conflict between pedantry and sentiment, science and art, which operates at the center of this problem of historical narration. From the figures in *Romola's* preface we can see that this problem is essentially one of positioning. The "dry" antiquarian pedant is too distanced, too focused on the "outer," and exemplified by the topographical, lofty viewpoint of the Angel of the Dawn floating high above the ground. The sentimental antiquary whose overwrought passion for the past blinds him to the concerns of the present is too close to his object of study. Hence Eliot's narrator bars the Spirit of the Florentine man from entering the city gates. The physical proximity of the city of Florence (the site of historical action) to these two figures, the distanced Angel floating high above the landscape and the Spirit who longs to enter the gates, metaphorizes two antiquarian perspectives on the past that equate to affective modes taken in relation to the subject of historical study: the Dr. Dryasdust pedant who deals in surfaces and the overly emotional antiquary, embodied in the Gothicized antiquarianism of Horace Walpole. These stances, to appropriate the terminology of Bulwer-Lytton, correspond to methodological differences centered around the "inner" and "outer" lives of men. On the one hand, antiquaries are associated with dry, chronicle-style local histories that perform the narrative equivalent of floating above the surface of the topography, never delving into lived human experience. On the other hand is Walpole's Gothic tradition, concerned with the expression of historical atmosphere and the inner consciousness of the individual, often to the exclusion of factual authenticity. The seeming impossibility that these two opposing forces can be synthesized to produce a successful work of fiction is one that concerns Walpole (who insists that it cannot be done by antiquaries except for

himself). As historical novelists, Eliot and Bulwer-Lytton inherit this assumption about antiquarian narratives, which explains their efforts to distance themselves from other historical novelists operating in the antiquarian tradition.

II. Dust Versus Sentiment: A Genre in Turmoil

Unlike Walpole, who claims that he has never known an antiquary other than himself to produce a successful piece of writing, Scott uses Walpole's success in *The Castle of Otranto* as evidence that the unstable antiquarian perspective on the past can be a productive and creative tension. In his Dedicatory Epistle to *Ivanhoe,* addressed to the fictional antiquary Dr. Dryasdust (whose name becomes synonymous with the dry pedantry associated with antiquarianism and is picked up later by Carlyle in his "Anti-Dryasdust" essay), Walter Scott acknowledges the seeming contradiction that an antiquary could produce a successful work of fiction:

> It seemed to be your opinion, that the very office of an antiquary, employed in grave, and, as the vulgar will sometimes allege, in toilsome and minute research, must be considered as incapacitating him from successfully compounding a tale of this sort. But permit me to say, my dear Doctor, that this objection is rather formal than substantial. It is true that such slighter compositions might not suit the severer genius of our friend Mr. Oldbuck. Yet Horace Walpole wrote a goblin tale which has thrilled through many a bosom; and George Ellis could transfer all the playful fascination of a humour, as delightful as it was uncommon into his Abridgement of the Ancient Metrical Romances. So that, however I may

have occasion to rue my present audacity, I have at least the most respectable precedents in my favour. (17)

Noting the successes of his literary forebears, Scott (here in the guise of Lawrence Templeton) argues that, despite the seeming contradiction of the premise, antiquaries have been successful in producing thrilling, humorous, and delightful narratives from the fruits of their "toilsome and minute research." Scott points out the dissonance between popular conceptions of the antiquary and the reality of antiquarianism as he knows it in his statement that these objections are "rather formal than substantial." Scott privileges the "playful" and the "slighter composition" and gives credit to his literary forebears. Where Scott is comfortable with the conflict inherent in the historical novel as a narrative form, Eliot seems to be struggling to reconcile this conflict in *Romola.* Eliot's struggle to separate the "playful" from the "grave" in *Romola* is perhaps a symptom of the beginning tide of the separation between proper, academic historical writing and popular histories.

The end result of this separation is evident shortly later in the reaction to John Richard Green's *Short History of the English People* (1874). The text achieved wide public popularity, but Green's academic mentor E.A. Freeman criticized it for the smooth, accessible prose and its appeal to a popular audience. The professionalization of historical writing by this time begins to create a separation between highly respected academic writing that is targeted at other professional historians and mostly inaccessible to the public readership, and popular histories.[71] Rosemary Jann traces a split between

[71] For more on the work of E.A. Freeman, J.R. Green, and their methods of historiography, see Rosemary Jann. Jann distinguishes between what she calls the "literary" and the "scientific" modes of historical practice as rival camps in which the "literary" practitioners such as Macaulay early on, and then later Thomas Arnold and J.A. Froude, gradually gave way to the empiricism and positivism (and dry prose) of E.A. Freeman and his disciple Green (who nonetheless struggled with his embarrasingly smooth prose and the popularity of his *Short History*—good writing and high sales were not commensurate with this model). Literary history as Jann conceives of it is characterized by a sometimes moralizing or didactic stance

what she calls "literary historians" and "scientific historians," noting that Green becomes caught in the middle because of the popularity of his *Short History.* According to Jann, "His scholarly efforts notwithstanding, Green's sympathies remained with 'literary' historians, and he achieved his greatest successes as a popularizer" (167). The conflict between this privileging of the scientific and the archival over popular forms of historical writing can be seen in Eliot's attitude toward the historical novelists in her essay on "Silly Women Novelists" and the narrative ambivalence evident in *Romola,* a novel that never seems at ease with the tension between the scientific and the literary elements of historical writing.

Long prior to Eliot and Bulwer-Lytton's wrestling with this dividing line, and the later split reaction to Green's *Short History* between the public and the gatekeepers of the academy, William Godwin was already interested in the same question. Godwin demotes history in favor of historical romance in *Imogen: A Pastoral Romance from the Ancient British* (1784), a text that is presented as a "found" antiquarian manuscript in the tradition of Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto.* In his essay "Of History and Romance" (1797), Godwin argues that "[t]he writer of romance then is to be considered as the writer of real history; while he who was formerly called the historian, must be contented to step down into the place of his rival, with this disadvantage, that he is a romance writer without the arduous, the enthusiastic and the sublime licence of imagination, that belong to that

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toward history, a narrative method that privileged a writing style influenced by novelists that was often highly visual and descriptive, emphasizing good storytelling, an interest in cultural and social history, as well as a greater openness to the use of alternative sources of history such as literature, cultural ephemera, and myths. For Jann, antiquarianism does not fit into either of her categories ("art" or "science"). Jann explains her choice of which historians to include in her study partially based on whether or not they could be described as antiquaries: "I passed over writers like Sharon Turner or Henry Hallam, whose concern with the past was more thoroughly antiquarian than imaginative." (xv). Jann later refers in passing to the "merely antiquarian" (6). Because of its paradoxical nature, antiquarianism fails to fit into a set of clear, dichotomous categories.

species of composition" (372). In his references to "real" history and the writer of romance as a "rival" to the historian, Godwin implies a contentious, uneasy relationship between the two forms of history writing. Godwin elevates the historical novel above the writing of the historian by noting the failure of history to present a productive vision of the past. Godwin's privileging of "the sublime licence of imagination" is also presumably what inspires the famous antiquarian hoaxes of MacPherson and Chatterton. This is a dangerous stance toward historical writing because of how it undermines any claim to authenticity, although it is perhaps a fitting take on the subject given Godwin's revolutionary temperament. Godwin takes as his purpose in this particular essay the goal of requiring history to "step down" from its elevated status above works of fiction and announcing that "[i]f then history be little better than romance under a graver name, it may not be foreign to the subject here treated, to enquire into the credit due to that species of literature, which bears the express stamp of invention, and calls itself romance or novel" (368). Godwin points out that one of the major differences between history and romance is that history has been proclaimed "graver." Gravity here implies that there is something unacceptably frivolous in the romance. Both Eliot in her essay on "Silly Women Novelists" and Godwin here make strong claims for historical fiction to be taken seriously. Eliot, however, elevates fiction by emphasizing its basis in empirical research rather than romance. Eliot tempers the "licence of imagination" in her novel with the ballast of archival research, although by the novel's conclusion even this foundation is called into question.

While Godwin privileges historical fiction for its ability to explore facets of human experience ignored by proper history, others choose to elevate historical fiction by

disagreeing with prevailing characterizations of the genre. For example, Scott in his preface to *Ivanhoe* (1819) distances himself from the accusation of being a "mannerist" (11). Bulwer-Lytton makes a similar rhetorical move in his dedicatory epistle to *Harold: The Last of the Saxon Kings* (1848). "I have sought in this work, less to portray mere manners, which modern researches have rendered familiar to ordinary students in our history, than to bring forward the great characters, so carelessly dismissed in the long and loose record of centuries" (2). He writes of the quandary facing all historical novelists in terms of balancing fact and fiction, dismissing both antiquarian-style pedantry and "flagrant" romance as equally disagreeable narrative models: "I saw before me the option of apparent pedantry, in the obtrusion of such research as might carry the reader along with the Author, fairly and truly into the real records of the time; or of throwing aside pretensions to accuracy altogether; --and so rest contented to turn history into flagrant romance, rather than pursue my own conception of extracting its natural romance from the actual history" (1). Moving in the opposite direction from Godwin in his privileging of "romance" as a superior form of representing the historical past, this term becomes pejorative in the realist mindset of Bulwer-Lytton. In this statement, Bulwer-Lytton presents a much more nuanced and complex vision of the hazards faced by the historical novelist than the simple oppositional choice posed by Godwin. He cautions against two dangerous but opposite practices: "apparent pedantry" and "flagrant romance." These two qualities represent both the flawed mindset of the overly sentimental antiquary, as well as the opposite effect the antiquary's intellectual products have on his readers and listeners—the boredom of dry pedantry. Bulwer-Lytton adjusts

his goals to produce a "natural romance" rather than a "flagrant romance," a distinction that is one of degree rather than a fundamental difference.

Eliot's effort to distance her narrative from the antiquarianist historical romances descending from the Scott tradition results in her novel becoming the focus of accusations typically associated with the antiquarian Dryasdust figure. Some critics label Eliot's novel a failure perhaps because of her struggles against the paradoxical tensions inherent within the historical novel as a form, which as typically written she considers to be a "slighter composition." Eliot's efforts to achieve unity and regularity in the form of the historical novel are interesting given that the content of *Romola* addresses just such an unresolvable tension in Romola's attempts to reconcile the worldviews of her pagan, humanist father and the civic-minded fanaticism of the Church. There are essentially two common complaints lodged against antiquarian writings: they are trivial and they do not result in cohesive narratives. Eliot addresses the issue of triviality by emphasizing the enormity of her archival research within the narrative and connecting the novel to larger questions relating to the productive value of historical writing. To use the words of George Henry Lewes in his critique of Fielding's *Tom Jones*, "[The author] must not permit us to see the strings and pulleys of his puppets; he must not betray his intention. Directly the machine creaks, our illusion vanishes" (334). The vast machinery of Eliot's historical researches, representing an endeavor that she later claimed turned her into "an old woman," (Cross 2: 255) makes its presence known in the novel.

The creaking of the machinery in *Romola* is perhaps nowhere more apparent than in the use of Italian in the dialogue. Eliot breaks a rule dating back to Scott's *Ivanhoe* preface that the language of historical novels should not attempt to superficially imitate

the obsolete language of the past. Scott cites Chatterton as well as his friend Strutt's unfinished novel *Queen-Hoo Hall* as examples that fail artistically because of the use of language that is unfamiliar to the reader and, therefore, strangely obtrudes into the narrative. While Eliot does not use obsolete English language in her novel, *Romola* is filled almost on every page with Italian words that presumably are meant to enhance the authenticity of the novel. A letter from John Blackwood to Mrs. John Blackwood in June 1861 reveals that Eliot struggled with how to reconcile the problem of language in the novel: "Her great difficulty seems to be that she, as she describes it, hears her characters talking, and there is a weight upon her mind as if Savonarola and friends ought to be speaking Italian instead of English" (Haight 3: 427). The Italian phrases call attention to the constructed nature of the narrative in that they are glossed in English, sometimes in the midst of dialogue, creating dissonance between the voice of the characters and the voice of the narrator. Within the first chapter, there are references to the "*poplani grassi,* or commercial nobility" (14), "a chief glory, or *dignita*, of a market" (15), "a handsome *gattuccio*, or 'Tom'" (15), and the "*deschi,* or stalls" (16). The insertion of Italian phrases reaches its zenith when a bit of dialogue from a character is interrupted by a parenthetical gloss. A participant in the public debate speaks of taxes, saying to a bystander, "'But this is what you love: you grumble and raise a riot over your *quattrini bianchi'* (white farthings); 'but you take no notice when the public treasury has got a hole in the bottom for the gold to run into Lorenzo's drains'" (19). Similarly, Tito later complains that his journey to the city has left him "'as soiled and battered with riding as a *tabellario* (letter-carrier) from Bologna'" (393). The smattering of Italian phrases with English language glosses continues throughout the novel as a means to evoke a sense of

cultural authenticity, suggesting the realist illusion that the entirety of these conversations are taking place in Italian, but the technique instead calls attention to the artificial construction of the historical narrative rather than its authenticity. This use of language is particularly important because it demonstrates that even on the most microscopic level of the text (the level of the single word), the narrator's perspective as shaper of the text is already oscillating between a distanced, authoritative voice of the historian and the more involved stance of the author as sole shaper of a fictional text. Attempting to give the illusion that all of the dialogue is implicitly occurring in Italian, the intermittent Italian phrases emphasize the fictionality of a text written in a genre that exists in an uneasy tension between trying to elide and emphasize the difference between past and present.

Despite the manner in which single words of dialogue compromise her project, Eliot moves her narrative closer to the realm of history privileged by the speaker in the Proem by overlapping important personal events in Romola's life with important public events in the politics of Florence. She watches the last cartload of her father's library being carted away from the city as the bells ring and fires are lit celebrating the withdrawal of the French army (315). This coincidence of events in Romola's life and the life of the city is central to Eliot's conception of historiography. She emphasizes that, although Romola dangerously denies her connection as an individual to the "common life" of the city, her fate is always intertwined with the large historical movements of her time. "Since that Easter a great change had come over the prospects of Florence; and as in the tree that bears a myriad of blossoms, each single bud with its fruit is dependent on the primary circulation of the sap, so the fortunes of Tito and Romola were dependent on certain grand political and social conditions which made an epoch in the history of Italy"

(205). Eliot elevates both her historical narrative and the character of Tito to the level of the proper "grand political and social" stage of history by insinuating him into the scenes of political intrigue and then attributing his absence from the historical record to Tito's self-deprecation. For example, Tito gives the welcoming speech to the French king as he enters the city gates, but he gives credit to Francesco Gaddi. The narrative explains this departure from fact both by attributing it to Tito's personality and by subtly questioning the veracity of the historical record: "[T]o those who had not witnessed it, let Gaddi have the credit of the improvised welcome" (237). However, while this particular technique of entwining her fictional character into known historical events moves her narrative into the realm of proper history, it also challenges the rigid separation between fiction and history writing. Tito's prominent position in the important political events of the time suggests that the novel takes as its focus important rather than frivolous subject matter. Eliot's technique also cuts both ways, however, in that it calls into question the veracity of the historical record. Eliot's insertion of Tito into the historical record implies that in the hands of the historian, history writing can be as malleable as fiction is for the novelist. The narrator of *Romola* does not announce to the reader that particular parts are "real," or drawn from primary historical sources while other parts are completely fictional. The judgment of where this line between history and fiction falls is left entirely to individual perception.

III. Down Into the Streets of Florence

All of the arguments evident in Godwin, Scott, Bulwer-Lytton, and Eliot circulate around similar concerns of tone and narrative perspective. Eliot's Proem enacts these

concerns in the shifts from soaring Angel to earth-bound Spirit and finally to the distanced voice of the narrator. These competing perspectives in the Proem are then adapted at various turns in the remainder of the narrative. Eliot's first chapter temporarily leaves behind the Spirit in the Proem. While the narrator warns the Spirit to avoid entering the city to avoid the disorientation following from the changes that have occurred, the novel initially defines its purpose immediately in this first chapter as a rejection of the antiquarian principles embodied by the Spirit. Opening in the "heart of old Florence," the narrator notes that "To the ear of Dante, the same streets rang with the shout and clash of fierce battle between rival families; but in the fifteenth century, they were only noisy with the unhistorical quarrels and broad jests of wool-carders in the cloth-producing quarters of San Martino and Garbo" (11). In this statement, the narrator immediately draws a defining boundary between the appropriate sphere of history (primarily politics) and the aspects of human experience considered outside the realm of history—the "unhistorical"—as the narrator refers to it. The narrative does not delay in moving beyond this "unhistorical" scene, as Bratti the peddler takes Tito to the public square. There they overhear a vehement and sophisticated political debate taking place in the large crowd of people concerning the ramifications of the death of Lorenzo de Medici. Several of these minor characters reappear in chapter 22 to again publicly discuss the recent explusion of the Medici and the entrance of France's Charles VIII into the city, and again in chapter 63 when the crowd gathers to discuss the impending Trial by Fire. The character Goro appears in each of these scenes (and no others) as a representative of the civic-minded common public citizen, a type of citizen whose interest in the political movements of the city justifies the importance of these scenes in a

historical novel meant to move the genre into the elevated realm of political history. While Eliot's novel is not unique in its incorporation of political content, the status of politics within the plot is presented by turns as both a productive and a destructive force. As characters, Romola, Tito, and Bardo are surrogates for the historiographer as they experiment with different levels of involvement in the political sphere. Romola in particular goes through a series of retreats and advances in the realm of civic politics, ending the novel on an ambiguous note concerning what particular stance the novel ultimately endorses.

There is tension evident in *Romola* between the historical novel as a public form of writing, such as history, versus the novel as form of writing consumed for private pleasure. Eliot's novel is concerned primarily with the elaborate political machinations of Renaissance Italy and explicitly emphasizes the hard historical research backing up the narrative within the course of the novel itself, a technique that links the domestic sphere with the realm of masculinized public history. The manner in which the historical novel presents an alternative history that moves partly into the domestic sphere is one potential reason that the historical novel undermines the "dignity of history." Diana Wallace has argued that this domestication of history results in the historical novel becoming a genre associated primarily with the feminine in the twentieth century.[72] However, in his

[72] In her study of women's historical novels of the twentieth century, Diana Wallace notes that "the genre . . . has come to be seen as a 'feminine' form" and that women have been attracted to the form of the historical novel precisely because it provides an opportunity to write women into a history that has effaced them from the historical record" (3). Because women typically had no place within the public sphere, these historical novels bring history further into the domestic sphere where readers can glimpse the private lives of famous historical figures. Therefore, this genre is perceived as inferior to the significance of proper, masculine history. While agreeing with Wallace's assessment of women's historical novels, I argue that the historical novel as a whole has been assessed as a degraded form precisely because of the vestigial association of antiquarianism with a feminine form of historical representation. While I agree with Wallace's argument about women's attraction to the form of the historical novel, I argue that there was already a pre-existing, implicit assumption in the nineteenth century that the historical novel is a "feminine

preface to *Ivanhoe,* Scott notes that readers are pleased when the atmosphere of historical novels seems as familiar as "his own snug parlour" rather than exotic and distant. Writing in the guise of Laurence Templeton in his dedicatory epistle to Dr. Dryasdust in *Ivanhoe*, Scott explains that antiquaries pull these private details from the work of historians to gather a picture of the past that is submerged in histories:

> The scantiness of materials is indeed a formidable difficulty; but no one knows better than Dr. Dryasdust, that to those deeply read in antiquity, hints concerning the private life of our ancestors lie scattered through the pages of our various historians, bearing, indeed, a slender proportion to the other matters of which they treat, but still, when collected together, sufficient to throw considerable light upon the *vie privée* of our forefathers. (16)

In this passage, it is significant that Scott portrays this low material as already present and available in important works of history, although it is submerged. He remarks that, even though this material does not contribute to the "other matters" that histories generally emphasize, it is nonetheless present. In doing so, Scott subtly breaks down the opposition between the work of antiquaries and that of proper historians by breaking down the boundaries between the presumably inconsequential domestic sphere and the broad public sphere in which history is often seen to operate.

The major characters in Eliot's *Romola* are historical surrogates through which the narrative moves, with each modeling different attitudes toward the past. Bardo, Tito, and Savonarola represent alternative perspectives on the nature of history and the

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form," an assumption that goes beyond whether the author was male or female. Essentially, I exchange Wallace's cause for my effect, arguing that women are attracted to the historical novel because it is already a feminized form by the beginning of the twentieth century.

individual's place both within and toward history. As the character of Romola shifts her loyalties in turn from one male authority figure to the next, the narrative performs a similar shifting in its loyalty to the historical models each character represents. The first figure that Romola begins to question is her father Bardo and, fittingly, he also represents the first historical model that the narrative questions. Eliot's project in *Romola* to distance this novel from previous historical romances presupposes that the figure of the antiquary serves as an counter-example of what will be defined and condoned as a proper relationship to the historical past. Romola's father Bardo is obviously modeled on the figure of the antiquary in that his fruitless and pedantic historical researches fit the mold of popular notions of antiquarianism as an unproductive and solipsistic form of interest in the past. Many have assumed that Bardo served Eliot as a model for Casaubon, noting the striking resemblance between Bardo and Casaubon who appears later in *Middlemarch* in his fruitless search for the "Key to All Mythologies." However, Bardo's name evokes the bard, a figure that functions as a cultural unifier, and like the bard, Bardo proves ultimately to be a sympathetic character. As Katie Trumpener argues in *Bardic Nationalism*, the bard and the antiquary are linked:

> On the face of it, the contrast between the two personae and the two modes of literary work could not be more extreme. Yet as the antiquarian attempts to echo the bardic register, to court the minstrel by reflecting back to him the accolades bestowed on poets throughout history, we glimpse the central paradox of eighteenth-century antiquarian scholarship: the constant yearning of antiquaries to become the bards they translate and edit. (118)

The "central paradox" Trumpener describes between the figures of the bard and the antiquary both describes the instability in Eliot's novel and suggests that the bard and the antiquary represent inextricable cultural impulses. In essence, Bardo stands in for Eliot as author, struggling against dry pedantry, but striving for the dignity accorded to the scholar over the sentimentalist. Trumpener's description of the bard and the antiquary as two complementary but paradoxical cultural impulses is helpful when considered in the context of historical novelists. Only Scott expresses any level of comfort with this "central paradox," while Eliot's novel, in its constant shifting, expresses a sense of restlessness, dissatisfaction with the historical novel as a form, and a desire for harmony.

Unlike the figure of the bard who, as traveling minstrel, binds together a community, Bardo only distances himself and his daughter from the vital interests of his own community. Continuing an important theme present in her other writings, Eliot emphasizes the importance of sympathy and connection between the individual and the community. In *Romola,* this principle is filtered through questions of what kind of relationship to the past encourages an expansive, connected notion of the individual's interest in history. Whereas antiquarianism is often portrayed as a solipsistic, egotistical form of historical inquiry performed merely for individual pleasure rather than the greater understanding of the public, Bardo's scholarly pursuits are demonstrated as similarly self-serving and divorced from the realities of the present. Romola comes to understand in the course of the novel that her life must be connected to the "common life" of her city through acts of sympathy and charity rather than separated from the flow of the community of which she is a part. By the end of the novel, however, Bardo has not left a completely barren intellectual legacy to Romola. In contrast to the "Silly Lady

Novelists" dismissed by Eliot for the shallowness of their historical knowledge, the novel's conclusion seems to suggest that Romola's success in creating a family out of the broken relationships left behind by Tito is a function of her ability to intellectually assess her situation, in contrast to the destructive nature of the peasant Tessa's overly emotional naiveté.

Before Romola's marriage to Tito, she and her father are repeatedly described as not only physically above and apart from the city in their home on top of a hill, but also mentally and spiritually disconnected. While Bardo is intellectually barren, this infertility emerges in Romola through her childless marriage, particularly set in contrast to Tessa's fecundity. Bardo dies without completing an important work of scholarship:

> The laborious simple life, pure from vulgar corrupting ambitions, embittered by the frustration of the dearest hopes, imprisoned at last in total darkness—a long seed-time without a harvest—was at an end now, and all that remained of it besides the tablet in Sante Croce and the unfinished commentary on Tito's text, was the collection of manuscripts and antiquities, fruit of half a century's toil and frugality. (245)

His "fruit" of manuscripts and antiquities, however, is soon dispersed and lost. Romola has been kept isolated from the "common life," and therefore from the flow of history within the life of the city, by her father's barren antiquarianism:

> She had been brought up in learned seclusion from the interests of actual life, and had been accustomed to think of heroic deeds and great principles as something antithetic to the vulgar present, of the Pnyx and the Forum as something more worthy of attention than the councils of living Florentine

men. And now the expulsion of the Medici meant little more for her than the extinction of her best hope about her father's library. (245-6)

At this point in her life, Romola still operates within the mindset in which Bardo raised her, favoring an antiquarian attitude of "history for history's sake." Bardo lived mentally entirely within the world of his ancient manuscripts, thrilled by the intellectual controversies of the past as if he were a contemporary of the long-dead scholars he studied. He looked at the present as a degradation of the glories of the past.

The manner in which Bardo's historical researches distance him emotionally from the concerns of the present make him much like the elevated Angel of the Dawn, floating too high above the landscape to adequately perceive significant change. Prior to his engagement with Romola, Tito makes frequent visits to Bardo in an attempt to insinuate himself into the family. During such visits he plays the part of scholarly apprentice to Bardo, whose passion for his academic pursuits blinds him to any ulterior motives on Tito's part. On one such visit, Bardo announces a plan to "go over our preliminary ground again, with a wider scheme of comment and illustration" (119). Bardo's plans to produce a scholarly work languish as he oscillates constantly between the minute detail and the "wider scheme," never realizing that he does not progress forward.

In counterpoint to Bardo, who lives entirely in the past, Tito embodies the danger and impossibility of ignoring the past. Tito appears on the streets of Florence, a shipwreck survivor who is coy about the details of his personal past. He creates a new life for himself, reborn into a new identity, and swiftly climbs up the ladder of Florentine society. Tito's sophistry concerning his decision to abandon his enslaved father Baldassarre centers on the unknowability of his father's fate. Tito reasons that he would

leave his privileged position in Florence to find Baldassarre only *"if it were certain"* that he had survived the shipwreck (emphasis in original, 98). Tito decides that without incontrovertible evidence of what happened, he is freed of responsibility from even investigating his father's fate. By extension, Tito's attitude that the unknowability of the past releases him from all responsibility of seeking any clarity concerning his father, suggests a nihilistic attitude toward historical investigation. Not having the potential for certainty about the past eliminates the value of any investigative effort at all. The novel condemns Tito's attitude toward the past, not only as dangerous and ultimately impossible, but also as morally corrupt.

Tito disavows his past and, in turn, the power that history holds over the individual, when he disavows Baldassarre. Tito is punished with death by his forsaken foster father who, despite amnesia, continues to hold on to his own past through cyclical bouts of lucidity and confusion. Baldassarre encounters the central problem of history in his struggle to confront and call to account Tito at a public gathering of Florence's ruling powers: "Could he prove anything?" (267). Baldassarre's testimony fails with his memory and the guards throw him into prison. Baldassarre's failure to narrate history does not mean that it disappears. Ultimately, Eliot's novel portrays history as a force independent of those who study it.

The symptomatic cultural anxiety associated with antiquarianism—that it opens up the possibility that history is not fully containable through narration, and that the past is not completely past—emerges as well in *Romola*. Baldassarre's failure to make historical meaning, and Tito's active efforts to suppress that history, mean nothing as both natural and social forces beyond Tito's control cause his past to catch up with him.

Through no free will of his own, Baldassarre wreaks his revenge upon Tito. When a mob threatens Tito, he jumps into the river to escape. The river washes him up right at Baldassarre's feet, where the old man strangles him to death. The power of the river, a natural force seemingly outside the power of human control, denies Tito's attempts to shape his personal past and renders irrelevant Baldassarre's failure to "prove anything." The novel relies on the image of a river, a common trope used to describe the passage of history, as the force in the novel that finally brings past and present together. Tito's fate is simultaneously both a fitting and just end for the novel's villain, and also a portrayal of the deadly power of history to erupt uninvited into the present. The novel thus explores an important cultural anxiety about history in this period: its tendency to elude and its power to destroy. The nature of this anxiety is that history is an entity independent from the narratives that construct it.

Like the river that washes Tito back to his past and to his death, the ominous image of history evoking the threat of physical violence appears in relation to Romola as well. In Dino's prophetic dream of Romola's future, he describes a vision in which Romola is threatened by a figurative river of manuscripts and an army of ancient sculptures. Dino on his death bed tells Romola: "And at last you came to a stony place where there was no water, and no trees or herbage; but instead of water, I saw written parchment unrolling itself everywhere, and instead of trees and herbage I saw men of bronze and marble springing up and crowding round you" (157). Here again images of antiquarian infertility merge with a sense that Bardo's immersion in an antiquarian past is as actively dangerous as Tito's denial and effacement of the past. Romola is caught

between her father's antiquarianism and her husband's blind presentist outlook and must navigate a dangerous path between the two.

Upon first learning of Tito's deceptive nature, Romola also attempts to leave her past behind. She disguises herself as a nun and escapes the city to start a new life as a new person, paralleling Tito's similar escape from his past. However, Savonarola accosts Romola in her flight and commands her to return to where she belongs. Savonarola appeals to her sense of morality by emphasizing civic duty in his admonishment: "Your life has been spent in blindness, my daughter. You have lived with those who sit on a hill aloof, and look down on the life of their fellow-men. . . . If your own people are wearing a yoke, will you slip from under it, instead of struggling with them to lighten it?" (358). It initially appears that Savonarola offers Romola a third way, a compromise between Bardo's separation from the present and Tito's self-serving, amoral immersion in the present. She will serve the poor and suffering people of Florence, with awareness and active participation in the social and political events of her own time. Eventually Romola comes to question Savonarola's vision of the individual's place within history as well, fleeing Florence a second time. As Shuttleworth suggests, Romola vacillates among different models of how the individual relates to personal and public histories. Romola by turn takes on the perspective of Bardo, Tito, Savonarola, and finally rejects all of these visions in their purest forms. Romola's vacillation parallels Eliot's experimentation at different points in the novel with various narrative perspectives on the past.

Romola's connection to the antiquarian pursuits of her father are described repeatedly as based on her affection for him rather than in an innate scholarly interest in his projects. Romola's realization that this affection for her father has caused her to

dedicate her life to an ultimately unproductive, unattainable goal is akin to the novel rejecting Bardo's brand of antiquarianism as a form of historical inquiry not only flawed in the ways already described, but also flawed in that it is motivated, much like Romola, by individual ties of affection and pleasure rather than in a grander, disinterested notion of how history can serve a larger nationalistic purpose. Although Romola does not come to this conclusion until Savonarola interrupts her first flight from Florence by appealing to her sense of duty to the city and thereby forcing her to realize the solipsism of the antiquarian worldview in which she had been raised, this critique is initially broached by her brother. On his deathbed, Dino explains to Romola his reason for leaving his family to join the Church:

> My father has lived amidst human sin and misery without believing in them: he has been like one busy picking shining stones in a mine, while there was a world dying of plague above him. I spoke, but he listened with scorn. I told him the studies he wished me to live for were either childish trifling—dead toys—or else they must be made warm and living by pulses that beat to worldly ambitions and fleshly lusts, for worldly ambitions and fleshly lusts made all the substance of the poetry and history he wanted me to bend my eyes on continually. (154)

Romola is still under the influence of her father at this point and rejects Dino's explanation, but the phrases he uses to criticize Bardo's studies—"childish trifling" and "dead toys" that are useless and out of touch with "a world dying of plague above him"—employ the terminology of critique leveled at a specifically antiquarian style of historical scholarship. In Dino's criticism of Bardo's antiquarian pursuits as "childish triflings"

Eliot again associates the figure of the child as being outside the realm of historical change. The child is a static element that does not have direct bearing on the important ways in which past and present are connected. By pleading with Romola to understand his reasons for rejecting his father's worldview, Dino does not reject the importance of scholarship. Rather, he pleads for Romola to understand the importance for such scholarship to serve the purposes of the present. In doing so, Dino and Savonarola ventriloquize the nineteenth-century position advocated by historians such as Macaulay and even later professional historians such as Green and Freeman that the practice of history has a direct bearing on the political questions of the current time.

Like the shift between the high-flying vision of the Angel and the more intimate vision of the Spirit in the Proem, the narration performs a similar back-and-forth shift in historical perspective. Many portions of Eliot's novel take on the tone of pure historiography rather than that of a novel. Sally Shuttleworth refers to this narrative voice as an absence in which Eliot "drops the narrator's persona," "relies on the appearance of objectivity," and "present[s] the novel not as constructed fiction but as history" (97). Although Shuttleworth sees this absence of narrative persona as indicative of the novel in its entirety, this "appearance of objectivity" is especially evident when the novel telescopes outward to describe the historical milieu. The distanced narrative voice becomes more noticeable at such points because the novel then takes on a wide stance that is much more similar to historiography rather than the microscopic focus on private lives more characteristic of novels. Eliot interrupts the focus on her fictional main characters to analyze historical events, motivations, and the historical record itself. The narrator speaks with the distanced authority of the objective historian, acknowledging the

passage of time and comparing the present to the past. In certain passages, the narrative is more interested in emphasizing the perspective of narrative hindsight rather than narrating the historical events in the moment. The effect this has is to configure the past in relation to the present and to the project of historiographical reconstruction, rather than emphasizing the past as separate and discrete from the present.[73] One such moment of distanced vision occurs in chapter 71, "The Confession," in which Eliot takes on the voice of a historian analyzing Savonarola's motivations and legacy, mixing in an acknowledgment that the narrative has been assembled from the written historical record through methods of historical research. The narrative analyzes Savonarola's actions and thoughts, noting that these conclusions have been derived from primary documentary evidence: "There is no jot of worthy evidence that from the time of his imprisonment to the supreme moment, Savonarola thought or spoke of himself as a martyr" (574-5). The narrative even suspends the omniscient knowledge of the fictional main characters in the case of these historical figures, mentioning of Savonarola that his mindset was informed by his living "[i]n a life where the experience was so tumultuously mixed as it must have been in the Frate's" (573). This phrase "as it must have been" exhibits a tone of distanced, skeptical analysis that does not appear when the narrative enters the perspective of the fictional characters.

The skeptical, authoritative tone of the chapter "The Confession" represents the narrative briefly trying on yet another narrative perspective that is discarded for good as the novel comes to a close. In these final chapters, Romola becomes the historian's surrogate, continuing to pursue the elusive truth about Savonarola. The lesson of the Proem, in which the narrative launches into the stream of history no matter how

[73] In contrast to Eliot, as Lukacs notes, "Scott very seldom speaks of the present" (33).

disorienting it may be for the resurrected spirit, is echoed in the final chapters of the novel as Romola realizes the flaws in the worldviews of both her father and Savonarola. In fleeing from Florence in the drifting boat, Romola flees from the stage of real history as Eliot has defined it. The destructive, rushing river that leads Tito to his past and to his death, and the drowning river of manuscripts Dino envisions as Romola's fate, transforms into "the gentle pulse of the sea" that carries Romola away from her troubles. The unnamed village exists outside the important political events and prominent historical figures that populate Florence. The village is the scene of Romola's awakening to her purpose in life because the emptiness of the village gives her the distance she needs to evaluate her place in Florence. "The experience was like a new baptism to Romola. In Florence the simpler relations of the human being to his fellow-men had been complicated for her with all the special ties of marriage, the State, and religious discipleship, and when these had disappointed her trust, the shock seemed to have shaken her aloof from life and stunned her sympathy" (560). The contrast between Florence as the stage of history on which Romola must properly operate and the unnamed village as a space separate from history is emphasized in how Romola comes to be remembered by the villagers after her departure: "Many legends were afterwards told in that valley about the Blessed Lady who came over the sea, but they were legends by which all who heard might know that in times gone by a woman had done beautiful loving deeds there, rescuing those who were ready to perish" (559). This village operates in the realm of legend, and Romola's visit is not remembered in terms of exactitude, but rather with a vague sense that it happened "in times gone by." The village is outside the bounds of history as defined by Comtean notions in this historical novel because it is outside the

bounds of institutions that form the subject matter and moving force of history—namely political, religious, and intellectual history. Romola, however, does not choose to remain in the village. Rather, it provides a temporary respite that allows her to achieve a balanced perspective of her place as an individual operating within history. Her intense emotional investment in the fate of the city brought about by Savonarola's commands, culminating in the political execution of her uncle Bernardo del Nero after Romola's failed attempt to intercede for mercy, proves as destructive as Bardo's isolationist stance.

Eliot returns to the idea first exhibited in her Proem that "the faces of the little children" are a static element outside the progressive stream of history when Romola wakes up in the village. The children whom she tends there occupy a space outside the political machinations in Florence and, therefore, outside the flow of history as the novel has worked to define it. The end of the novel comes, appropriately then, after the major events of Romola's life have come to a conclusion. She returns to Florence where she and Monna Brigida take in Tessa and her children. Her retreat from the public stage of history comes with her extrication from Tito and her occupation of a domestic caretaking role in relation to Tessa and the children. At this point the novel comes to a close, indicating that the events with which it is concerned—the historical events—have been reconciled and there is nothing left to tell regarding Romola's place in history. As Tito's childless wife she is at the center of the action in the novel. As the adoptive caretaker of children and the child-like Tessa, she has ceased to be an actor within the flow of history.

The conclusion of the political plotline of the novel involving Savonarola insinuates that while public institutions, such as the church and state, are the driving force of historical movement, they are also the source of adulteration in the historical record.

The machinations of the political parties and the imprisonment, torture, and confession of Savonarola are all communicated to the public via circulating documents. Romola searches the text of Savonarola's confession "again and again, desiring to judge it by some clearer light than the contradictory impressions that were taking the form of assertions in the mouths of both partisans and enemies" (569). The citizens of Florence experience the same confusion as Romola with the contradictory and suspicious nature of the public record:

> The appearance of this document had produced a consternation too profound to be at once displaced as it ultimately was by the suspicion, which soon grew into a positive datum, that any reported words of his which were in inexplicable contradiction to their faith in him, had not come from the lips of the prophet, but from the falsifying pen of Ser Ceccone, that notary of evil repute, who made the digest of the examination. But there were obvious facts that at once threw discredit on the printed document. Was not the list of sixteen examiners half made up of the prophet's bitterest enemies? Was not the notorious Dolfo Spini one of the new Eight prematurely elected, in order to load the dice against a man whose ruin had been determined on by the party in power?

For Romola and the Florentine public, the truth is never confirmed. The documents from which they gather these rumors are both official and unofficial, and they tell a story of Savonarola's confession of guilt, retraction of his confession, and retraction of his retraction. These documents form the basis of the historical record that is handed down to George Eliot's time, and in these final chapters the narrative becomes increasingly

self-conscious and critical of this textual record. The narrative states that "perhaps this confession, even when it described a doubleness that was conscious and deliberate, really implied no more than that wavering of belief concerning his own impressions and motives which most human beings who have not a stupid inflexibility of self-confidence must be liable to under a marked change of external conditions" (573). Romola's search for certainty concerning Savonarola's guilt or innocence in these final chapters parallels the historiographer's search for certitude in the only sources sanctioned by professional history: the public textual record. When this record is not satisfactory, Romola travels to the site of the execution hoping that Savonarola's final words will provide certitude. In the last moments "Savonarola's voice passed into eternal silence" (579), not only in terms of his death but also in terms of the historical record.

Despite the novel's commitment to archival research, the failure of these competing historical documents to provide an authoritative vision of the truth concerning Savonarola's character calls into question the primary source of historical evidence from which the present gathers evidence about the past. However, the novel reminds us in the end that despite the fact that these documents are increasingly the sanctioned and preferred form of evidence for nineteenth-century historiographers, they are not the only source of information. Romola's final impression of the life of Savonarola returns to the level of shared human sensory experience: "But in the same moment expectation died [that Savonarola would speak], and she only saw what he was seeing—torches waving to kindle the fuel beneath his dead body, faces glaring with a yet worse light; she only heard what *he* was hearing—gross jests, taunts, and curses" (578-9). This shared sensory experience is one that again recalls the impressions of the resuscitated Florentine spirit

before he is ejected from the narrative. He recalls human sensations of his experience as a living man: "the sunlight and shadows on the grand walls," the chants from the church, and the voices on the street. The novel suggests that while the truth of the exact historical events cannot be known, a shared sympathy of experience is open to Romola—and to those who seek to access the truth of the historical past—concerning common human sensation. This end point validates the Florentine Spirit from the Proem, initially barred from entering the city because of his lack of analytical distance.

While Romola is able to experience this final moment of sensory connection with Savonarola because of her physical presence at the moment of his execution, Eliot's novel does not offer an exact parallel for how the historian may experience a similar sensory connection. Other historians, however, do advocate physical, sensory experience as the catalyst of historical knowledge. This is a historiographical practice favored by historians as disparate as Thomas Carlyle and Edward Gibbon. In the second book of Carlyle's *Past and Present* (1843), in which he recounts the history of the thirteenth-century monk Jocelin of Brakelond, Carlyle emphasizes the importance of the physical structure of the monastery and the architectural ruins that survive into the present as a way of accessing the past. After condemning most of what goes by the name of "History, and Philosophy of History" in his own time, Carlyle suggests that his historiography is literally grounded by a sense of place. He writes of Jocelin's Abbey in St. Edmundsbury, "And yet these grim old walls are not a dilettantism and dubiety; they are an earnest fact. It was a most real and serious purpose they were built for! Yes, another world it was, when these black ruins, white in their new mortar and fresh chiseling, first saw the sun as walls long ago" (47). For Carlyle, the concrete physical presence of the material remains

of the past are the catalyst for historical truth that supersedes the "dilettantism" he perceives to be prominent in the historiography of his day. Although he cannot by any means be described as an antiquary narrowly defined, Carlyle argues for the importance of physical remains to catalyze the historian to create an evocative atmosphere, echoing Scott's praise of Walpole's achievement in *The Castle of Otranto* in its emphasis on a material sensation.

It is in this way that antiquarianism unites disparate historiographical methodologies, purposes, and narrative forms. Writers such as Walpole, Scott, Carlyle, and Eliot all come together under a single umbrella in their privileging of the manner in which the physical, material remains of history form the catalyst for shared human sensations. These physical remains are incontrovertible in a way that textual documents are not. Antiquarianism thus spreads its influence even in those whose methodologies exclude such non-textual evidence. For example, Edward Gibbon recounts how his *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* grows out of a sense of physical place, even though the text itself relies on written authorities. According to Gibbon in his autobiography, the inspiration for the ambitious historical project descended upon him at a moment when he stood among the Roman ruins contemplating the beauty of the scenery and how it evoked the material presence of the past. "It was at Rome, on the fifteenth of October, 1764, as I sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, while the barefooted fryars were singing Vespers in the temple of Jupiter, that the idea of writing the decline and fall of the City first started to my mind" (qtd. in Womersley, xvi). This anecdote from Gibbon's autobiography is mentioned almost without fail by Gibbon scholars, indicating its importance in understanding his project, although it is completely

absent from the *History*. It also demonstrates that Gibbon to some extent privileges the notion shared by Carlyle that good historical narratives grow from some affective material catalyst that supersedes the disinterested and rational mechanism of the historian's analytical faculty.

In *Romola*, too, Eliot treads a similar line between employing an antiquarian-inspired emphasis on materiality and leaning away from the overly invested affective historical stance associated with antiquarianism. Eliot's practice throughout the novel is to depart from the emphasis on material, and particularly architectural, surroundings that exist in a ruined or worn form in the time of her readers as a method of presenting a romantic historical atmosphere. The novel does exhibit a sense of the physical presence of Florence, but it does so in a straightforward, factual tone. The narrative traces the footsteps of the characters through the city in exhaustive detail by mentioning streets, bridges, gates, and buildings that orient the action. Although Eliot constantly mentions the geography of Florence throughout the novel, she does this mainly as a form of authentication that grounds the events of the novel in a specific location rather than as a site of romantic identification. In this manner, Eliot's novel demonstrates how antiquarianism becomes an inspiration for other forms of historical inquiry that take particular elements as needed and discard the rest. In such a way, antiquarianism, long associated with an interest in the fragmentary and half legible manuscript, becomes a palimpsest for history itself. Evolving methodologies read it and rewrite it, using it like archaeology as a springboard against which to launch itself, or like Rankean history as a lever against which to push.

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