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David V Smith

Tourism and the Formation of the Writer: Three Case Studies

PhD. 2002

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12 DEC 2003

Dedication

I would like to thank my Supervisor, Professor Tim Clark, for his inspiring tutorials and his guidance and patience throughout this project. I would also like to thank my Mother and Father, Mark and Larisa, Gillian and Mike, Matthew and Rachael, and Granny, for their support and kindness. I also wish to express thanks to the 1998 Board of Studies chaired by Professor Michael O' Neill, and the University of Durham who granted me an award enabling me to pursue a PhD. Thanks also to Professor Michael O' Neill, Professor Richard Cronin, Professor David Fuller, Professor Andrew Sanders, Dr Robin Dix, Dr Fiona Robertson, Dr Pam Knights; fellow students and staff in the English department and University; the staff in the University's libraries and the Graduate Society; and to the students whom I was privileged to teach during my studies.

David Vernon Smith

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Abstract

In the nineteenth century a vogue for travel writing emerged as writers began to describe experiences of foreign travel in a style quite different from realistic Grand Tour narratives. In their travel writing, Byron, Shelley and Dickens display an impression of the complexities of modernity rather than present a mimetic and conformist view of the world. The study shows how travel writers represent the manifold nature of tourist experience through a composite presentation of subject which despite its heterogeneity lays claim to a unity of knowledge. This thesis discusses the impact of tourism on the beliefs, identities and style of writers. The chapter on Byron shows how he evolved a new poetic voice using a verse travelogue which evaluates the injustices of war and empire. The chapter on Shelley examines his tour of Switzerland and shows how the influence of Rousseau's imagination inspired Shelley in his vision to improve English society. The chapter on Dickens considers how the economic development of America informed his views on the state of American society and urged him to conceive in his later works a world in which the privacy of the domestic hearth is sanctified. The thesis investigates the extent to which ideals of political and social reform govern the nature of travel writing in Europe and America in the late Romantic and early Victorian periods. Tourist narratives of the period use contemporary and historical evidence to assess the advantages and disadvantages of the political and social systems of abroad, thereby indicating a path to enlightened social harmony.

Abbreviations

- AN Dickens, Charles. American Notes for General Circulation. 1842. Ed. John S. Whitley and Arnold Goldman. London: Penguin, 1985.
- B Byron, Lord. The Oxford Authors Byron. Ed. Jerome J. McGann. Oxford: Oxford U P, 1986.
- BLJ Byron, Lord. Byron's Letters and Journals. Ed. Leslie A. Marchand. 11 vols. London: Murray, 1973-85.
- D Dickens, Charles. The Pilgrim Edition The Letters of Charles Dickens. Ed. Madeline House, Graham Storey and Kathleen Tillotson. 12 vols. Oxford: Clarendon, 1965-2002.
- H Shelley, Percy Bysshe. Poetical Works. Ed. Thomas Hutchinson. London: Oxford U P, 1971.
- IP - - -. The Complete Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley. Ed. Roger Ingpen and Walter E. Peck. Vol. 7. London: Ernest Benn, 1965.
- J - - -. The Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley. Ed. Frederick L. Jones. Vol. 1. Oxford: Clarendon, 1964.
- M - - -. The Prose Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley. Ed. E. B. Murray. Vol. 1. Oxford: Clarendon, 1993.
- ME - - -. The Poems of Shelley. Ed. Geoffrey Matthews and Kelvin Everest. Vol. 1. London: Longman, 1989.

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Introduction: Tourism, Writers and Identity

The experience of tourism may irrevocably alter identity. The primary subject of this thesis is to examine how this experience of transformation, and how tourisms of longer, more fixed durations affect writers' philosophies and their sense of personal and English national identity. The English abroad are forced to reconsider their identity when confronted with new landscapes, societies and cultures. The discovery of cultural difference may initiate new ideas and often, for a writer, marks the beginning of new literary endeavour. In the nineteenth century the growth of a tourism associated with encountering particular literary or historical figures began to increase as advances in transport and road building made long journeys easier. The development of literary tourism enabled writers to discover for themselves the mythology and lore surrounding the histories of their own specific secular deities. Exposure to foreign geographies allows writers to consider different practices of cultural integration and accordingly suggest more efficient ways of governing society. The experience of travelling abroad enables a temporary suspension of self which allows the writer vividly to memorialise experience with an enlightened understanding.¹ This thesis suggests that confrontation with foreign space engenders new systems of thought and reconfigures identity by trespassing through parameters of imagination and reality. The imagined safety region of abroad allows dissident mentalities to flourish, which in the travel writing of Shelley, Byron and Dickens led to anti-establishment and iconoclastic ideas of reform.

Travel Writing and the Rise of Tourism

The development of travel writing as a genre is associated with the desire to keep a record of a journey. As explorers began to navigate the world accounts of their voyages and adventures provided a useful source of geographical and scientific information for traders,

¹ See p 21-23.



settlers and future travellers.² Rome rather than Jerusalem became the centre for pilgrimage in the fifteenth century effectively marking the beginning of travel centred on Italy as a final destination. In the sixteenth century, with the development of the printing press, the number of published accounts of travel increased.³ The seventeenth century saw the formalised recognition of the institution of the Grand Tour, a term first used by Richard Lassels in his Voyage of Italy (1670) although there are several earlier examples of Elizabethan travellers undertaking similar tours. The Grand Tour of the major cities of Europe was undertaken by the sons of aristocratic families as a journey of education and focused especially on Italy with its rich classical heritage. By the eighteenth century this flourishing phenomenon resulted in a boom of published works recounting European journeys. Previous scholarship has suggested that the Grand Tour collapsed once the French wars of 1793-1815 sealed off Europe as a viable tourist destination. However, the existence of Romantic travel accounts of domestic tourism in Great Britain, and Continental tourism in the Eastern Mediterranean and Western Europe whilst the war was still raging suggests that the Napoleonic wars may only have partially contributed to the demise of an already declining institution. The idea of a 'Grand' Tourism focused on a specific itinerary of places and culture which ends in a tour of Italy simply became an outmoded fashion in the modern nineteenth century which saw a new liberality of the route and itinerary ungoverned by religious and classical topoi. It may be argued that the new interest in Greece shown by antiquaries, archaeologists, fortune-hunters, scholars and poets around the beginning of the nineteenth century effectively marked the end

² Early examples of manuscripts of travel include Pausanias's Hellados Periegesis (2nd century A.D.). Giraldus Cambrensis's Itinerarium Cambriae (c 1188) and the Extravaganzas of Sir John Mandeville (1496). Earlier still, The Histories of Herodotus (485-425 B.C.) and Xenophon's Anabasis (430 B.C.) are the first substantial historical narratives of travel writing. Further afield, Cosmas of Alexandria (548 A.D.) left an account of his travels in Ethiopia and the Indian Ocean, and Fa-Hian (399-414 A.D.) wrote of his travels in India. Two early examples of Englishmen travelling abroad are Anthony Jenkinson's Account of a Trip to Russia (1557) and Thomas Dallam's Account of a Journey to Constantinople (1559). For a more detailed synopsis see: J.A. Cuddon, Penguin.

³ See Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing 1450-1800, trans. David Gerard, ed. Geoffrey Nowell-Smith and David Wootton (London: NLB, 1976).

of the 'institution' of the Grand Tour, or a tour which culminates in a visit to Rome. The new enthusiasm for more exotic Eastern Mediterranean destinations lured tourists and travellers away from the idea of a strictly routed journey. The nineteenth century became a 'free' age of travel. The idea of travel became deregularized, as the need for a precisely mapped journey which climaxed in a pilgrimage to the major religious centre in Western Europe, became less meaningful to free-thinking intellectuals in an age of growing unbelief.

In the nineteenth century accounts of tourism flooded the publishing market. Part of the subject of this thesis is to investigate how writers took advantage of the opportunities now afforded by an increased readership to publish more specified writing on tourism. Impressions of tourism provided an obvious source of narrative material and one which was enthusiastically enjoyed in the popular market,⁴ but they could also be used for political purposes. In the later Romantic age of Shelley and Byron tourism developed a more radical agenda. The failure of the French Revolution, the supremacy of Napoleon throughout Europe and increasing levels of social unrest and dissatisfaction in England led a new generation of writers to use tourism as the basis for political and social reform. The investigation of European political philosophies and the promulgation of active revolutionary, political or social reform is the defining characteristic of the travel writers of the early nineteenth century.

(i) Towards a Definition of Tourism

Tourism is a difficult word to define and because of its diversified nature should not be thought of as a single identifiable phenomenon. In The Beaten Track James Buzard notes

⁴ Simon Eliot has noted how the early nineteenth century saw a transition from sacred to secular titles in the publishing market. For example in the Bibliotheca Londinensis for 1814-1846 religious writing comprises 20.3 % of the total; geography, travel, history, and biography 17.3 %; fiction and juvenile 16.2 % and poetry and drama 7.6 %. See John O. Jordan and Robert L. Patten, Literature in the Marketplace: Nineteenth Century British Publishing and Reading practices (Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1995) 19-43.

that the etymology of the word tourism derives from its early eighteenth century usage as a “synonym for traveller” (1). According to the Oxford English Dictionary “tourism” is defined as the “theory and practice of touring, travelling pleasure--the business of attracting tourists, providing for their accommodation” (“Tourism”, Oxford). Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary describes “tourism” as “an activity [confined] to tourists and those who cater for them” (“Tourism”, Chambers). This definition is perhaps rather negative since it implies tourism is a solely economic and profiteering type of phenomenon. In his poem of 1825 “The Delinquent Travellers”, Coleridge considers the huge increase in tourism on the continent following the end of the Napoleonic wars. He cites two general motives for continental tourism: curiosity to see Europe after access has been denied for so long, and the strong desire to escape home: “But O, what scores are sick of Home, / Agog for Paris or for Rome!” (Poems lines 5-6). Coleridge implies through his description of the “scores” of travellers nowadays cringingly “agog” for touristic experience that travel is a more readily available pastime than in the exclusive days of the eighteenth century Grand Tour. Coleridge’s tourists carry negative associations because of their rampant numbers; mass tourism is bad.

In “The Triumph of Life” Shelley glorifies individualism by opposing the self to the thronging multitudes who may be encountered in the journey of life:

Methought I sate beside a public way

Thick strewn with summer dust, and a great stream

Of people there was hurrying to and fro,

Numerous as gnats upon the evening gleam,

All hastening onward, yet none seemed to know
 Whither he went, or whence he came, or why
 He made one of the multitude. . . . (H lines 43-49)

The idea of the masses carries negative implication; the multitudes do not think, do not know or desire to know. The Oxford English dictionary's etymology of "tourists" implies that by the final quarter of the nineteenth century mass tourism was a well-established but negative phenomenon. In his Inland Voyage of 1878, for example, Robert Louis Stevenson refers to "all the ruck and rabble of British touristry", whilst in his Praeterita (1887) John Ruskin blames an invasion of the masses for the despoliation of the English landscape: "Ruin was inevitable in the valley after it became a tourist rendezvous" ("Tourists"). One of the fundamental cruxes of tourism is that the individual traveller, nomad, philosopher has to exist in opposition to the crowd. Tourism is not only what tourists do but also implies the plurality of mass travel repeated in unending and thoughtless imitation.

For much of life we are still all individuals pursuing our own ends, finding our own way through the maze of existence. Tourism as the journey of life may be understood as part of the postmodern condition; we are all tourists now, endlessly consuming materialism in a plastic, popular world. Indeed, John Urry has suggested that the predominant intrusion of the image into postmodern society has effectively resulted in the end of tourism. The proliferation of foreign images in everyday life means we can experience a simulacrum of abroad simply by switching on a television set. The elation of foreign encounter, of pleasure in the material artefacts of continental societies may also be encountered in the high street with more readily available imports in our consumer-oriented society:

Disorganised capitalism then seems to be the epoch in which, as tourism's specificity

dissolves, so tourism comes to take over and organise much contemporary social and cultural experience. Disorganised capitalism then involves the 'end of tourism'. People are tourists most of the time whether they are literally mobile or only experience simulated mobility through the incredible fluidity of multiple signs and electronic images. (Consuming 148)

Of course, nothing can match the atmosphere of encountering abroad in reality. Tourism hasn't exactly ended, rather tourism's capricious and uncontrollable exhilaration of fast-changing images has become a more regularised aspect of modern consumer society. The touristic rhetoric of the neon-sign, the fairground ride, candy floss, Coca-Cola, the weekend, the postcard means that a simulacrum of leisure experience can be easily enjoyed within the confines of ordinary life. The proliferation of touristic images has therefore resulted in the blurring of a distinction between touristic experience and everyday life.

Similarly, the diffusion of different cultures throughout the world especially in multicultural societies has led the most progressive thinkers of society, especially the younger generation, to adopt the fashions, cuisine and music of foreign cultures whilst still regarding their identity as intrinsically, for example, English.⁵ The idea of a recognisable national identity has become a less specific concept. Many 'Englishmen' no longer define their Englishness through a love of British beef, the last night of the proms or a Union Jack waistcoat. The new generation's absorption of cosmopolitan culture, crazes for tofu, saris, or the Buddha has led to a more globalized perception of society which partly deconstructs the idea of specific national cultural boundaries within the rigid political frontiers which demarcate different countries. The liberalisation of regional culture, the wide appropriation of certain aspects of others' cultures and histories as belonging to a global rather than a regional

⁵ See Kevin Davey, English Imaginaries: Six Studies in Anglo-British Modernity (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1999).

community suggests that boundaries of cultural geography are broadening.

The tourist industry, however, exists to promote the idea of Englishness by idealising images of the past through heritage sites and museum displays which cash in on nostalgic representations of British history. Tourism has always been regulated by education, the curiosity to uncover the past. On each day of his holiday the tourist undergoes a new journey to discover and visit the heritage of a particular city. Castles, cathedrals, museums, local markets, shopping centres, restaurants all become commodities making up part of the tourist trail followed by individuals and masses.

Urry, MacCannell and Buzard all understand modern tourism as being an acquisitive venture which is structured by the consumption of signs. Urry has evolved a classification of semiology in which tourists consume signs on their travels through the process of sight, or the "gaze." Urry distinguishes between "romantic" and "collective" gazes, referring to an anti-tourist or individualised romantic gaze and a tourist or mass, public collective gaze. Tourists gaze on a variety of objects: "a landscape (the Lake District), a townscape (Chester), an ethnic group (Maoris), a lifestyle ("Wild West"), historical artefacts (Canterbury Cathedral or Wigan Pier), bases of recreation (golf courses) or sand, sun and sea (Majorca)" (Urry, 57). The individual's interpretation of such objects and signs clarifies a specific experience of tourism. The mountains and tarns in the Lake District may have more significance to a lover of romantic poetry, who may appreciate them in a deeper poetic and literary-historical sense, than to a gazer who has simply come to admire the scenery. The former tourist deploys a romantic and individual gaze, whilst the latter is part of an undistinguished collective gaze. These distinctions work by assuming that the consumption of culture has a higher intrinsic value than materialism. Capitalist consumption ensures that inequality is one facet of modern tourism. Expense regulates an exclusion zone, allowing only the wealthy to pursue some forms of tourism, whilst an aesthetic poverty of mind means only certain individuals can

enjoy particular types of cultural experience, or indeed derive satisfactory understanding and appreciation from a particular tourist attraction.

(ii) Anti-Tourism

In his extensive work on the development of literary tourism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries James Buzard has demonstrated how travellers like to distinguish themselves from mere tourists by labelling themselves as anti-tourists.⁶ The whole condition of anti-tourism implies difference but not inequality, rather infraternity. Buzard's study suggests that anti-tourists demarcate themselves from "vulgar" tourists through accumulating cultural experience:

Anti-tourism evolved into a symbolic economy in which travellers and writers displayed marks of originality and 'authenticity' in an attempt to win credit for acculturation; and visited places were perceived as parts of a market-place of cultural goods, each location chiefly of interest for the demonstrably appropriatable tokens of authenticity it afforded. Travel's educative, acculturating function took on a newly competitive aspect, as travellers sought to distinguish themselves from the 'mere tourists' they saw or imagined around them. Correspondingly, the authentic 'culture' of places--the genius loci--was represented as lurking in secret precincts 'off the beaten track' where it could be discovered only by the sensitive 'traveller', not the vulgar tourist. (6)

It is assumed that anti-tourists are educated, or able to make use of their education to retrieve

⁶ See James Buzard, The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to Culture. 1800-1918 (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1993).

and understand the specialised information from guide books or travel narratives which furnish and elaborate the condition of tourism. Those able to appreciate the higher aspects of art, architecture, cuisine, or a relatively unvisited location are anti-tourists because their experience of tourism requires an input which gravitates against the tourist's characteristic of being shown what someone else has designated to be "the" sights worth seeing. The anti-tourist judges for himself what he will see by selecting pertinent information from a guide book. For example, a tourist might aimlessly wander around the basilica of San Marco, whilst an anti-tourist might locate a specific mosaic or sculpture he has read about.

Buzard's work relies on the assumption that an us / them dichotomy may be established between different kinds of tourists. The implication is that tourism is inherently a class-based phenomenon which channels tourists into educated and individualised anti-tourists, or half-educated and willingly led mass-tourists. Tourism and anti-tourism are therefore regulated by concepts of high and popular culture and the tourist's ability to engage with and understand either form. Above all, the notion of tourism is underscored by the commonplace that tourism and tourists are bad; the tourist is a person to be frowned on, abhorred and dissociated with. John Frow suggests that this class-ridden philosophy of otherness which effectively demarcates a sense of intellectual identity is at the heart of much discourse related to tourism: "Hence a certain fantasized dissociation from the others, from the rituals of tourism, is built into almost every discourse and almost every practice of tourism. This is the phenomenon of touristic shame, 'a rhetoric of moral superiority' that accompanies both the most snobbish and the most politically radical critiques of tourism" (95). This culture of difference is absolutely necessary for the continuing existence of tourism: "The tourist / traveller dichotomy has functioned primarily, as Culler says, 'to convince oneself that one is not a tourist . . . the desire to distinguish between tourists and real travellers [being] a part of tourism--integral to it rather than outside it or beyond it' "

(Buzard 4-5). Buzard sees the denigration of tourists as belonging to the anti-tourist's sense of self-definition:

My point is simply that anti-tourists or practitioners of the 'romantic gaze' required the crowd they scorned and shunned, for they built their traveller's identities in opposition to the crowd. There is a dialectical relationship between the elaboration of 'crowd' and 'tourist,' on the one hand, and the anti-tourist's privileging of 'solitude,' which is less a valuing of private experience than it is a rhetorical act of role-distancing in need of its audience, real or imaginary. (152-53)

The anti-tourist needs his or her other in the same way that in theories of orientalism the coloniser needs the colonised to define his identity. Buzard's "other", is however, the totality of faceless masses encountered abroad, not the generalised figure of the foreigner. The tourist crowd is perceived to be vulgar, anti-Bohemian, unprofessional, uninterested and uncommitted to the central role of art and culture in modern society. The anti-tourist's desire to appropriate culture, to collect aesthetic experiences of art and absorb authentic ambience gives him cultural distinction validating his worth. Buzard's anti-tourist works through a distinction of cultural superiority, a world in which anti-tourists carry forward superior philosophies and formulate identity by distinguishing themselves from faceless philistines who do not understand or believe in the higher aesthetic value of art. Intellectual identity is achieved by assuming a position of anti-philistinism, of dissociating entirely from the 'in crowd', rebellion in separation. This distinction gives rise to the creation of the Touristic stereotype, that is the generalised representation of the tourist as an unrefined barbarian. The danger with stereotyped assumptions is that they act against mankind's communal wealth of experience; the tourist / anti-tourist division is, though, useful as a basis for understanding the

fundamental drives and desires which structure the condition of tourism.

The writer may often be a kind of higher or super anti-tourist who emblazons his experience of tourism through memorialisation. Writers experience a different kind of tourism than other mortals because their heightened observation of the foreign is often used as the basis for literary creativity. Exposure to new landscapes, peoples and cultures allows the presentation of a wealth of unfamiliar, unimaginable and alien practices which may be used by writers primarily to form the basis of a travelogue, diary or letters, or secondarily to provide the setting for works of poetry, novels and drama. For a writer, therefore, tourism activates the imagination by flooding the mind with a bustling and vigorous plenitude of action so unfamiliar that inspiration is almost bound to be the consequence.

In the early nineteenth century, owing to the unemancipated condition of women, the majority of travellers abroad were male. Elizabeth Bohls has noted, for example, the tendency for aesthetic travel writing to be specifically masculine--gendered and orientated to property owning aristocrats.⁷ A group of exceptional women travel writers did, however, emerge.⁸ Helen Maria Williams, for example, infuses her heavily politicised travel writing with a feminised emotional discourse which celebrates her position as a woman travel writer. Mary Wollstonecraft uses her femininity as a means of establishing a particularised relationship to the foreign landscape of Scandinavia. Wollstonecraft's subjected identity as a female in England is liberated abroad since she finds equality in her relationships with the people of the far North. Bohls suggests that "Wollstonecraft uses the episodic structure of the travel narrative as a frame for experiencing and describing subjective states of being; her [female]

⁷ See Elizabeth A. Bohls, Women Travel Writers and the Language of Aesthetics 1716-1818 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995).

⁸ For an introduction to the development of women's travel writing in Spanish America and Africa see Mary Louise Pratt, Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation (London: Routledge, 1992). For example in Spanish America: Flora Tristan, Peregrinations of A Pariah, 1833-34, (Boston: Beacon P, 1986) and Maria Callcott Graham, Voyage To Brazil and Journal of A Residence in Chile during the Year 1822 (London, 1824) (Pratt 155-71). In Africa: Anna Maria Falconbridge, Narrative of Two Voyages to the River Sierra Leone (London, 1802) (Pratt 102-07).

persona builds a complex interiority through her responses to her surroundings” (159). Mary Wollstonecraft’s daughter, Mary Godwin, also responded to the literary spaces of abroad by co-writing a travelogue with her fiancé, P. B. Shelley, in 1814. Later, abroad in 1816 she began writing her first novel Frankenstein (1818), inspired by the salon of émigrés, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Claire Clairmont, Lord Byron, and Polidori who had gathered around Lac Lemane that summer. This study, whilst concentrating on the texts of male-gendered writers, does, however, contextually consider the ideas of female travel writers.

Tourism and Identity

The definition--and in the case of the anti-tourist the distinction--of identity is a principal consequence of tourism. Tourism allows identities to be hidden or transformed. Crossing a border and encountering unfamiliar territory affects individuals’ psyches either negatively or positively. The confusion and strangeness of alien cultures may induce crises of identity in a traveller whose being is predominantly defined within the circle of his community. Since human identity is largely determined through interaction with others, separation from a familiar circle of associates may lead to a loss of self-definition and the onset of psychological crisis; to borrow Julia Kristeva’s phrase we become “strangers to ourselves.” Once we set foot abroad we become the ‘foreigner’, our identity metamorphoses into the other: “The foreigner is within me, hence we are all foreigners. If I am a foreigner, there are no foreigners” (Kristeva 192). How far a subject defines his identity through nation and national culture may be an indicator of how far the experience of foreign culture is problematic in terms of conceiving identity. Writers such as Shelley and Byron who were, to a degree, alienated from the English establishment cultivated cosmopolitan and universal attitudes once they settled in European societies. The appropriation of Italianate ottava rima

in “Beppo”, for example, suggests that Byron partly regarded the Italian language as his own. Equally his habit of wearing Albanian costume suggests that his identity had crossed a boundary and that his sense of Englishness was eradicated to such an extent he could identify with the artefacts of a non-western European culture.

The concealment of identity, the delight of being able to think “no-one knows me here” is part of the apparatus of tourism as a means of escape from home and its communities. It is an acknowledged truism of tourism and travel literature that the sight of familiar faces abroad is a thing to be avoided at all costs.⁹ The intrusion of home militates against the perfect escapism that the distant spaces of abroad furnish. Abroad is a hide away and the sight of the too familiar bursts the bubble of imagined refuge. The escapist syndrome only works in the temporary period of time which tourism allows. The dividing line between tourism and expatriation may be partially defined in terms of the more permanent and fixed nature of living abroad for so long that one begins to become part of the local community. The permanency of expatriation with its encumbrances of responsibility and domesticity contrasts with tourism, which in its temporary easy-going mode of lifestyle, offers a considerable means of release from the familiar.

Tourism also offers release in more abstruse ways for those philosophical travellers whose escape might involve a flight from current restrictive practices of existence. The sight of completely strange terrain absorbs the mind to such a large degree that problems back home may diminish and are temporarily forgotten. There is so much for the tourist to do, to survive, to keep going in this new, strange foreign locale that the mind is too busy to contemplate its prior mode of living. Tourism enables a Lebensraum of vitality and freshness

⁹ For example Lady Caroline Capel who had already been on the continent for two years lamented the influx of English travellers in Brussels on the anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo. See The Capel Papers Being the Correspondence of Lady Caroline Capel and her daughters with the Dowager Countess of Uxbridge from Brussels and Switzerland 1814-1817, ed. The Marquess of Anglesey (London: Cape, 1955). See also Thomas Moore, “Rhymes on the Road,” 1819, The Poetical Works of Thomas Moore, ed. A. D. Godley (London: Oxford U P, 1910) (Extract 9, 1-5) and Sterne, Sentimental 13 (or p 68 of this thesis).

which allows one to forget the recent past and, whilst abroad at least, to find a renewed and regenerated existence. All past life may be forgotten in the new temporary identity which the tourist may assume since no one knows him and his history here.

Whilst it may, of course be possible when abroad to avoid the vagaries of home community, it is impossible to avoid the problems associated with assuming a new foreign identity. The difficulties of communicating in a foreign language itself may prove awkward if anything goes wrong. How, for instance, would Smollett have complained so vociferously about the unpalatable French food, his atrocious lodgings or his uncomfortable journeys without a working fluency in the French language? Before the wider development of English language education for foreigners, and education in foreign languages in British schools, and indeed the ready availability of phrase books, grammars, dictionaries and self help books in foreign language proficiency, the nineteenth-century tourist must have been to a large degree at the mercy of gesture and facial expression as a means of communication, unless his education had already equipped him.

(i) Cultural Difference

The primary disadvantage of assuming foreign identity, however, is simply being judged as belonging to a faceless conglomeration of the other society, or in becoming a cultural stereotype. The foreigner, in being unable effectively to represent himself and establish a working relationship with the host community, becomes a target for misrepresentation in the eyes of others. For example, in his critical travel essay, "Travelling Abroad", Hazlitt remarks on the levelling effects that entering a foreign space and becoming

a foreigner has on all classes of society:¹⁰

There is no perceptible difference between the lord and the commoner, the lady and her maid. A pert French soubrette going along laughs at them both alike. Travelling, like Death, levels all distinctions. ‘The toe of the citizen treads on the courtier’s heels, and galls his kibe.’ We are all hail-fellow-well-met. The difference is not worth the counting. It is as if one great personification of John Bull had been suspended over the continent, and had been dashed to the ground in a thousand fragments, all bruised and senseless alike. (Complete 340)

Lord and commoner alike, all assume the same indistinguishable “John Bull” English identity in the eyes of the French. The English themselves, though, according to Hazlitt in a later work, are no better and equally regard the French with gall. Difference is not admired, or imitated, but viewed with derision: “The first thing an Englishman does on going abroad is to find fault with what is French”¹¹

Perception of cultural difference has always been laced with prejudice, Hazlitt argues in his essay “On Personal Identity.”¹² This is especially so with regard to Oriental civilization. Englishmen can more readily identify with Westernised stereotypical heroes such as Alexander the Great than Eastern monarchs such as Darius. The Persian invasion of Athens threatened the very idea of Western civilisation and democracy: the Athenian defeat of Darius ensured a continuing distinction between Western and Eastern society. As Hazlitt remarks, “But among monarchs, there is no one, I think, who envies Darius or Xerxes. One

¹⁰ “Travelling Abroad” first published in The New Monthly Magazine, June 1828. The Complete Works of William Hazlitt, ed. P. P. Howe, vol. 17 (London: Dent, 1933) 332-344.

¹¹ William Hazlitt, Notes of A Journey Through France and Italy, 1826, The Complete Works of William Hazlitt, ed. P. P. Howe, vol. 10 (London: Dent, 1932).

¹² First Published in The Monthly Magazine, January 1828. See vol. 17 of Complete, 264-275.

has a different feeling with respect to Alexander or Pyrrhus; but this is because they were great men as well as great Kings, and the soul is up in arms at the mention of their names as at the sound of a trumpet” (Complete, 17 : 269). For Hazlitt, the stereotypical Englishman not only empathises more readily with Western culture, but understands his own superior English identity as being opposed to all that is foreign. The space of abroad releases the full-blooded identity of all true Englishmen: “I am one of those who do not think that much is to be gained in point either of temper or understanding by travelling abroad. Give me the true, stubborn, unimpaired John Bull feeling, that keeps fast hold of the good things it fancies in its exclusive possession, nor ever relaxes in its contempt for foreign frippery and finery.”¹³ The typical Englishman abroad, therefore, finds that his demotion to foreigner strengthens a resolve to determine his identity and retain self-respect by becoming the very best of all that England stands for. Hazlitt’s tourist is proud to assume the staunch, hardy stubborn persona of John Bull. In modern critical theories of identity this phenomenon may be explained in terms of others and othering. Colonising powers assert their being and ultimately their whole authority by establishing their identity as supreme and secure their power through reducing the colonised native to the other. The problem with such assumptions is that identity cannot altogether be reduced to binarisms of superior and inferior, even though it seems to be part of human nature.¹⁴ As Hazlitt implies, in his Romantic criticism of the English abroad, power-relationships of other / othered are essentially more complex than labelling every citizen as a John Bull persona. Cultural stereotypes make no allowance for uniqueness and individuality but lump the worst traits of each nation into unfair, misrepresentational and inaccurate

¹³ “Travelling Abroad,” (Complete, 17: 332).

¹⁴ For instance see “National Antipathies” in William Hazlitt, Notes of a Journey through France and Italy: “We put the good, wholesome, hearty, respectable qualities into one heap and call it English; and the bad, unwholesome, frivolous, and contemptible ones into another heap, and call it French; and whatever does not answer to this pretended sample, we reject as spurious and partial evidence. Our coxcomb conceit stands over the different races of mankind, like a smart serjeant of a regiment, and drills them into pitiful uniformity, we ourselves being picked out as the elite du corps, and the rest of the world forming the forlorn hope of humanity” (Complete, 10:141).

generalisations. The relationship between tourist and foreigner cannot be reduced to a generalised stereotype since everyone has different or conflicting opinions. This aspect of cultural identity forms a major part of Homi Bhaba's theory. In The Location of Culture Bhaba suggests that the fallacy of understanding the concept of nationhood within the parameters of the stereotype indicates that we urgently need to re-address our perception of the whole notion of colonial identities and the relationships between the powered and the disempowered: "I suggest . . . that the stereotype is a complex, ambivalent, contradictory mode of representation, as anxious as it is assertive. . ." (70). Bhaba firmly relocates the object of his analysis in the margins of society. It is here that resistance is most effective. The "other" articulates a defiant space of selfhood from a secure place on the periphery of society, a location from which to repel the repressive ambivalence of colonial authority and emerge and form a stringent cultural identity. Personhood is attained through a necessarily self-imposed cultural segregation.

(ii) Englishness and the Demarcation of Identity

The territory of abroad affirms and questions preconceived and inbred perceptions of Englishness. Anthony Easthope has noted how a sense of English identity may be represented by certain English institutions, such as the Bank of England, Parliament, the Navy or Whitehall (55). These institutions, however, (unless we reside in London) are not constantly before our eyes. They only form part of an imagined perception of what it means to belong to the English nation. Once abroad, imagined ideas of Englishness become even more remote as the eye is bombarded with images of alien cultures. Perhaps as a means of holding on to a sense of wellbeing the tourist exaggerates his sense of English being, especially if socialising with the host nation seems problematic. Our sense of Englishness is determined through

discourses of behaviour and language. In an essay on Matthew Arnold, Julian Wolfreys suggests that “language is the medium . . . through which a nation expresses, or can express, its national identity” (59). Our sense of self is heightened abroad because we speak another language. As I have noted, class distinctions are levelled abroad. Foreign peoples do not usually discriminate against tourists because of regional dialect or class: a foreigner is simply a foreigner.¹⁵ In the works I shall be examining, all the writers seek to maintain or challenge their perception of Englishness by either positively valorising some aspect of foreign society and culture, or by adopting a discriminatory position against the foreigner and thereby enunciating English identity. In *American Notes*, for example, Dickens repeatedly refers to the Americans’ unpleasant habit of spitting tobacco in public, an act which regardless of its anti-social uncleanliness, militates against accepted traits of English manners and behaviour.

Surely, therefore, most tourists encountering strange and unfamiliar cultures abroad suffer alienation and consequently experience an increased sense of Englishness. Such crises of identity may be brought on by the confrontation with the foreign: different physical appearance, dress, manners, customs and language may be initially disconcerting. Equally, unfamiliar geographical terrain and the total severance from family and friends may lead to feelings of estrangement, loneliness, disorientation. However, identity crises may not be as traumatic if either one understands the language in a foreign country, or if consistent socialisation with foreigners leads to mutual cultural acceptance, even embracing the foreign through adopting foreign systems of thought or engaging readily with the material culture of other societies. For writers, artists and intellectuals the shock of the new initiates new ways of thinking and creating through the assimilation of different ideas, customs, beliefs, materials and cultures.

¹⁵ The irony in cultural stereotyping, as Wolfreys implies, is that the English language itself is made up of loan words from most parts of the world. English is truly an international, cosmopolitan language, and a language which is increasingly being spoken by more and more non-English peoples. See Julian Wolfreys, *Being English: Narratives, Idioms and Performances of National Identity from Coleridge to Trollope* (State U of New York P, 1994) 90.

Edward Gibbon, for example, in 1764 conceived his idea for his great historical epic whilst musing on the ruins of the Coliseum in Rome:

After a sleepless night, I trod, with a lofty step, the ruins of the forum; each memorable spot where Romulus stood, or Tully spoke, or Caesar fell, was at once present to my eye; and several days of intoxication were lost or enjoyed before I could descend to a cool and minute investigation . . .

It was on the fifteenth of October in the gloom of the evening, as I sat musing on the Capitol, while the barefoot fryars were chanting their litanies in the temple of Jupiter, that I conceived the first thought of my history. My original plan was confined to the decay of the city; my reading and reflection pointed to that aim; but several years elapsed, and several avocations intervened, before I grappled with the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. (Hibbert, Grand 141-42)

In Gibbon's case his fascination with modern eighteenth-century ruins instigated his imaginary visions of ancient Roman history. Contemplating on imagined perceptions of the past amongst the decay of the contemporary Italian Capitol awakened in him the desire to account for the fall of the ancient Roman empire. He was inspired by the ambience of a foreign location to imagine scenes from the past, which further incited him to address historical questions relating to the temporal differences between contemporary Italian politics and the efficient and latterly declining political administrations of the Roman Empire.

(iii) Tourism, Expatriation and Identity

In The Ethics of Travel From Marco Polo to Kafka, Syed Manzurul Islam argues that

once a traveller begins to identify a sense of being through distinguishing the other he has effectively crossed a boundary: "If a traveller moves between points by ellipsis, how does he indicate that he has crossed a threshold . . . how do we know that it is another place? Simply, the answer must be that it is by repeating a discourse of the other that the traveller announces his arrival in another place" (67). A geographical region therefore can be defined in terms of an invisible border which identifies itself to the foreign tourist by enunciating its own position of otherness through language, culture, custom, tradition, art. A country asserts its nationality by imaging to the world 'we do things differently here.' My thesis examines such constructions of identity through the viewpoint of the English writer abroad.

Any journey in which ties to local communities remain temporary, unrooted and intangible allowing a wealth of anonymity may be referred to as Tourism in its most philosophic sense. As soon as the magic circle of secrecy is disrupted by the administered ugliness of regulated life, as soon as the responsibility of permanence enters the equation, the release of holiday tourism reverts to daily ordered existence within a not quite so foreign setting. A tourist is able to prolong this idyll of irresponsible and free anonymity by purposively refusing to put down roots and continuing to tour new locations. In terms of temporary freedoms, therefore, tourism allows the greatest liberty of all--as long as foreign laws, rules, wars do not intrude on the tented shelter of the traveller.

Expatriation, which involves living in a foreign location for a longer, although generally unspecified, period of time may eventually seem a less liberating experience than the short temporary anonymity of tourism because closer integration within a foreign community starts to reveal problems which begin to cancel out the pleasures of holiday experience. Expatriates may not enjoy the same legal rights as natives. It may prove to be more difficult to enjoy interesting and lucrative employment. There may be irritating local customs and laws which are not allowed to tarnish the shorter durations of tourism. A tourist

may overlook disadvantage since he will soon return home or move on. The expatriate, however, must learn to enjoy disadvantage, or prejudice deriving from his status as foreigner; it is the cost of being an exile. The advantages of expatriation, however, are similar to tourism in that the expatriate enjoys anonymity from his past home community and indeed all his past history. An expatriate can still enjoy the pretence of living a new existence unregulated by the laws, strictures and unhappiness of home, but he must also accept that the longer he remains away, the more away will seem to be like home. The forging of a new life abroad involves forming ties to a new community in which social, economic, and legal disadvantages may end up being the same, perhaps even a worse part of the formula than in life at home. Perhaps many expatriates go abroad to forget their personal histories; foreign communities allow one to transform identity by allowing one to forget the travails and insufferabilities of domestic life.¹⁶

This argument counters one aspect of Anthony Easthope's recent study on Englishness. Easthope maintains that "there can be no escape from identity (except into psychosis or death)" (24). If we are to understand the place travel has in life, in an anthropological sense, tourism belongs to rites of passage experiences. Van Gennep has identified the three great rites of passage as birth, marriage and death.¹⁷ If this is so, tourists who undergo transformations of identity abroad, who are able temporarily to bury old perceptions of the self, may be said to have undergone a rite of death, a burial rite. If the experience of abroad resolves in the death of the self and the assumption of a new identity--however temporary this may be--then this suggests that tourism releases latent psychological and philosophical tendencies which remain suppressed in home communities. The complete

¹⁶ In Countries of the Mind, Gillian Tindall examines George Orwell's essay about Henry Miller (In Inside the Whale and Other Essays) to illustrate the attraction of the expatriate community where writers may enjoy the hedonistic atmosphere of café society without the responsibility of encumbering domesticity.

¹⁷ Arnold Van Gennep, The Rites of Passage, trans. Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee (London: Routledge, 1960).

suspension of the old self, whilst abroad, carries the tourist across a new threshold of being: he becomes free. D. H. Lawrence describes such an experience on his walking tour of Italy in 1916:

The great inspiration of the new religion was the inspiration of freedom. When I have submerged or distilled away my concrete body and my limited desires, when I am like the skylark dissolved in the sky yet filling heaven and earth with song, then I am perfect, consummated in the Infinite. When I am all that is not-me, then I have perfect liberty, I know no limitation. Only I must eliminate the Self. (70)

The self may, of course, be eliminated in a domestic situation such as being absorbed in a film; it may, however, be eradicated to a much greater degree in the terrain of a foreign country. The total absence of responsibilities and worries from home may finally be forgotten through continued exposure to new images which absorb the mind to such a total extent that the old self temporarily dies and the tourist becomes as free as the skylark. In nineteenth century literature such overwhelming types of experience may be interpreted within an aesthetic discourse of sublime philosophy. Romantic writers often described breathtaking, even perilous scenes and phenomena of nature in highly emotive language which reflected the human psyche's reactions to the grandeur and beauty of nature. States of transcendental rapture conceived through communing with nature may be considered within the phenomenon of touristic absorption, a state of exhilaration and excitement awakened through perceiving intense reality; it is most often encountered on holiday, especially in unknown and unfamiliar territories: "And thus I am absorb'd, and this is life" (B 3. 73, 689).

Touristic absorption is what Schopenhauer, in *The World as Will and Idea* (1819), calls "pure knowing subject" and when a subject has the ability to reproduce his perception in

living images, through poetry or painting this is the work of genius:

Thus genius is the capacity to maintain oneself in the state of pure perception, to lose oneself in perception, and to withdraw from the service of the will the knowledge which originally existed only for that service; that is to say, genius is the power of leaving one's own interests, wishes and aims entirely out of sight, thus of entirely divesting oneself of one's own personality for a time so as to remain pure knowing subject, clear eye of the world; and this is not merely at moments, but for long enough, and with consciousness enough, to enable one to reproduce by deliberate art what has thus been apprehended, and 'to fix in lasting thoughts the hovering images that float before the mind' [Goethe, Faust]. (109)

When writers encounter the stage of the world through tourism and are able to become an object and forget their subjectivity, the representation of this experience artfully contrived, is, for Schopenhauer, the state of pure creativity.

Expatriate writers indulge in a culture of transgression. Travellers to distant cultures embark on a journey in which they are allowed to forget the past and become something new, unbounded by the rules and customs which restrict the practice of life back home. The real traveller, the foremost anti-tourist, is one whose notion of home has been eradicated to such an extent he must make his home anywhere, or on the move. Nomads and itinerant rovers are the real travellers, those who find no comfort in the familiarity of the same fireside but find life-force in the continued thrust of new locales and the excitement of meeting new people. The Victorian writer W. H. Matlock remarked in 1889 that "the true traveller seeks precisely what the excursionist dreads . . . a sense of escape from all that is homely and habitual" (Buzard 8). The flight from home and quest for all that is foreign suggests authentic travellers

prefer a mode of life which valorises and continues to worship the unfamiliar. Perhaps tourists may be defined as those who accept the inevitability of return home to some sort of comfortable, conformist ordered existence. The gravitation towards home suggests that tourists are perhaps the class most able to engage in cultures of nostalgia and enjoy touristic shows which represent the golden age of the past. John Frow sees the condition of nostalgia as a sort of “ontological homelessness” (80) to which we all return after failing to satisfy the quest for “lost origin[s] . . . sought in the alien [modern] world” (80). Expatriate writers who defer their return, whose existence becomes an unending nomadic quest build their identity within an alien territory of separation. For such a traveller Heimat is only one of a series of indistinguishable places since the nomad carries his home about with him. The larger part of Lord Byron’s works, for example, were written in different locations abroad. For Byron, region itself provides the impetus for inspiration. He found his identity, as a writer, by migrating and crossing a threshold into a different society and culture.

The Grand Tour and the Writer’s Tour: The Development of Travel Writing and the Continental Tour from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century

Travel writing may be divided into three types: factual, fictional and writing which has elements of fact and fiction. Travel narratives are often autobiographical, or take the form of a memoir, diary, or are presented as a series of letters. Writers convey their experiences of travelling in fictional poems or novels, and factual prose narratives and guide books. However, the dividing line between fact and fiction is not always certain since all writing is in a sense fictive.

One of the earliest identifiable trends in travel writing is the rise of the picaresque novel, a form which originated in Spain in the sixteenth century with Lazarillo de Tormes

(1553).¹⁸ Percy Adams suggests that the Picaresque novel has three organising principles. Firstly, the protagonist is “a scoundrel, a rogue, a delinquent, or some sort of anti-hero”; secondly, the novel has “an ironic tone . . . that leads to a satire of society”; and thirdly, there is a “movement through space, that is travel from one occupation or kind of life to another, often over a whole nation” (199).¹⁹ Notable examples include Don Quixote (1605-1615), Gil Blas (1715), Roderick Random (1748) and Tom Jones (1749). In all these novels the protagonist embarks on a journey in which he is educated in the ways of the world. Adams suggests we must be wary about diffusing the label ‘picaresque’ too widely and suggests that later eighteenth-century versions of the picaresque are rather adaptations of the pure original Spanish genre: “The Spanish Picaresque then was absorbed--as with so many other forms and modes--into the mainstream of European fiction. It was, in short, combined with the sentimental, the adventurous, the comic until it no longer existed as a “genre” or a “form” but as a tradition evolving with the evolving novel” (200). The picaresque novel enjoyed a revival, even a mini golden age, in the heyday of the eighteenth-century Grand Tour, which illustrates how cultural styles circulate throughout art and literature in response to the latest cultural trends.

In the eighteenth century, prose travel writing aimed to be as objective as possible. It was considered high style to submerge the author’s voice. Despite this publishing trend, Samuel Johnson still preferred the autobiographical section of Boswell’s An Account of Corsica (1768), rather than his observations of natural history (in the first part of his journal) which conformed to the house style of Augustan travel writing.²⁰ Even as late as 1834 Beckford’s publisher insisted he tone down the autobiographical content of his Dreams,

¹⁸ J.A. Cuddon. The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory (London: Penguin, 1998).

¹⁹ For a further explanation of the development of the Picaresque novel and its applications to post-Renaissance Literature see: Robert Alter, Rogue’s Progress: Studies in the Picaresque Novel (Cambridge. Massachusetts: Harvard U P, 1964).

Waking Thoughts and Incidents (1783) for the second edition. This suggests that publishing authorities felt that factual scenes of travel were more appropriate, even respectable material for publication than highly personalised and private styles of travel narrative, such as Beckford's Travel Diaries (1787). Despite the trend to objective fictional accounts one of the most popular pieces of travel writing in the eighteenth century is a novel. Sterne's A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy (1768), based on Sterne's travels abroad between 1762 and 1765, parodies the contemporary vogue for factual travel writing evident in the works of writers such as Smollett (Smelfungus). Charles Batten suggests the popularity of this work is largely a result of its autobiographical style: "The subject of Sentimental Journey is largely Yorick; the reader learns much about the traveller, little about the country through which he passed. Thus Yorick is the egoistic traveller the century had consistently condemned as being inappropriate in nonfiction travel books" (80).

By the 1770s the culture of travel writing began to change with the development of picturesque tourism. Writers such as William Gilpin, William Payne Knight and Uvedale Price published works which recognised the beauty of the irregularities of nature.²¹ Factual travelogues now attempted to describe scenes of natural beauty which tourists could use to enliven their aesthetic enjoyment of walks in the countryside. Tourists began to use the camera obscura and the Claude glass, (an instrument which facilitated the easier creation of line drawing for the amateur artist) to allow them to re-create their own images of the local landscape.²² Nature was still largely viewed as a source of spiritual relief and consolation.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, travel writers began to convey not

²⁰ See Charles L. Batten. J.R. Pleasurable Instruction: Form and Convention in Eighteenth Century Travel Literature (Berkeley: U of California P, 1978) 34.

²¹ William Gilpin, Three Essays: On Picturesque Beauty; On Picturesque Travel; and on Sketching Landscape (London, 1792). Richard Payne Knight, The Landscape, A Didactic Poem in three Books (London, 1794). Uvedale Price, Essays on the Picturesque, as compared with the Sublime and the Beautiful (London, 1794).

²² See Bate, Song 132-33.

just the glories and irregularities of picturesque nature but the terrors of sublime landscapes which affect the mind to a seemingly supernatural degree. The defining criterion of early Romantic tourism is a distinct difference in the use of imagination in aesthetic perception. In the Romantic age the legacies of ancient civilisations began to be considered differently. Rather than slavishly copying, drawing and consuming ancient architecture and sculpture as authentic legacies of classical perfection, antiquities began to be aesthetically viewed as ruins. Ruins came to be viewed not intrinsically for their value as Classical heritage but as part of a wider landscape: ruins began to be worshipped as part of a Romantic landscape, as the location in which solitary figures enjoyed visions of personal experience and reflection. Whilst the ruin motif has been a metaphor for transience and the immortal spirit of art since the earliest poetry of the Old English elegies,²³ and achieved eminence under eighteenth-century poets such as Gray, Cowper and Young, the Romantic age sees a stronger association between the ruin and the individual in which the figure of the poet is totally immersed in solitary communion with a romanticised panorama. The idea of an individual opposed to a hostile society takes on a deeper emphasis with the rise of the nation-state which saw a move from a tied Gemeinschaft community-based existence to a more impersonal and distant Gesellschaft organisation of society.²⁴ 'Romantic Tourism' evolved in an age in which individualism was glorified in comparison to enlightenment thinking which honoured great men for their contribution to public life. In the romantic age writers such as Blake, Wordsworth and Mary Shelley began sensitively to represent outcasts as individuals in comparison to the stereotyped tradition of Hogarth's caricatures. The development of travel and tourism allowed increasing numbers of tourists to engage in sublime worship of mountain scenery. Modified perceptions of nature and scenery in post-medieval Europe later

²³ See Anne Janowitz, England's Ruins: Poetic Purpose and the National Landscape (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990).

²⁴ For a further explanation of Ferdinand Tonnies' terminology see Sharon Macdonald, "Identity Complexes in Western Europe: Social Anthropological Perspectives," Inside European Identities. Ethnography in Western Europe, ed. Sharon Macdonald (Oxford: Berg, 1993) 1-26.

became further refined as the wilderness came to be viewed as a source for metaphysical transformation and as a site for the discovery of the self. The Alpine terrains of Switzerland and Italy inspired many poets to conceive works which conveyed a deeply philosophic response to mountain scenery. Romantic poets begin to have a higher affinity with nature; the soul enjoys a prolonged introspective dialogue in the wilderness. This sea change of interest in personal and individual experience is also evident in the rise of autobiography as an art form, and also in the increased use of letters and the memoir in travel narratives which now began to foreground the figure of the author.

(i) The Grand Tour

Romantic tourism, in its expressive performativity of utterance, is part of the broader phenomenon of the writer's tour, an institution which began with Chaucer's dialogues of pilgrims in The Canterbury Tales (1387), and spread abroad in the Renaissance as writers began to risk the sea voyage to Europe and the uncertainty of travelling abroad in unfamiliar territory. The eighteenth-century Grand Tour did not require the same degree of artistry as the writer's tour, although eighteenth century writers did, of course, undertake Grand Tours.

The institution of the Grand Tour, as a finishing school for the sons of the aristocracy, flourished in the eighteenth century, although there are numerous accounts within the literary canon of writers venturing abroad and subsequently recording their experiences in travel narratives. For example, as early as 1611, Thomas Coryat toured the continent and composed his Crudities.²⁵ Coryat was able to journey from Venice to Switzerland by foot because the route from Southern to Northern Europe across the Italian and treacherous Swiss alps had recently been made more accessible. Indeed, the inscription to Coryat at the inn of Saint

²⁵ See Percy G. Adams Travel Literature and the Evolution of the Novel (U of Kentucky P, 1983) 41, 208. 252-53.

Marco testifies this point. Some writers regard Coryat as the first Grand Tourist.²⁶ This is not strictly true since Sir Philip Sydney had undertaken a long tour of Europe between 1572 and 1575 to train him for the position of English ambassador to the emperor of Germany, Rudolph the second (Hibbert, Grand 10). Equally, Fynes Morrison, a graduate of Cambridge, departed on a tour of the continent in 1591 to study international law (11). Thomas Coryat, however, was the first tourist to commit his ideas to paper and on his return home wrote and published at his own expense a large two volume work enthusiastically recording his adventures.²⁷ To Coryat, an ingénu of James the first's court, travel was "of all the pleasures in the world . . . the sweetest and most delightful" (Coryat 1: 8). After completing his travel book Coryat was unable to settle in England, and returned abroad walking to the court of the Mogul in India where he spent his last days.

Edward Chaney has noted how "it was not until the first half of the sixteenth century that we notice signs of the Holy Land Pilgrimage being replaced by something resembling the Grand Tour. . ." (5). He associates the creation of a Grand Tour with the development of Rome as the new mecca of Catholic religion:

Although Jerusalem was still placed at the centre of the world in Hereford Cathedral's great thirteenth-century Mappa Mundi, after the institution of the Jubilee Year and the subsequent return of the Popes from Avignon, Rome steadily regained its predominant position, eventually replacing the Holy land and all other rivals as Europe's most popular place of pilgrimage (58-59).

²⁶ See especially Tim Moore, Continental Drifter (London: Abacus, 2001).

²⁷ Coryat's Crudities Hastily gobbled up in five Moneths travells in France, Savoy, Italy, Rhetia commonly called the Grisons country, Helvetia alias Switzerland, some parts of high Germany, and the Netherlands: Newly digested in the hungry aire of Odombe in the County of Somerset and now dispersed to the nourishment of the travelling Members of this Kingdom By Thomas Coryat, 2 vols. (Glasgow: Glasgow U P, 1905).

The new interest shown in Italy is evident in two early accounts which precede Coryat. Chaney suggests Thomas Hoby, whose diary of his Italian Journey was not published until 1905, was the first Grand Tourist. However, Tim Moore's suggestion of Coryat may be more accurate since Coryat's itinerary included several different European countries as opposed to a singular tour within Italy. In February 1550, Hoby left his friends in Naples and set off on a tour of Sicily through Calabria, Cicilia, Reggio, Messina, Syracuse, Malta and back to Naples. His unpublished account of his journey comprises his account of Sicily in the autobiographical Booke of the Travaile and Lief of me Thomas Hoby.²⁸

The first traveller to publish a written account of a tour was William Thomas whose Historie of Italie appeared in 1549. A bankrupt Thomas fled to Venice in 1545 to avoid charges of embezzlement against his Catholic master. After serving a brief term of imprisonment in a Venetian prison he chose to remain an exile and toured the Italian states of Padua, Bologna, Florence, Naples and Rome (70-73). Chaney notes that Thomas "may be described as having done more to introduce an awareness and appreciation of Italian life, language and culture into this country than any other Sixteenth century Englishman. . ." (70).

Further:

This somewhat misleadingly entitled work contains not merely a sophisticated chronicle of every major Italian city state, but in each instance concludes with a fascinating summary of that city's current political and economic situation, and an almost invariably enthusiastic account of its social customs, 'civilitie', physical setting and major buildings. As such, it has been praised as 'the first, and for a long time the only, introduction to [Italy] in English.' (73)

²⁸ A comprehensive account of the writings of Thomas Hoby and William Thomas has been compiled by Edward Chaney in The Evolution of the Grand Tour: Anglo-Italian Cultural Relations since the Renaissance (London: Frank Cass, 1998).

Certainly Thomas's account qualifies him for the title of the first published Grand Tourist of a specific country, and because of the unsettled state of Catholic Europe in the late sixteenth century few travel accounts appeared following Thomas's until the Jacobean age. Italy, largely under the control of the Catholic Spanish monarchy, ceased to be a safe destination for travellers between 1560 and the early seventeenth century, as relations between England and Spain broke down. It was only after the Spanish Armada and James the first's subsequent peace treaty with Spain in 1604 that travellers felt safe enough once again to journey to Italy (205). The Grand Tour evolved out of this intense interest in Italy as a centre of culture, religion and classical heritage.

The eighteenth-century Grand Tour is a phenomenon most closely associated with the landed classes of society, although the middle classes did begin to travel abroad in greater numbers towards the end of the eighteenth century, especially after 1763.²⁹ Many travellers went abroad partly to learn a foreign language or manners which might be useful in a later career. In the eighteenth century, for example, France was, to a degree looked upon as a society of refinement and manners, a society in which an English gentleman could refine his own constitution. As Brian Dolan remarks: "The role the Grand Tour was thought to play in the education of English gentlemen helps explain a predisposition to incorporate French affairs and fashion into the repertoire of polite conversation. . . ." (12). However, after the Seven Years War, with the uncertainty of the French Revolution, and finally the breakdown of relations between England and France following the breakout of the long war in 1793, attitudes to the French gradually changed. Once looked on, by the upper classes, as the cultivators of an elegant manner, the very height of grace and nobility in fashion, the French

²⁹ See Jeremy Black, "Tourism and Cultural Challenge: the Changing Scene of the Eighteenth Century," All Before Them: English Literature and the Wider World 1660-1780, ed. John McVeagh, vol.1 (London: Ashfield, 1990).

now came to be regarded as the stereotype enemy.³⁰ Consequently post-eighteenth-century Grand Tourists looked to other countries as a means of acquiring experience, polish and a new fashionable ton which could be used back home to gain entrée into the most valuable circles of society.

In his experience as a teacher and bear leader, Adam Smith observed that young men seldom profited from their experience of the Grand tour:

A young man who goes abroad at seventeen or eighteen, and returns home at one and twenty, returns three or four years older than he was when he went abroad; and at that age it is very difficult not to improve a good deal in three or four years. In the course of his travels he generally acquires some knowledge of one or two foreign languages; a knowledge, however, which is seldom sufficient to enable him either to speak or write them with propriety. In other respects he commonly returns home more conceited, more unprincipled, more dissipated, and more incapable of any serious application, either to study or to business, than he could well have become in so short a time had he lived at home. (Inquiry, 2: 773)

Smith's assessment may be valid but he fails to take into account the benefits which may be acquired by any young man in absorbing the customs and society of a foreign culture.

Shaftesbury's debates with Locke in Hurd's Dialogues on the Uses of Foreign Travel³¹ consider the exact advantages that travelling has in the education of youth. Shaftesbury understands travel as a method "which can be taken to polish and form the

³⁰ See Gerald Newman. The Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History 1740-1830 (New York: St Martin's P, 1997) 37.

³¹ Dialogues on the Uses of Foreign Travel; Considered as a Part of An English Gentleman's Education: Between Lord Shaftesbury and Mr Locke. By the Editor of Moral and Political Dialogues Mr Hurd (London, 1764).

manners of our liberal youth, and to fit them for the business and conversation of the world” (8). Locke, like Smith, on the contrary sees little good in travel “in proportion to the time it takes up” and “sees nothing but mischiefs spring[ing] from it” (8-9). Lord Shaftesbury understands the value of travel as fitting young men for society and conversation:

Let a young gentleman, who has been trained abroad; who has been accustomed to the sight and conversation of men; . . . let such an one, at his return, make his appearance in the best societies; and see with what ease, and address, he sustains his part in them! . . . how prepared to acquit himself in the ordinary commerce of the world, and in conversation! (45-46).

Shaftesbury argues that the study and contemplation of man leads to an increase in knowledge. Locke, however, suggests that learning of language can only be superficial whilst the study of antiquities and curiosities is largely useless. (88). Indeed, Locke suggests that the true espousers of knowledge belong to a higher school of society: “Any one that has eyes, is qualified to observe the shapes and masks of men; but to penetrate their interior frame, to inspect their proper dispositions and characters, is the business of a well-informed and well-disciplined understanding” (123). Locke implies that this understanding belongs to a special breed of mankind, the intellectual, the philosopher; in short, in modern terms, the writer. It is possible therefore to discern two kinds of early Grand Tour experience: the Grand Tour, and Locke’s implication of a Writer’s Tour. The regularised version educates a gentleman in specific social norms, including a rudimentary knowledge of classical architecture and art, the latest European fashions and, above all, the cultivation of worldly attitudes of vertù and nobility which suitably prepares an ingénue for a career in society. Locke’s philosophical traveller requires a higher intuition, the sharp ability to quickly penetrate behind social masks

and situations and grasp the underlying inner complexities of social panoramas. The writer is more disposed to observe and comment on people's behaviour and fashions than copy them.

(ii) The Writer's Tour

The Writer's Tour is therefore a different type of experience than the organised regulated 'commercial' type of tours undertaken by aristocratic youths and their bear leaders. Writers, perhaps because of their individuality or their freedom to devise a deregularised agenda, could investigate and report on aspects of foreign society closed to the standard classical Grand Tourist. A brief survey of seventeenth and eighteenth-century writers suggests that whilst the study of classical heritage--as with Grand Tourists--plays a significant part in their tour experience, the most defining characteristic of the 'writer's tour' is his engagement with the societies of foreign courts and communing with the minds of great men. In this sense, the figure of the expatriated writer harks back to Renaissance models of travellers, who, fewer in number and of noble origin, had access to higher circles of society. As John Frow notes:

In the Renaissance, Adler argues, the aristocratic traveller 'went abroad for discourse rather than for picturesque views or scenes.' The art of travel prescribed for him (more rarely her) 'was in large measure one of discoursing with the living and the dead--learning foreign tongues, obtaining access to foreign courts, and conversing gracefully, with eminent men, assimilating classical texts appropriate to particular sites, and, not least, speaking eloquently upon his return'. (91)

Ostensibly, the key development between this exemplar and the nineteenth-century traveller

is that modern writers used their interaction with great men to probe, in greater depth, the social machinery, deprivations and inequalities more apparent to them in modern society.

In "Of Education" Milton readily advocates foreign travel as a means of enlarging experience and observation (236). His own tour of Italy between 1638-39, as William Parker notes, "brought a turning point in Milton's development as an artist" (179). Milton's vocation as a writer in the English language was established after his interaction with the learned men of the Italian academies, men such as Grotius, Galileo, Holstadius, Manso, Diodati, Cardinal Barberini, and Monteverdi. In the "Reason of Church Government" (1642), Milton concludes that :

In the private academies of Italy, whither I was favoured to resort, perceiving that some trifles which I had in memory . . . met with acceptance above what was looked for . . . I began thus far to assent both to them and divers of my friends here at home, and not less to an inward prompting which now grew daily upon me, that by labour and intense study . . . I might perhaps leave something so written to aftertimes as these should not willingly let it die. (John Milton 169)

These trifles, were of course, written in Latin. To succeed, as a writer in Medieval, Renaissance and Reformation Europe one had to write in the lingua franca of Europe, the Latin language.³² When he returned to England after his Italian experience Milton resolved to

³² In Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (London: Verso, 1991) Benedict Anderson notes that "Latin ceased [after 1575] to be the language of a pan-European high intelligentsia. In the seventeenth century Hobbes (1588-1678) was a figure of continental renown because he wrote in the truth language. Shakespeare, on the other hand, composing in the vernacular, was virtually unknown across the channel. And had English not become, two hundred years later, the pre-eminent world-imperial language, might he not largely have retained his original insular obscurity?" (18). See also : Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing 1450-1800, trans. David Gerard, ed. Geoffrey Nowell-Smith and David Wootton (London: NLB, 1976). "Latin continued to be the language of diplomacy, science and philosophy . . . until the late seventeenth century" when French took its place (331-332). Febvre and Martin suggest that Latin culture became extinct with the rise of Vernacular languages and in conjunction with the invention of the printing press (332).

write a work in English, for the English people, a work, which turned out to be one of the greatest epics in the English language.³³

John Evelyn, a contemporary of Milton, produced the first literary diary in the English language which in its early parts is effectively a travelogue of his tour of France and Italy. On his earlier tour in 1644, Evelyn absorbed the more usual Classical, Medieval and Renaissance 'Grand Tour' sites such as Virgil's sepulchre (John Evelyn's 64), Cicero's tomb in Formia (60), the tomb of St. Thomas Aquinas at Fossanova (60) and Michaelangelo's Judgement in the Sistine chapel in Rome (42). However, on a journey to Paris in 1651, he visited a prison and witnessed a man being tortured in the chamber at Grand Chatelet (80): an experience vividly described in his diary. Such encounters are rather beyond the usual Grand Tour experience and may be partly explained by Evelyn's interest in medicine and anatomy. His earlier tour also departs from the standard itineraries of galleries and museums in documenting his interest in European architecture and gardens.

Andrew Marvell, who spent four years on the continent following the outbreak of the Civil War in 1642, also spent a good deal of time studying Renaissance architecture and gardens which arguably had risen to a higher art on the continent.³⁴ There is no written account of Marvell's experiences in Holland, France, Italy and Spain, although some of his poetry is evidently influenced by his experience as an expatriate, namely: "The Character of Holland", "Fleckno, an English Priest at Rome" and, most especially, "Upon Appleton House To My Lord Fairfax"--a poem which demonstrates his flair for describing stately gardens, and indicates that the state of the art in architectural practice lies abroad. In comparison, English architecture is sober and rather ordinary: "Within this sober frame expect / Work of no foreign architect" (1: 1-2).

³³ See William Riley Parker, Milton. A Biography, ed. Gordon Campbell, 2nd ed. vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1996) 169-182.

³⁴ See John Hunt Dixon, Andrew Marvell: His Life and Writings (London: Paul Elek, 1978) 35.

Whilst in the seventeenth century, there was a trend amongst connoisseurs to the aesthetic appreciation of gardens, in the eighteenth century this interest evolved into a passion for sublime landscape. One of the earliest writers to describe heightened emotion at the sight of mountain scenery is Thomas Gray, who undertook a Grand Tour with Horace Walpole between 1739 and 1741. Gray, as a classical scholar, made painstaking notes on Greek and Roman antiquities in Rome and Florence, something which intensely annoyed and bored Horace Walpole.³⁵ However, it was the journey to Rome itself, in which Gray and Walpole stopped at the monastery of the Grand Chartreuse, which was to have the greatest effect of all in Gray's forthcoming career as a poet. As Ketton-Cremer remarks: "To Gray that unforgettable ride was of far deeper significance. It stirred, as nothing had previously done, the poetry that slumbered within him . . . It made the most profound and solemn appeal to his religious convictions" (Thomas, 35). In a letter to his contemporary, West, of the sixteenth of November 1739 Walpole eulogized: "Not a precipice, not a torrent, not a cliff, but is pregnant with religion and poetry" (35). Gray's sublime epiphany resulted in the composition of his Alcaic ode, a Latin poem in which he finds his *genius loci* in the awesome and precipitous mountains. Gray's work, although in Latin, anticipated later Romantic poets who describe personal awakenings amongst alpine landscapes.

Whilst the careers of Evelyn, Marvell and Gray may be useful to demonstrate how aesthetic experiences of travel inform literary composition, the careers of Milton and Boswell suggest how the influence of foreign community and converse with great men may firmly launch a writer in his vocation. James Boswell undertook his Grand Tour (1764-65) purposively to develop his career as a writer. To do this he set out to meet some of the finest minds in Europe. As Peter Martin notes: "By touring the German courts and venturing into Switzerland, Boswell hoped to meet great men and thinkers who would help him realize his

³⁵ See R. W. Ketton-Cremer. *Horace Walpole: A Biography* (London: Faber and Faber, 1946) 63.

own native ‘genius’, test his own embryonic ideas about religion and literature, rouse his stifled imagination, energize his literary instincts” (163). As well as becoming friendly with Karl Friedrich, the Margrave of Baden-Durlach in Karlsruhe, Boswell also sought and successfully cultivated the company of Voltaire in Ferney, and Rousseau in Môtiers. In his short conversations with Rousseau, Rousseau postulated that the island of Corsica offered the highest ideals of freedom for a European nation. (Martin 184). Boswell later visited Corsica and wrote a detailed travel journal which effectively urged the British Government to intervene and effect Corsican independence.³⁶ As Martin surmises, “the most significant thing about his Corsican adventure of 1765 . . . was that it was inspired less by philosophical ideas on liberty than by the stature and personalities of two men, Rousseau and Paoli” (204).

Undoubtedly there is a correlation between literary activity and such inspiring social interaction. The theories of M. M. Bakhtin are founded on his proposition that language is mediated through social experience. As he argues in “Discourse in the Novel”: “Verbal discourse is a social phenomenon” (259). Our thinking can only be effectively realised through conversation with others. The idea that writers are inspired by the company of other great men abroad finds especial resonance in the Romantic period. In France in the 1790s several salons sprang up frequented by English writers as accomplished as Mary Wollstonecraft, Helen Maria Williams, Thomas Paine and William Wordsworth. Madame de Staël’s career only became established after her exile from Paris, when she was fortunate enough to travel to Germany and meet Goethe, Schiller and Schlegel whose conversation helped her to formulate her ideas for *On Germany* (1813) (Staël, *Major* 10).

A major aspect of my thesis suggests that such reformations of thought are generated by traversing foreign ground and absorbing the conversation, culture and intellectual history of foreign societies. Shelley’s whole-hearted engagement with Rousseau’s writing and his

³⁶ *An Account of Corsica, The Journal of a Tour to that Island; and Memoirs of Pascal Paoli* by James Boswell. 1768, 3rd ed. (London, 1769).

habitation (that is the scenes and topographies of his life and novels) and the stimulus of conversation with Mary Shelley and Lord Byron combined to generate his extensive prose examination of Switzerland in History of a Six Weeks' Tour.

In the mid-eighteenth century two writers especially dominate the development of travel writing. Tobias Smollett toured France and Italy between June 1763 and July 1765 initially to come to terms with the recent death of his daughter, Elizabeth, but also in the hope that a warmer climate would ease his pulmonary condition. He recounted his experiences in a substantial travel narrative which is renowned for its caustic attitudes to foreigners, their spicy food which did not suit his palate and countless other inconveniences.³⁷ "My personal adventures on the road were such as will not bear recital. They consisted of petty disputes with landladies, post-masters, and postillions" (Mansfield Knapp 252). Smollett's great epistolary novel The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker (1771) which is a fictional tour of the United Kingdom was revised and redrafted between 1768 and 1770 when Smollett was residing in a magnificent and palatial villa, Il Giardino, overlooking luxuriant views of the Mediterranean (Mansfield Knapp 288). Both these works consider the role that health, disease and mortality play in eighteenth century domestic life, and how travel and tourism offers respite and alternative remedies despite the frictions and disadvantages encountered along the way.

In many ways the writing of Lawrence Sterne seems the complete antithesis to the unrelaxed discourse of Smollett. Sterne, too, suffered from consumption and sought the warmer climate of France and later Italy in the hope it might prolong his life. The shadow of death hovers incessantly over both his great novels, works which both strongly convey the mutability of life and celebrate the warmth of human devotion. As Arthur Cash points out, neither Tristram Shandy nor A Sentimental Journey are travel works per se, indeed both

³⁷ Tobias Smollett, Travels Through France and Italy, 1766, ed. Frank Felsenstein (Open U P, 1979).

novels were written in Sterne's study at Coxwold using travel books as sources to complement his own memories of travel (122), yet these fictional accounts would hardly make sense without the guiding structure which the rhetoric of travel breathes over each narrative. Certainly, in A Sentimental Journey, Sterne's descriptions of particular hackneyed scenes such as Dessin's hotel at Calais may not be precisely accurate and his omission of the lovely medieval architecture at Montreuil (Cash 123) is puzzling; still, his satiric purpose renders the tropes of exact description of secondary importance. Sterne's irritation at his rival, the learned Smelfungus, is all too evident in A Sentimental Journey. Sterne's novel parodies the descriptive conventions of travel writing evident in Smollet's Travels and he does not aim to reproduce a precise geographical representation of his journey. Rather, he blurs the ambience in order to convey his primary desire for universal love and brotherly sentiment. Indeed in a letter to Mrs James of 12 November 1767 Sterne writes, "I told you my design in it was to teach us to love the world and our fellow creatures better than we do" (Sentimental xv). Tristram Shandy, too, both in its modernistic narrative whimsicality and more conventionally in Book seven, which adopts the conventions of a tour narrative, expresses Sterne's utopian dreams of warm community, human sentiment and loving human relationships. The novel is a novel of the mind, an idyll of retirement that takes place largely within the confines of Shandy Hall. The revolutionary narrative design of the text, as well as its community sentiments, were undoubtedly influenced by Sterne's friendships, whilst in France, with the leading Enlightenment philosophes, Pelletier and D'Holbach. Cash notes that in 1762 Sterne dined regularly at the table of D'Holbach where amongst others he met Diderot, d'Alembert and the Count de Buffon (136). He later met David Hume and John Wilkes. Tristram Shandy and A Sentimental Journey are not usually noted for their political agendas yet both works convey strong Enlightenment ideals of the brotherhood of man, and A Sentimental Journey indirectly shows the high degree of destitution and dissatisfaction

inherent in huge segments of French society in the years leading up to the French revolution. Sterne's use of the travel topos is therefore highly nuanced and marks a unique development in eighteenth century travel writing.

In the years following the French Revolution, Romantic writers sought to examine and recount the political and social circumstances surrounding the revolutionary turmoil. Both Coleridge and Wordsworth became involved in revolutionary events in France, and disillusioned with the widespread violence exacerbated under Robespierre's post-revolutionary regime both poets later assumed reactionary political positions. In Book 12 of The Prelude, which is dedicated to his friend, Coleridge, Wordsworth suggests that man must look to "the philosophy of mathematics" for any utopian solutions to social unrest. Whilst Coleridge campaigned vigorously against the war with France (in a series of articles in The Morning Post (1797)³⁸ and in his Bristol lectures (1795)³⁹) he was eventually forced to restrain his radical voice; like Wordsworth, he recanted his political allegiances to revolutionary idealism after France invaded Switzerland in 1798.⁴⁰ Coleridge, too, in his later writing assumes a position as a romantic philosopher, a desire to understand the human mind and literature through personal reflection.

Coleridge acquired his knowledge of German metaphysics following an extended period abroad between 1798-99. Initially setting off on a walking tour of Germany with William and Dorothy Wordsworth, both parties separated, Wordsworth seeking secluded rusticity, Coleridge desiring the animation of a busy social life, earnestly wishing to improve his efficiency and knowledge of German language and culture. Coleridge extended his visit

³⁸ See Katherine Cooke, Coleridge (London: Routledge, 1979).

³⁹ See Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Lectures 1795: On Politics and Religion, ed. Lewis Patton and Peter Mann (London: Routledge, 1971) 1-74, vol. 1 of The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed. Kathleen Coburn, 16 vols.

⁴⁰ Coleridge still, however, published a poem of political recantation, "France An Ode" in The Daily News in April 1798.

and enrolled at the University of Göttingen, where he hoped to write a biography of Lessing and a history of German folk customs.⁴¹ His months spent in the intellectual society of the University of Göttingen, as Richard Holmes suggests, instilled in him ideas which Coleridge later drew on when he returned to England and wrote his great work of metaphysics, Biographia Literaria:

This intense period at Göttingen also gave him a sense of sharing in the intellectual life of Europe, of being part of a broad community of world-renowned scholars, which shaped much of his subsequent writing, and distinguished him sharply from the purely provincial aspect of English thought. His whole notion of “criticism”--of the application of philosophic principles to imaginative literature--was to be European rather than English; and the fundamental importance which he gave to religious and metaphysical ideas, in later controversies over both literature and politics, profoundly reflects the atmosphere of Romantic reaction and mysticism which was then spreading throughout the universities of Germany--at Göttingen, at Jena, at Leipzig.

(227)

For Coleridge, living in a foreign community subsequently shaped his future literary career as a leading Romantic philosopher.

Wordsworth based a great deal of his writing on his walking tours, to France and Switzerland in 1820,⁴² and to Italy in 1837,⁴³ however, his renowned work, The Prelude, was unpublished in his own lifetime. Book six of The Prelude is a retrospective memoir of the

⁴¹ See Richard Holmes, Coleridge: Early Visions (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1989) 216.

⁴² See William Wordsworth, “Memorials of a Tour on the Continent 1820,” 1822, Poetical Works, ed. Thomas Hutchinson (London: Open U P, 1969).

⁴³ William Wordsworth, “Memorial of a Tour in Italy, 1837,” 1842, Poetical.

walking tour Wordsworth undertook with his friend, Robert Jones, between July and September 1790.⁴⁴ Books nine and ten “Residence in France” are a biographical account of the period Wordsworth spent expatriated in France between November 1791 and December 1792, at the very height of the Revolutionary terror. Examining his own artistic development ten years after the terror (1804-5) Wordsworth’s recollection of his involvement in the political maelstrom of 1793 is restrained but heroically effective. His idealised conversations with General Michel Beaupuy, “With him did I discourse about the end / of civil Government” (9: 329-30), are recounted with a romantic sentimental heroism which illustrates Wordsworth’s earlier commitment to revolutionary politics. He explains the circumstances surrounding his own recantation in the guise of a tourist crossing the Carousel and observing the terrible devastation in the assault on the royal palace in Paris in Autumn, 1792 when one hundred people were slaughtered: “I crossed--a black and empty area then / The square of the Carousel, a few weeks back / Heaped up with dead and dying” (10: 46-48). He remembers the horror of the September Massacres with equal disdain and the solitude of the evening is still redolent with an atmosphere of dread and fear:

I thought of those September massacres,
 Divided from me by a little month,
 And felt and touched them, a substantial dread . . .
 But at the best it seemed a place of fear,
 Unfit for the repose of night. . . . (10: 65-81)

Wordsworth’s reconstructions of his war tourism culminate in the imagined scene when Louvet enters the convention, and accuses Robespierre of “fostering his own personality cult”

⁴⁴ Wordsworth composed his “Descriptive Sketches taken during a Pedestrian Tour among the Alps” (1793) during this holiday. Poetical.

(Roe 71): “Louvét walked singly through the avenue / And took his station in the Tribune, saying, / ‘I, Robespierre, accuse thee!’ ” (10: 111-13). Wordsworth’s confessional tourism in The Prelude examines the violent consequences of political action in a retrospective discourse which suggests his later disillusion⁴⁵ may be explained by his understandable sensitivity when confronted with visible evidence of recent carnage.

Wordsworth’s extreme reaction to the violence of the post-revolutionary terror explains his retirement from the political scene and his earnest desire to create a poetry of rural seclusion and a world of intense inner metaphysical speculation. Stephen Gill has noted how Wordsworth’s career as a poet is founded upon the worship of his home region: “the richest sources. . . of his poetry [are] the strength of his attachment to a particular place and his yearning for some localised home for his imaginative activity” (32).

Wordsworth’s success as a regional poet is unusual at a time when London was the centre of the literary scene. As Stephen Gill notes:

In December 1799 Wordsworth acted to make his life as a man and as a poet coherent in all its parts. He had chosen his vocation. Deliberately distancing himself from the political centre, from publishers, and the whole professional world of literature, he had chosen his home, not as a negative retreat from the ‘real world’ but as a positive commitment to an austere and dedicated life amidst the elemental forms of nature.

(Wordsworth 173-74)

At this period the Lake District was a fairly secluded and isolated rural backwater. With the publication of works of literature and journalism describing the rural life, scenery and beauties of the Lake District by writers such as Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, Lamb,

⁴⁵ See p 41.

Lloyd and De Quincey, the region became a destination for tourists wishing to encounter poetical representations of Northern scenery at first hand. John Urry has described this phenomenon as a 'myth of place' through which a specific region may become immortalised by the publishing success of a local school of poets:

In the case of what we now call the Lake District, this only in a sense became part of England when many visitors, including artists and writers, began to travel to it, particularly from the metropolitan centre. These visitors turned the 'Lake District' into part of England particularly through the development of a particular kind of place-myth. The area came to be visited because a place-myth developed about this otherwise barren and inhospitable place. This was a noteworthy example of what became a strikingly significant characteristic of the late eighteenth century onwards, namely the rapid proliferation and circulation of myths of place. (*Consuming* 194)

With the widespread dissemination of print culture following the rising demands of the public for literature in the nineteenth century, not only 'myths of place' but myths of the figure of the author became part of the development of literary tourism in England.⁴⁶

In the summer of 1818 Keats joined his friend Charles Armitage Brown for a walking tour of the Scottish highlands. It was in the Lake District, however, at the beginning of their sojourn, that Keats had his first visionary experience of the spiritual mysteries of landscape. On the hills of Bowness the breathtaking panorama was suddenly revealed: "How can I believe in that?--Surely it cannot be!", exclaimed Keats (Gittings 220). The supernatural beauty of Windermere is so overwhelming that the boundaries between imagination and

⁴⁶ For an examination of the development of a literary tourism which worships the figure of the writer see Ian Ousby, *The Englishman's England: Taste, Travel and the Rise of Tourism* (Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1990). See also John Glendening, *The High Road: Romantic Tourism, Scotland and Literature, 1720-1820* (New York: St. Martin's P, 1997) which considers the development of literary tourism in Scotland.

reality are temporarily dissolved. In his magical vision Keats enters a different world, a land of faery, an inner theatre of imagination. At Stock Ghyll Force the tumultuous splendour of the waterfall seething and churning endlessly down in a torrent of deafening violence completely transported Keats onto a higher cosmographical plane: “ ‘I never forgot my stature so completely’ he exclaimed in [a] letter to Tom, ‘I live in the eye; and my imagination surpassed, is at rest’ ” (Gittings 220). Like Lawrence’s skylark,⁴⁷ Keats reaches a complete sense of being and forgets himself so utterly, corporeity is extinguished and he departs our earth to wander enraptured over the celestial plains above.

In the early nineteenth century before huge population increases created the concept of mass society it was still possible for a traveller to request an audience with an established literary or political figure. In the 1820s De Quincey wrote a speculative letter to his idol, Wordsworth, who was so impressed with his eloquence that he invited him up to Grasmere.⁴⁸ De Quincey soon ran away from Manchester Grammar School and walked to the Lake District; and for a time he lived with the Wordsworths. Several years before De Quincey, Keats had casually wandered into Wordsworth’s cottage at Rydal in the hope of meeting the famed poet. He was, however, out, electioneering on behalf of Lord Lowther “against the Whig, Brougham” (Gittings 221). Leaving a note, on what he assumed was a portrait of Dorothy above the mantelpiece, Keats hurriedly departed, shocked at discovering Wordsworth’s affiliations, disappointed too, to learn that his dwelling had become a popular landmark on a tourist trail.

In Scotland, nevertheless, for Keats, such intrusive invasions of mass tourism evaporated; in 1818, because of the hardship necessary to undertake such a tour, the Scottish highlands still remained largely unspoilt. Further, the whole trip for Keats became a

⁴⁷ See p22-23.

⁴⁸ See Thomas De Quincey, Recollections of the Lakes and the Lake Poets, ed. David Wright (London: Penguin, 1986).

pilgrimage to Robert Burns, a poet who because of his humble origins, Keats could more readily identify with. In their preliminary walks in the primitive lowlands Keats's thoughts were far from the Ossianic or Shakespearean associations which had since the latter quarter of the eighteenth century drawn tourists into the highlands. Like Samuel Johnson, Keats was deeply affected by scenes of rural poverty and hardship which blighted his feelings to such an extent that any hopes of identifying with scenes of imaginative literature were soon dispensed with.⁴⁹ However, once they entered Kircudbright, Keats's enthusiasm to discover the lore surrounding Scott's Guy Mannering effectively banished his melancholy. As Brown recounted the novel to him, Keats became wildly enticed with the figure of Meg Merrilies and he excitedly pointed out to Brown the very spot on which she boiled her kettle (W. Bate 352). Meg, the wild untamed woman of the highlands, as poor as the dispossessed who had so troubled Keats, but rich in her alluring Cinderella enchantment. Keats's poem "Old Meg" suggests that her independence of spirit, her complete freedom on the untamed reaches of the moors allows Meg a happy existence: "She liv'd as she did please" (3. 4).

The anthropomorphisation of a fabled figure into a 'realistic' projection is a characterisation of literary tourism. His Scottish tour increasingly became for Keats a crusade to Robert Burns whose humble origins seemed to strike a deep chord in his imagination: "Keats was filled with despair for the poet who had tried to live as a poet in such a society" (Gittings 225). Following the Burns trail the two men passed "Kirk Alloway, the Banks of the Doon river and the Brig across it, over which Tam O' Shanter fled" (225), finally resting at Burns's cottage where after enjoying a dram of Scotch whisky Keats wrote his "Sonnet Written in the Cottage where Burns was born." Keats's journey with Brown illustrates how the new Romantic tourism of the early nineteenth century is a more personal, intimate and

⁴⁹ In the middle and later decades of the nineteenth century the social poverty and misery wrought by the cataclysmic upheaval of industrialization to a great extent killed off the pleasures tourists derived from picturesque tourism, as scenes of appalling poverty increasingly intruded into their social conscience. See Malcolm Andrews, The Search for the Picturesque: Landscape Aesthetics and Tourism in Britain, 1760-1800 (Stanford, California: Stanford U P, 1989).

highly imaginative experience of travel than the 'packaged' Grand Tour. Keats's tour is a more humble, down-to-earth and egalitarian kind of travel than the thoroughly upper class finishing school aptly labelled the 'Grand' Tour. The Scottish moors for Keats belonged entirely to the spirit of Burns--"The meadow thou hast tramped o'er and o'er" (Sonnet)--and to Meg Merrilies, the creation of the other great Scottish writer, Sir Walter Scott. Between them, these two writers had eclipsed the cults of Ossian and Macbeth.

In September 1824, William Hazlitt embarked on a continental tour following the recent collapse of his marriage. He hoped eventually to furnish The Morning Chronicle with a series of articles describing his impressions of abroad.⁵⁰ Shortly before embarkation Hazlitt had come across his old friend, Mary Shelley, who, shocked at his downcast appearance, could not contain her grief when his charming smile enlightened his benighted countenance (Jones 363-64). Hazlitt's journey abroad seemed a desperate venture, a means of overcoming the terrible unhappiness and destruction wrought in the breakup of his relationship with Sarah Walker. After travelling through Florence, Venice and Milan he crossed the Simplon into Vevey, reaching the shores of Lake Geneva. At last, thirty years after reading it, he could see with his own eyes the territory of La Nouvelle Héloïse. As Stanley Jones remarks:

At the height of his infatuation with Sarah Walker his greatest wish had been to bring her to these shores, to tell her the story of Julie d'Étange and show her where Saint-Preux, returning to the Valais after long absence, scaled the rocks of Meillerie to gaze longingly across the lake to the Pays du Vaud and Julie's home. It made no odds now that Sarah had forsaken him . . . The feeling was the same. And the associations of La Nouvelle Héloïse remained. That feeling, and those associations, compelled him to take the same road despite Sarah's absence. (369)

⁵⁰ Later published as Notes of A Journey Through France and Italy. 1826.

Hazlitt, Shelley and Keats all entered the cosmographical territories of imagination in their theatrical recreations of literature on walking tours of the supposed landscape of the text. In entering the territory of the hero and appropriating the hero / heroine's space for oneself, the ego finds a sense of self worth, excitement, being. I, too, came, saw and conquered on my own terms. In a secluded strand or heath all three writers attained states of disembodiment and suffered revealed epiphanies or secular revelations which fuelled their future literary creativity and revived their careers as writers. To enter the cosmographical territory of release from this earthly world one must imagine. For Romantic writers, imagination is the guiding hand which turns the phenomenon of touristic absorption into works of literature. As Stanley Jones concludes in his assessment of Hazlitt's tour:

It made no difference either that, in travelling, he had long penetrated the illusions of the imagination, recognized the impossibility of finding the anticipated ideal in the present reality (since, in any case, the imagination can only attach itself to what is absent), and that he had only recently in Rome, noted again to his mortification that 'imagination is entirely a thing imaginary and has nothing to do with matter of fact, history, or the senses.' . . . But although his continental journey had brought new scenes, new experiences, now that it was nearly over it merely confirmed him once more in the view that life is lived through the imagination ('all that is worth remembering in life is the poetry of it') and that reality subsists on a lower, if not an inferior plane. (369-370)

Tourism and the Formation of the Writer

(i) Byron

The texts chosen for this study have particular significance within the genre of travel literature because of their divisive and polemical nature as works of political writing. Byron's Childe Harold's Pilgrimage (1812) marks a watershed in travel writing not only because of its immense popularity, but in view of its disputatious satire, its hybridity of form and its status as an autobiography: indeed Byron's poem dispenses totally with the recent conventions of eighteenth century travel writing. In his review in The Quarterly of March 1812,⁵¹ George Ellis points out that it is the first poetic narrative of travel. It seems almost simply unbelievable that no modern writer before Lord Byron had the idea of using a long poem to recount a narrative of travel. The poem, though, is much more than a piece of travel writing. Its satirical engagement with contemporary European politics distinguishes it as a work of exceptional controversy in an age when legalities of censorship meant publications had recently come under close scrutiny.⁵² Byron's political invective is also unusual not so much for its critique of the British establishment, but rather its specific address to the cause of the Greek nation. In a recent essay Jane Stabler has noted the poem's philhellenic sympathies and its intention to vitalise revolutionary reform in Greece.⁵³ Beneath Stanza 73--"Who now shall lead thy scatter'd children forth" (2. 73, 695)--in the manuscript, Byron had scrawled in answer his own name (Gilmour 233). The poem may be understood as a doctrine of revolution to incite the Greek nation to uprising against Ottoman authority. Byron uses the convention of a travel narrative to play down the radical and politicised agendas deeply within his narrative. By using the figure of a jejune and naive youth undertaking a Grand Tour experience, Byron decoys much suspicion arising from the work's plea to revolutionise

⁵¹ See p 82-83 of this thesis.

⁵² For a fuller explanation of the laws pertaining to publication between 1787 and 1820 see Charles Donelan, Romanticism and Male Fantasy in Byron's Don Juan A Marketable Vice (London: Macmillan Press, 2000).

⁵³ Jane Stabler, "Byron's Digressive Journey," Romantic Geographies: Discourses of Travel 1775-1844, ed. Amanda Gilroy (Manchester: Manchester U P, 2000) 223-39.

Greek attitudes and policy. Indeed many contemporary reviews failed to notice altogether the political implication behind Childe Harold's journey. For instance in his 1812 article in the British Review William Roberts suggests that the subject of the poem is "the narrative of a modern tourist."⁵⁴ Rather, Byron uses a series of touristic figures to illustrate the development of Harold's character.

As the poem develops, the figure of Childe Harold may be interpreted as a medieval knight, a 'backpacker' (analogically speaking), a 'bard,' an 'exile,' a 'trespasser,' a 'bedouin,' and towards the conclusion of canto two Harold's identity is temporarily and indistinguishably merged into Byron's as he becomes a 'national poet' inciting the Greeks to rebellion.⁵⁵ The figure of Lord Byron also appears at the conclusion to each canto in an autobiographical cameo which gives the poem a sense of thematic unity and suggests that the trauma of death serves as a further motive for Harold to continue his pilgrimage. To a degree, Byron uses his own intrusion into the poem as a means of publicly exorcising his own recent loss and despair through elegy. Representations of the touristic figure essentially demonstrate the irregularity of personal experience. Whilst previous writers such as Scott and Gray had used the figure of the 'bard' for nationalistic purposes, Byron enhances this tradition: his 'bard' figure (and his other tourist figures) lend themselves to reformations of identity. The experience of pilgrimage is used not to renew spirituality but to transfigure thought or secular beliefs.

Childe Harold's war tourism, his battlesite tours which express pity for those who have given their lives in the Peninsular wars, forms a very specific touristic experience. The impalpable nature of the touristic site, totally devoid of any cultural or artistic pleasure, suggests that cultural acquisition plays no part whatsoever in this kind of tourism. In the first canto, war tourism is a phenomenon peculiarly suited to moral appropriation. The touristic

⁵⁴ See p 72.

⁵⁵ For a more detailed definition of the tourist figure see p 68-72 and p 110-114.

site or shrine in no way belongs to an artificial search for cultural satisfaction or collecting artistic treasure, but serves only to determine moral growth; sites are appropriated or accumulated to define a growing moral development. The highly moving revelations of confronting recent scenes of military action, of understanding the human value which underlies the cost of war is for Harold an intensely epiphanic experience which leads to a maturer outlook and perception of life. In the second canto the passive contemplative voice of the first canto becomes active as Harold's war tourism is addressed more to the cause of Greek independence. The image of the battlefield is used as a sign to incite the sons of modern Greece to rebel.

In the second canto images of tourism are described in order to question the very notion of tourism itself. Tourism is by nature an acquisitive game. Sites are often acquired by tourists in a series of ludic progressions in which the winner collects or tours as many cultural artefacts or experiences as possible within the limited time of his vacation. Such strategies are largely defeatist in that rapid tourism does not allow the full artistic and aesthetic pleasure of appreciating and understanding a work of art in its entirety. In Childe Harold's journey the detailed analysis surrounding each tour site suggests that he has wholly absorbed the terrain, ambience and meaning of his 'moral' touristic experience. He has gazed on the visual representation of the battlefield long enough to formulate ideas on its signification.

In Greece, Byron presents images of the past in a way which militates against touristic convention. The long digression on the exploits of Lord Elgin in appropriating large sections of the Acropolis is recounted in order to convey Byron's disgust at Great Britain's imperialistic tendencies in the Eastern Mediterranean. This anti-imperialistic discourse commences at the beginning of the second canto in order to prepare for a later vituperative onslaught following stanza 73, when in a series of cameos which situate the ruins of Greece in paradisaical spaces of nature, Byron proposes that touristic images of Greek ruins and the

Greek myths, history and civilisation which such symbols stand for, should not be appropriated by English tourists to elevate their sense of national identity, but should exclusively belong to the Greek peoples themselves.

Byron's pro-Greek sympathies may be interpreted as anti-colonial nationalism, a school of discourse which Ania Loomba defines as "a struggle to represent, create or recover a culture and a selfhood that has been systematically repressed and eroded during colonial rule" (217). In early nineteenth century Greece the sense of Greek national identity had been eroded to such an extent that modern Greeks had largely forgotten all knowledge of their own myths and histories.⁵⁶ Byron uses the evolving voice of Childe Harold, the national poet, as a dynamic force within Greek politics to educate the Greeks, to arouse their consciousness into recognising the injustices of continuing to submit to Turkish rule and to adopt policies of militant anti-colonialism.

In presenting cameos which glorify the lost tradition of ancient Greek history and myth, Byron's poem offers the modern Greeks a cultural incentive which may encourage them to fortify their identity and self-worth, and actively revolt against their colonial oppressors. The poem's publication in England may also have stimulated interest in Greek culture and politics and, indeed, in the following decade have fired philhellenic sympathies. In introducing Greek politics into the English popular imagination Byron was in his way successfully attempting similar eurocentric philosophies as Madame de Staël's, whose On Germany may be seen as an attempt to indoctrinate the French peoples with an alternative Germanic culture and civilisation.

The presentation of a touristic figure who develops in a purposively moral manner as the pilgrimage progresses gives a sense of thematic determinism in a narrative which is otherwise difficult to classify and interpret because of its digressive hybridity. The several

⁵⁶ See p 116-17 of this thesis.

distinct narrative voices that layer the structure of the poem may be interpreted as a discourse of polyphony, which in its variety and refusal to be subjugated to standard norms of poetic composition reflects the allusive and continually changing experience which characterises tourism. It is not impossible that Byron's digressive style evolves primarily as a means of thoroughly disguising his own polemical beliefs whilst advocating the cause of Greek independence.⁵⁷ Byron's discourse of expatriation is illustrated in his actions in proposing that the Greeks ought to unify and fight for independence. Neither Byron nor Harold lose their sense of Englishness, which is perhaps too inherent a part of their identity. They do lose, though, a commitment to English patriotism and Whig ideals; there is a strong sense in which belief in English values and politics has been forgotten and replaced by a new enthusiasm for European affairs. Severance from England produces a world which is mostly governed by the feeling that Greece is the one place which could offer the ideal model society in a Europe still disordered by Napoleonic conflict. The contemplative nature of Harold's emerging personality and his dialogues debating the morality and justice relating to contemporary and historical political events combine to form the emerging demeanour of Lord Byron's anguished view of the modern world, his own unique Byronic philosophy.

(ii) Shelley

Shelley's experience of tourism in 1816 reformed his ideas on religion and the representative nature of power in society. Throughout his Swiss tour he actively became engaged with the ideas of Rousseau and sought out specific settings around Lake Geneva where Saint Preux and Julie inhabit the imaginary landscape of La Nouvelle Héloïse. After

⁵⁷ Digression is an accepted and long-standing trope in travel writing. For example, in Thomas Coryat's account of his European tour, "at Lyons he stopped his fascinating account of himself, his observations, his inn to give the history and physical features of the city, the number of churches, all named, and anecdotes such as one about Pontius Pilate committing suicide in the city" (Adams 208).

the defeat of Napoleon in 1815 a new atmosphere of optimism had arisen in Europe. Shelley's visit to Switzerland in 1816 had partly been undertaken to investigate his hope that the Swiss republic might offer the perfectly equal kind of society which Rousseau fervently advocated in his political discourses. Whilst Shelley soon discovered this was not the case, touring the cantons around Lake Geneva which had played such an influential part in forming Rousseau's character and informed his later ideas, conveyed to Shelley how his desire to reform English society might be realised through diminishing inequalities of power.

In History of a Six Weeks' Tour Shelley considers the history of certain events relating to the Swiss landscape through the perspective of Rousseau's thinking on power structures in society. The injustices of the Reformation evident, for example, in the foreboding dungeon of the castle of Chillon are explained in terms of the irresolute behaviour of mankind. Whilst violence is an intrinsic part of the species (as Tacitus understood), conduct may be reformed through persuasion. Shelley affirms in his travel writing that mankind must benefit from modifying customary beliefs. Opinion can be transformed by perceiving reality from a different perspective. The shifting scenes of Saint Preux's exile suggested to Shelley that imagination could become reality through only an effort of will. For Shelley, reconstructing the dramaturgy of certain tableau vivant in La Nouvelle Héloïse became a wishful rehearsal for Rousseau's vision of a refined and loving community. As interpretation governs individual understanding of a novel, so co-operative re-assessment of political doctrine could revolutionise society. All that was required to begin to address, for example, the incidences of terrible poverty Shelley saw in the countryside around Evian was a restructuring of the way men exercised power over one another. Once men could learn to be more discriminating, and not blindly believe opinion and inherited beliefs concerning customs and morals, Shelley proposes that a reformation of society might arise. The rebuilding of perception arising out of the interplay between real and imaginary images forms

the basis of Shelley's recreation of Rousseau's aesthetic imagination. To Shelley on his Swiss journey, the figure of Rousseau became a secular God whose ideas could liberate humankind from the inequality, violence and coercive measures which have characterised man and society throughout history.

Shelley's two poems written during his tour around the environs of Lake Geneva both contend with the poetic tradition of confirming the presence of God within a beautiful landscape. Communing with some of the leading Romantic writers in England, as well as residing near some of the most influential thinkers of the late European Enlightenment, provided a highly stimulating environment for Shelley, which is reflected in the metaphysical and divine nature of his 1816 hymns. Shelley's strongly atheistic disagreements with established ecclesiastical hierarchies and methods of practising religion were forced in the spectacular Swiss landscape into eruption. Whilst historical evidence on his tour affirmed his belief in the cruelties of dynastic power, his poetry and letters three and four of his travelogue⁵⁸ suggest he had begun to formulate ideas of an idealised religious humanism in which states of emotion allow the mind to transcend earthly dilemmas and love all humankind anew. The natural world, which reflects the cruelties and beauties of humanity, is a force in Shelley's poetry for transition. To the elect, contemplating on the beauties of nature and the deities of mankind inspires secular revelations, which may be used to reform the inequitable practices of mankind. Shelley's History⁵⁹ is a carefully constructed narrative which radically critiques institutions of religion, government and society, and urges readers to look beyond the established fabric of society and effect personal and political reform through dispensing with received customs and beliefs.

The use of imagination is perhaps the most defining aspect of Romantic tourism. In

⁵⁸ i.e. Shelley's poems and his part of the journal written in Switzerland in 1816. See footnote 2 on p 145.

⁵⁹ Shelley in this and subsequent references refers to P. B. Shelley's contribution to History of a Six Weeks' Tour. See Footnote 2 on p 145.

the later nineteenth century with the development of the daguerreotype,⁶⁰ black and white images of foreign locales could be more readily available. Of course the development of landscape painting in the eighteenth century, to some degree, exposed images of abroad to a wider audience, even so, it may be assumed that only in the twentieth century has the public at large really been able to anticipate the physical identity of foreign tourist attractions. The most significant way in which modern tourism differs from nineteenth century tourism is that expectation is more or less wholly geared to visual representation. Images of abroad were simply not as available to Augustan, Romantic and Victorian tourists who relied mostly on reputation and prose travel accounts to construct their prior expectation of a tourist location.⁶¹ Visually, travellers simply didn't know what to expect before the widespread exposure of photographic images not only furnished an incentive for travelling abroad but enabled tourists to predict and create their own anticipatory vision of a foreign city.

Twentieth-century tourism worships the image whilst nineteenth-century tourism is regulated mainly through the word. Consequently, travel writing prior to the widespread circulation of colour images is much more descriptive, and is allowed to be much more speculative than in our modern age, in which readers may be much more critical of texts about specific locations since they may already be familiar with representations of those areas. Romantic travel prose represents images via the word, in comparison to modern travel media which largely communicate images of abroad using visual techniques. Modern travel writing conveys all the vivaciousness of high-speed life in the city.

Romantic travel writing provides an especially suitable forum for forwarding ideals of political and social reform because the terrain of abroad is still largely an unknown visual

⁶⁰ Louis Daguerreotype invented the process of creating photographic images using iodine-sensitized silver plate and mercury vapour in 1851.

⁶¹ See for instance, Henry James, "The Aspern Papers," 1888, *Tales of Henry James*, ed. Christof Wegelin (New York: Norton, 1984): "When Americans went abroad in 1820 there was something romantic, almost heroic in it, as compared with the perpetual feryings of the present hour, when photography and other conveniences have annihilated surprise" (137).

phenomenon and consequently may be associated with ideals of utopia.⁶² The huge success of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage was partly because of its visually resplendent representation in poetry of a series of relatively obscure and unknown destinations. Shelley's History, whilst conforming to a degree in its alpine descriptions of a country which was experiencing the awakening of its tourist industry, illustrates how romantic imagination can transform perception of place. An imaginative belief in the descriptions of Meillerie in La Nouvelle Héloïse transmogrifies what is in reality a dull insignificant stretch of landscape into a territory bejewelled with rich literary association. By the middle of the twentieth century complete over-exposure to images of abroad has de-romanticised the hope that the foreign may provide spaces of ideal and perfect community. Global shrinkage perhaps suggests that utopia is completely beyond any geographical conception, since most of the planet has been colonised. Romantic tourism combines the real and ideal. In History, Shelley shows how recreating scenes of fiction provokes an interplay between reality and imagination. Fragmenting the objective 'reality' of Rousseau's novel within its actual location, inspired in Shelley the radical sort of thinking which urged him to castigate the societal hierarchies whose history is enshrined in the ruins of the landscape. In Shelley's writing political, philosophic and social ideals of reform seem to become graspable realities within the reach of ordinary mortals. Romantic tourism sanctions the ideal pantisocratic vision because the familiar and unfamiliar are allowed to co-exist in mutual harmony.

In the Victorian age, perhaps because of the increase in social inequality resulting from large increases in population, representations of travel inevitably sought to find solutions for domestic social deprivation by examining analogous foreign societies. Dickens's early attempts at travel writing present a largely dystopian view of the social institutions of post-colonised America, a land which after sixty years of independence is in

⁶² See Footnote 61 on p57.

reality far from free. Both Shelley and Dickens seem to agree that in actuality post-revolutionary societies do not offer perfect freedom to citizens.

(iii) Dickens

Dickens toured America and Canada in the first six months of 1842 with the intention of writing a short travelogue recounting his impressions of American society and its political and social institutions. Although a highly sociable being, and man of the world, Dickens's sense of Victorian Englishness, a decorum for politeness of manner and civility, caused him excessive anguish when faced with the American habit of spitting out tobacco and defiling public spaces. Dickens's satirisation of this vulgar practice carries a highly symbolic economy in American Notes. The frequent disposal of the detritus of tobacco alludes to practices of slavery: the tobacco industry relies on slaves to pick the tobacco crops ready for manufacture. A major premise of American Notes is that Black Americans and native North Americans do not enjoy equal voting rights, or the chance to rise in political office or business, in comparison with the white population. Dickens's damning indictment against the inhumane malpractices of plantation owners openly blames American public opinion for the practice of slavery and questions the myth that America is a model republic.

Dickens was largely disappointed with America because of the absence of universal liberty, the apparent absence of privacy rights and the excessive power of the public. A huge disadvantage with the American system of democracy was that lack of privacy made America an unequal social democracy. Throughout his tour Dickens himself became a tourist attraction. His international success as a best-selling writer caused him much disquiet at the hands of an intrusive American public who stared at him, followed him and subjugated his private sense of being. The major disadvantage of the United States political system was,

Dickens sensed, that it was despoiled by majority rule. Too many inexperienced and inexpert hands had too great a say in determining laws, and ratifying opinions and ideas which were more efficiently managed by public bodies of professional committees of men who should have been democratically voted into office by a representative system of franchise. For a society which advocated the highest ideals of liberty, outside forces imposed too much on individual freedom.

Dickens returned to England with a heightened sense that Chartist reform could succeed where the American Democratic party system (which allowed eccentricities and anomalous opinions to grow) had failed. Dickens did, however, admire what he recognised as the classless nature of American society. In the States, parochial attitudes to occupational status could be absolved, although this had arisen at the detriment of the highly competitive nature of business. Most people had the opportunity to succeed financially through any kind of work. In America, though, men seemed too driven by the desire to earn money, at the cost of unmannerly social decorum.

In reaction to the imposition of social inequality, in terms of the absence of his own privacy, Dickens in the series of Christmas Books he composed in the years following his American visit utilised the space of the English domestic hearth as a private sanctuary which is worshipped with reverence. Opposing the prevalence with which he believed Americans wrongly pursued wealth, at the cost of humanitarian and shared values, he created in Martin Chuzzlewit and Dombey and Son major protagonists whose love of money ends in their personal destruction. Egoism is denounced as unjust social behaviour, and cordial and equal family relationships are understood by Dickens, at the resolution of Dombey and Son, to be the ideal model for contemporary Victorian households. Throughout the remainder of his writing career Dickens frequently challenges the Victorian capitalistic value system which valorises the rise of self-made men who exalt the protestant work ethic. Satirical portraits of

financiers and industrialists are mostly absent from Dickens's novels before his American visit. After 1842, his exposure to an American society obsessed with wealth and a cultural tendency which conditioned men to achieve success through single-minded egoism impelled Dickens to satirise the avaricious behaviour of the middle and upper classes in England.

Dickens, at least, did find admirable the work of American philanthropists to instigate the first blind schools in America. Equally, attempts by society to discipline deviant behaviour within a penal environment suggested America did have some positive aspects (although Dickens deplored and outlawed the American innovation of solitary confinement). The exemplary practices of social welfare Dickens observed in the States convinced him that more public intervention was required to maintain an adequate measure of social reform at home. On his return to England Dickens immediately threw himself into an argument with colliery owners regarding the shameful employment of women and children, and the widening differences of wealth between employer and servant, both of whom, Dickens argued, were dependent on each other.⁶³ Despite the disadvantages which he perceived structured the American social and political system his experience had, at least, fired his reformist mind to improve conditions back in England.

⁶³ See Dickens's letter to the editor of the Morning Chronicle of the 25th July 1842 (D 3: 278-85).

The Formation of the Writer: Lord Byron's Mediterranean Pilgrimage

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage is the study of an individual's quest to comprehend a displaced ego within the fragmentation of modern European society. The polyphonic nature of the poem's several voices may be understood as an attempt to represent the chaotic state of modern society and self. Byron's presentation of a melancholy hero relies on an underlying tension between author and subject in which the psyche of both increasingly comes under observation. Byron's character study of Harold shows the development of a contemplative poetic style of philosophic melancholy. In assuming a moralising position on the tragedy of modern civilisation Childe Harold reforms his personal world picture and begins to accept his identity as an exiled nobleman: his catharsis on the battlefields of Spain and ancient Greece suggests he has attained a responsible attitude in ascertaining political morality. His own past sins are diminished and extinguished in the brutal reality of Napoleonic conflagration. His war tourism establishes his emerging identity as a poet who laments for the tragedies of mankind, and is therefore to some degree less of an outsider than he was at the beginning of his exile. Lord Byron's distinctive Byronic voice emerges for the first time through the anguished discourse of his hero's Mediterranean tour.

Childe Harold's impressionistic displays of sightseeing constitute a form of unconventional poetic narrative. Imaginative dream-states of contemplation enable us to share the scenes of his tourism, visualisations which Byron embellishes, re-fashions and re-visions to represent a Europe torn asunder by Napoleonic domination. Imaginatively reconstructing scenes of tourism is part of the writing process of composition, and in poems like Childe Harold the reader becomes privy to an imaginative cinematic show which displays images of the figure of an aristocratic poet inscribing the biography, in images of travel, of his solitary protagonist, Childe Harold.

The intensely personal nature of the poem may serve to explain part of its success as a publishing phenomenon. The appeal of Childe Harold's disclosures perhaps lies in their

confessional mode and Byron may well have followed the precedent set by narratives of reminiscence and diary forms of composition in the tradition of Rousseau and Chateaubriand.

Byron situates his poem within a multiple structure which contains elements of chivalric romance, realism, satire and modern tourism. This complex polyphonic narrative strategy sometimes makes it necessary to assume that Harold, the narrator and Byron speak with a unified voice. Tourism allows a detachment from established society and provides alternative spaces of anxiety and refuge which inspire the composition of a poem of political liberty and personal liberation.

(a) INTRODUCTION

(i) Narration and Structure

In the first two cantos, Byron adopts a polyphonic narrative style of multiple voices. McGann¹ identifies two narrators, the poet and Harold, whilst Peter Thorslev² advocates three speakers, Harold, the minstrel narrator, and Byron's own voice. Byron himself made it quite clear in his letters that he wished to be entirely dissociated from the persona of Harold, who it may be readily observed is the antithesis to the very public and overtly sociable side of Byron's personality. In a letter of 31st October 1811 to Robert Dallas he said: "I by no means intend to identify myself with Harold, but to deny all connexion with him. If in parts I may be thought to have drawn from myself, believe me it is but in parts, and I shall not own even to that. . . . I would not be such a fellow as I have made my hero for all the world" (BLJ 2: 122). Indeed, in his preface to the poem Byron states quite clearly that the character of Childe Harold is a fiction introduced to bring his somewhat shapeless form of narrative into sharper definition:

¹ Jerome J. McGann, *Fiery Dust: Byron's Poetic Development* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1968) 68-69.

² Peter L. Thorslev, *The Byronic Hero: Types and Prototypes* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1962).

A fictitious character is introduced for the sake of giving some connexion to the piece; which, makes however, no pretension to regularity. It has been suggested to me by friends, on whose opinions I set a high value, that in this fictitious character, 'Childe Harold', I may incur the suspicion of having intended some real personage: this I beg leave, once for all, to disclaim--Harold is the child of imagination, for the purpose I have stated. (B 19)

As the "child of his imagination" Harold may be seen as the alter-ego of Byron's own dark imagination, his private self, and a medium through which to express trenchant and volatile political satire. It is often a difficult task to separate Byron himself from the narrator, since Byron's real-life tour of the Mediterranean is closely mirrored in his fictional poem, most especially, in the series of notes appended at the end of each canto. These notes almost function as a guide-book which exemplifies particular details of the poem's touristic images. Throughout Harold's pilgrimage the narrator's voice is rather predominant. Childe Harold assumes the function of bard in "To Inez" (l. 84, 1-9, lines 837-72) and "Adieu, Adieu my native shore" (l. 13, 1-10, 118-97) and has his own singing voice, but for the greater part of the poem his voice is silent and he is commented upon by a narrator. McGann concludes that "Byron the artist . . . is refined out of poetic existence . . . and his consciousness is built into the poem's structure, not into the narrator's character" (55). McGann, indeed, sees Harold's character as the alter-ego of Byron: "Byron uses the Childe as an object-self in a confessional poem that involves, first, a journey of self-discovery, and second, a therapeutic movement toward a better self than the one he was at the outset" (69). Byron's use of a 'hidden' alter-ego in his parodic romance may be compared to the more explicit tradition in which a character such as Sancho Panza acts as a foil to the protagonist (Don Quixote). The

contradictory narrative voices allow Byron to distance himself from the more caustic and contentious aspects of the poem, because it is more or less impossible to unravel the separate narrative strands and ascertain who is speaking.

The uses of narration may be further examined by distinguishing the underlying schemata behind both narrator and poet. The narrator is given some of the generic traits of the story-teller of a quest-romance. The term romance itself, or 'romaunt' as Byron entitles his poem, derives from the medieval tradition of the Chivalric tale in which the knight wins the hand of the lady through overcoming some ordeal on a physically and mentally tough journey. Medieval knights required qualities of endurance, fortitude, physical strength, nobility, honour and especially allegiance to the brotherhood, in order to achieve the goal of their quest--the Holy Grail.

In his essay "The Journey and its Narratives",³ Tzvetan Todorov, notes that the grail quest "is of a spiritual nature and the Grail is impalpable" (Chard 289). In Childe Harold's case the end seems to be perpetually frustrated; consequently the reader is faced with the incomprehensible task of assembling a series of contradictory pictures. This irregular mode of poetics with "no pretension to regularity"⁴ is a feature of romance form inherent in Spenser and Ariosto where the action is continually interrupted and shuffled to provide narrative intrigue. As Patricia Parker comments:

Romance is characterised primarily as a form which simultaneously quests for and postpones a particular end, objective, or object, a description which Frederic Jameson approaches from a somewhat different direction when he notes that "romance from the twelfth century, necessitates the projection of an other, a projet, which comes to

³ See Transports: Travel, Pleasure and Imaginative Geography, 1600-1830, eds. , Chloe Chard and Helen Langdon (New Haven: Yale U P, 1996) 287-96.

⁴ See p 64 above and (B 19) ie. the introductory notes to the poem.

an end when that other reveals his identity or 'name'. (4)

Assuming Jameson's position, Childe Harold's questing tourism may be understood as a series of encounters with other touristic sites which are assimilated, or rejected, in a series of postponed climaxes until he encounters a sight after which he reaches a moment of illumination, an experience which suggests that a stage of his journey has been reached, and in some way his self has been spiritually fulfilled.

In his impalpable, meditative quest Childe Harold may be imagined as a youthful knight whose encounters are not with actual scenes of war, but with the damage left behind by the warring factions of the Napoleonic wars. Childe Harold's tour is, in this sense, a tourism of war. Byron's letters also suggest that the Napoleonic wars are a dominant aspect of his tourism: "I have no intention of returning to England, unless compelled so to do. I only regret I did not quit it sooner. This country is in a state of great disorder, but beautiful in itself, the army is in Spain, and a battle is daily expected" (BLJ 1: 214). In this letter to John Hanson written in Lisbon at the commencement of his Iberian pilgrimage it is clear that the anticipation of military action against the French occupation is a strong incentive and attraction in Byron's forthcoming tour of the peninsula. Byron's war tourism is further established in another letter to Hanson written in Gibraltar, after a long ride across Spain during which Byron saw the horror of war:

Sir, I have just ridden between four & five hundred miles across the country from Lisbon to Cadiz, and thence by sea to Gibraltar. I shall pursue my voyage the first opportunity. I have been at Seville where the Spanish Government is at present, of course you have by this time received intelligence of the battle near Madrid.⁵ As I

⁵ i.e. the battle of Talavera. See p 102-03.

rode seventy miles a day during this intense heat, you will conclude I am rather fatigued. . . . Spain is all in arms, and the French have every thing to do over again, the barbarities on both sides are shocking. I passed some French prisoners on the road from Badajoz to Seville, and saw a spy who was condemned to be shot. . . . (BLJ 1: 217)

It is difficult to ascertain Byron's exact feelings about the recent scenes of war he has witnessed. There is, however, in his letter a sense of excitement, perhaps post-observation exhilaration, that he has experienced actual history in the making. This phenomenon may be classified as war-tourism. In The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Society John Urry notes the "absolute distinction between authentic history (continuing and therefore dangerous) and heritage (past, dead and safe)" (110). Byron's close encounter with a contemporary war to the extent he saw a condemned spy awaiting execution reveals a desire to experience what modern sociologists like MacCannell define as authenticity. This phenomenon is essentially an extension of what sociologists in the field classify as participatory observation: "It is only when a person makes an effort to penetrate into the real life of the area he visits that he ends up in places especially designed to generate feelings of intimacy and experiences that can be talked about as participation" (106). Byron's participation in recent scenes of the war validates his experience as authentic.

The endeavour to seek an exciting, even dangerous experience outside the boundary of ordinary existence may be directly related to feelings of dissatisfaction even boredom with life. One of Childe Harold's primary motivations for travel is to cure his splenetic ennui, possibly as an anti-dote to the guilt he feels deriving from his debauched conduct. A quest for a real experience might not only produce feelings of exhilaration and life-force but instil in the sightseer a belief that he is sensing and perceiving impressions which are only available

to those caught up in the larger issues of history: politicians, generals, soldiers, and so on; the actors and players who decide and perform major events in contemporary life. We can distinguish between tourism of continuing life which might involve a 'behind the scenes tour' of a public institution, or a more vicarious kind of tourism such as observing the site of a recent historical event which, perhaps because of associated feelings of awe, instils in the observer the higher value of a historically 'real' experience. The arena of a recent theatre of war in its sobering and horrifying ambience provides just the sort of image of a recent historical occurrence which is the nearest thing to having witnessed or participated in the actual incident at first hand. This pseudo-authentic experience furnishes tourists, such as Harold, with the adrenalin surge of being which promotes the authentication of real experience.

The search for authenticity is the ultimate desire of many modern anti-tourists who, in their desire to maintain an idiosyncratic psyche, dissociate themselves from, and avoid crowds of mass tourists. This phenomenon is not new and may be observed in Sterne's parodic tour of eighteenth century France and Italy A Sentimental Journey: "As an Englishman does not travel to see Englishmen, I retired to my room" (13). These sorts of highly individualistic travellers who wish their holiday experience to be in some way educationally uplifting, and who also hate the notion of other tourists, are often in our own times those classified as 'backpackers':

Interviews with backpackers and other tourists, their correspondence and photography, articulate a system of thought which could be characterised as extremist in its commitment to notions of authenticity and experience. . . . [This] logic . . . [may be] expressed in a discourse of touristic shame . . . a general condemnation of tourists by tourists for ruining that authentic otherness which they have travelled so far to

experience. (Kaur 75)⁶

One need not necessarily carry a backpack to assume 'backpacker' status; indeed Phipps suggests that "professional travel writers, photographers and social scientists [all seek] authentic experiences with other cultures" (80), although we could also include any highly individualistic person in this category.

A 'backpacker' might be defined as a tourist who is persistently willing to suffer hardship in the quest for an authentic experience with another culture:

The main feature which distinguishes backpackers from other tourists is the disproportionate value they place on the physical sufferings and dangers of travel on the cheap as a marker of value. There is an extensive vocabulary of renunciative strategies and gestures which attach enormous status to poverty, hardship and illness as signifiers of the authenticity of an experience. (81)

There are distinctive similarities between the backpacker, the pilgrim in Childe Harold, and the figure of Byron on his own youthful pilgrimage. In a letter to Hanson written before setting out on his tour of the East, Byron emphasises that he is prepared to undergo such hardship in his quest to achieve an individualised travel experience:

In the first place, I wish to study India and asiatic policy and manners. I am young, tolerably vigorous, abstemious in my way of living; I have no pleasure in fashionable dissipation, and I am determined to take a wider field than is customary with travellers. . . . With regard to expence, travelling through the East is rather

⁶ Peter Phipps, "Tourists, Terrorists, Death and Value," Travel Worlds: Journeys in Contemporary Cultural Politics, eds. , Raminder Kaur and John Hutynk (London: Zed Books, 1999) 74-93.

inconvenient than expensive: it is not like the tour of Europe, you undergo hardship, but incur little hazard of spending money. (BLJ 1: 175)

The willingness to suffer such hardship, the intricacy of planning such a tour, the obscurity of the destination and uncertainty of the manners and reception of the host community, suggest that the youthful Byron may in some respects be paralleled with the late twentieth century phenomenon of backpackers. The nature of Byron's travelling party which consisted of his friend, John Cam Hobhouse, and his servant, William Fletcher, initially suggests his tour was to some degree more of an arranged and comfortable experience than the tours of today's backpackers, although underdeveloped accommodations such as poor bedding and the discomfort of travelling by mule suggest otherwise.

The notion of the 'Backpacker' is frequently associated with the young person, often taking a year out from education in an attempt to enhance their life-experience, to find themselves; the sorts of quest undergone by the beat generation, hippies, and exemplified in contemporary road movies.⁷ Their journey brings to the fore the concept of self-testing, a feature of the quest which is rooted in medieval chivalric journeys in search of the holy grail. In modern times the knight's test is translated into the notion of 'rites of passage tourism':

The emphasis on self-testing can be seen as an example of voluntarily undergoing a 'rite of passage', acting out a ritual space signifying a break from one life stage to another, or proving to themselves that they have the strength to deal with a major crisis in their lives. . . . Those most likely to engage in 'rites of passage tourism' include young people deferring the responsibilities of adulthood, often in an

⁷ For example, see Jack Kerouac, *On the Road* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1957) which charts the encounters of Sal Paradise as he tours the United States of America in a bid to experience the freedom of the American dream. The temporary adventures and relationships he forms with other people on the road, incorporate the body of casual personal confrontations which help him to find himself as a writer.

intermediate stage between completing further education and embarking on a career or making major commitments to a family, those recently divorced, widowed, or making major career changes. It is characterised by prolonged absences from home, and often arduous travels and activities involving some form of self-testing, attributes which Graburn compares to the spirit of pre-invasion, North American indigenous societies. (Kaur 81-82)

Like many young people of today, Childe Harold engages in extensive tourism as a means of deferring responsibility, and in an attempt to understand metaphysical uncertainties, which begin to assume importance in late adolescence.

As young men in the continuing years of the Napoleonic wars Byron and Harold are unable to undergo the conventional Grand Tour, the great rites of passage journey for the aristocracy, which fashioned their identity in class terms by exposing young aristocrats to the exclusive cultural practises of continental societies. In fact, in Byron's case his motive for pursuing a Grand Tour based finally on an Eastern Mediterranean route, may be regarded as a desire for adventure which directly opposed the conventional and prudent fashion of the aristocracy for pursuing 'domestic tourism' in Scotland whilst Europe was politically unstable between 1793 and 1815, and enabled him to compose an exotic romance which competed in the marketplace with Scott's historical fiction.

The danger and uncertainty of Harold's war tourism suggests he may be classified as a rudimentary 'backpacker'. His status as an aristocrat gives him the access to an unlimited amount of time which enables him to pursue his tour. Unlike Byron, Harold, in his enforced exile from exclusive circles of aristocracy, is likely to have had to resort to economical rather than extravagant standards of living on tour and consequently may, like the 'backpacker', feel distanced from materialist Western values. Whilst aristocratic Grand Tourists are likely to

have collected foreign works of art as souvenirs, the nature of Harold's tour is less commercially minded, his non-commercial relationship to host societies more concerned (particularly in canto two) to establish close contact and even foster relationships with the natives of foreign countries.

(ii) Romance and Chivalry

In a review of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage: a Romaunt in the British Review in June 1812 William Roberts suggests that Byron's poem is not a romance or chivalric tale but simply the narrative of a modern tourist:

When we first heard of the poem of Childe Harold--a Romaunt--what could we expect, but a new assortment of chivalrous tales, of amours and battles, of giants and deliverers of knights and saracens, of dwarfs and demons? In this we were mistaken. And our puzzle is now to account for those portentous titles of a poem, the subject of which is certainly neither chastity, nor valour, nor truth; nor fairies, nor damsels, nor deliverers; nor hero baptized, or infidel; but the narrative of a modern tourist.

(Reiman 1: 396)⁸

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage is a narrative of a modern tourist but it is also a 'Romaunt' in an ironic sense, in a similar tradition to the chivalric romances of Spenser, Ariosto, and Cervantes. In the Faerie Queene Spenser uses the form of epic romance to present a quest in which moral and spiritual values are tested through encounters with

⁸ See William Roberts, rev. of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage: a Romaunt by Lord Byron, British Review 3 June, 1812: 275-302.

fantastic and supernatural beings.⁹ Ariosto too, “in his poetic world situated somewhere between high fantasy and reality” (Reynolds 45) may be viewed as a writer who uses the form of romance within a more personal journey of crisis and self-evaluation.¹⁰ The concept of self-testing is a theme of medieval romances such as Gawain and the Green Knight in which the knight’s honour is tested in temptation scenes which determine his faithfulness to the brotherhood.¹¹ Nobility is defined in terms of honour, loyalty and friendship, which are quite different qualities of chivalry than acts of bravery and heroism. Romantic irony may involve the subversion of the medieval idealistic tradition, which began with Chaucer and in Europe developed under the schools of Ariosto and Cervantes. “G. W. F. Hegel . . . in his Aesthetics, links Ariosto’s name to that of Cervantes as the ironic devastators of the medieval chivalric tradition and its values” (Ascoli 8). Cervantes, in Don Quixote de la Mancha (1605-15) parodies chivalric romance within a structure which aligns scenes of romance and realism inside the medium of a quest adventure:

He thought it expedient and necessary, as well as for the advancement of his own reputation, as for the public good, that he should commence knight-errant, and wander through the world, with his horse and arms, in quest of adventures, and to put in practice whatever he had read to have been practised by knight errants; redressing all kinds of grievances, and exposing himself to danger on all occasions; that by accomplishing such enterprises he might acquire eternal fame and renown. (25-26)¹²

⁹ See Spenser, Poetical Works, ed. J. C. Smith and E. de Selincourt (Oxford: Oxford U P, 1970).

¹⁰ See especially Orlando Furioso (The Frenzy of Orlando): A Romantic Epic by Ludovico Ariosto, 1532, trans. Barbara Reynolds, 2 vols. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975).

¹¹ Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, ed. J. J. Anderson (London: Everyman, 1996).

¹² Miguel Saavedra de Cervantes, Don Quixote de la Mancha, 1605-15, trans. Charles Jarvis (Oxford: Oxford U P, 1992).

Byron's uses of romance are complex, and both privilege and subvert medieval ideals in order to examine wider political issues. This view counters critics such as Manning (1991) who regards Byron wholly as a romantic ironist.

Manning argues that Byron "vacates the order of chivalry" and "replaces it simultaneously with himself" (*Modern*, 180) and in so doing "violently negates the chivalric code" (184). He suggests that Byron satirises romance form and replaces the chivalric knightly traditions with the figure of the author "making his own career the authorising source of value, a present-day demonstration of heroic grandeur." Consequently he "redefines the relationship of the aristocrat and genius to the market he both scorns and represents" (170). There is therefore a shift of focus from the protagonist knight as hero to the figure of the poet as hero:

If Byron, as narrator of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage declares the death of chivalry, Byron the newly hatched public figure gave his poem the lie. Here stood the handsome noble poet himself, returned from brave adventures in exotic lands, soon to be the darling of Whig society, making impassioned speeches in Parliament, his amours chronicled in the papers. (179-180)

Whilst Manning's suggestion that Byron, (as an aristocratic travelling poet) posed a new public figure in the marketplace, is absolutely tenable, his suggestion that the chivalric inheritance is nullified needs to be modified.

Byron's adoption of romantic epic form is complex because of his ironic voice. Like Spenser, Childe Harold's journey is interlaced with a series of moral judgements in response to contemporary political events. In Renaissance thinking the idea behind a romantic epic was educational. In his Discorso intorno al comporre dei romanzi (Discourse on the Composition

of Romances) (1567-70) Giraldi Cinthio “maintained that the purpose of the romantic epic should be to inculcate good morals” (Reynolds 78-79). Byron’s use of romantic epic is similar to the Renaissance model in that the reader learns from the pilgrim’s moralising song to consider moral, in this case pacifist, values.

The puzzle which William Roberts in the British Review describes is a failure to understand the ancestral and behavioural aspects of Harold’s character. This too needs to be understood within a simplified definition of romantic epic which firmly establishes the genre within the medieval tradition. Barbara Reynolds defines the romantic epic as “an epic of Romance: that is, of post-classical, medieval legends, especially those relating to the paladins of Charlemagne and the knights of Arthur” (11). Childe Harold, himself, has a medieval and chivalric title. Brewer’s Dictionary of Phrase and Fable defines Childe as : “a title of honour. In the days of Chivalry, a noble youth who was a candidate for knighthood, during his time of probation was called infans, valet, damoyse, bachelier and childe.” Certainly by the end of his pilgrimage, if not before, Childe Harold has earned his honourable spurs through his self-testing “time of probation” and may be deemed worthy of the title knight. Critics such as Ellis in the Quarterly Review were highly sceptical about the poem’s status as a romance and Childe Harold’s own chivalric identity. Indubitably, Childe Harold’s aristocratic lineage qualifies him as a “candidate for knighthood.” His youthful wassailing, revelry and feasting, (1. 2) and dissolute behaviour specify him as a knight descended from such literary progenitors as “childgered”¹³ Arthur in the court of Camelot.

In his “Addition to the Preface” Byron parries Ellis’s criticisms by illustrating that the Middle Ages were a time just as profligate as his own, and that codes of honour are equally pertinent to contemporary as well as medieval systems of society:

¹³ See Sir Gawain 170.

Amongst the many objections justly urged to the very indifferent character of the 'vagrant Childe' (whom, notwithstanding many hints to the contrary, I still maintain to be a fictitious personage), it has been stated, that besides the anachronism, he is very unknightly, as the times of the Knights were times of love, honour, and so forth. Now it so happens that the good old times, when 'l'amour du bons vieux tems, l'amour antique' flourished, were the most profligate of all possible centuries. Those who have any doubt on this subject may consult St Palaye,¹⁴ passim. . . . The vows of chivalry were no better kept than any other vows whatsoever, and the songs of the Troubadors were not more decent, and were certainly less refined, than those of Ovid.--The 'Cours d'amour, parlemens d'amour ou de courtesie et de gentillesse' had much more of love than of courtesy or gentleness. . . . Whatever other objection may be urged to that most unamiable personage Childe Harold, he was so far perfectly knightly in his attributes. (B 20-21)

In her introduction to The Literary History of the Troubadors (1807) Mrs Dobson remarks that in St Palaye's work "we have a great and striking picture of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when ignorance and barbarism held dominion over Europe" (viii). She suggests that the system of chivalric honour allowed intemperate behaviour to compensate for the horrors of close-combat against outside evil. In the works of the Troubadors "we behold the prodigality of the nobles, set up as the essential virtue of their nobility; as little delicate in acquiring the means, as in the manner of their dissipation; . . . There we behold that spirit of independence which fosters the disorders of anarchy" (xii). Byron's defence of Harold's character suggests, at least, that he believed in St. Palaye's ideals of public valour and heroic virtue, values which could be revealed in friendship and in circumstances of national duress:

¹⁴ Schroeder cites Saint Palaye as "one of the most important, influential and widely respected sources of information about the middle ages" (29). Saint Palaye "often depicted the chivalric society of medieval times as a historical reality that approached an ideal" (28).

It is certain that chivalry, in the first ages of it, tended to promote order and good morals; and though in some respects imperfect, yet produced the most accomplished models of public valour, and of those pacific and gentle virtues, that are the ornament of domestic life: and it is worthy of consideration, that in ages of darkness, most rude and unpolished, such examples were to be found, from adhering to the laws of an institution founded solely for the public welfare, as in the most enlightened times have never been surpassed, and very rarely equalled. . . . Thus was chivalry, in these dark ages, a source of continual benefits; and its peculiar glories shone forth in the noble actions of friendship, gratitude and humanity. (Schroeder 28-29)¹⁵

In his Iberian tour Childe Harold's knightly indiscretions are reformed in his modern tourist's quest in which he begins to find his place in the world through judging the immoralities of war.

Byron's own chivalric ideals are delineated, (as argued later),¹⁶ in the narrator's tribute to John Wingfield, an elegy which in its romantic poignancy juxtaposes Byron's feelings of despair with Wingfield's loyalty to his country. Manning's violent rejection of the chivalric code is therefore not altogether accurate. Whilst Byron does, to some degree, especially in the introductory notes, satirise the revelry of the "good old times" (B 20) there are far too many idealised associations with chivalry, and codes of friendship, love and honour to completely dismiss this inheritance altogether. Byron's position is ironic because he recognises that the Middle Ages were just as immoderate as our own, but also accepts that society was regulated through ideals of honour. For the narrator, chivalry lives, and Childe Harold, too, is "so far perfectly knightly in his attributes" (B 21): profligate and noble.

¹⁵ Memoirs of Ancient Chivalry, trans. Mrs Susannah Dobson (London, 1784).

¹⁶ See p 105-06.

(iii) The Literary Inheritance

The narrator, Harold, belongs to several traditions of romance all of which share slightly different ideals of chivalry. The precursors of Childe Harold may be sought in the ironic narrations of Chaucer's pilgrims, the romanticised moral songs of Spenser's Faerie Queene and Shakespeare's late romances. They all belong to the school of journey, pilgrimage or exile which is also inherent in The Odyssey and which Byron remoulds into his singular Byronic pilgrimage. Harold with his "harp, which he at times could string" (l. 13, line 110) may be aligned with the ancient classical bards who travelled around Ancient Greece singing The Iliad and The Odyssey to regional audiences. Harold, though, in his preference to sing alone, to absent himself totally from his audience--"He seiz'd his harp . . . When deem'd he no strange ear was listening" (l.13, 110-12)--peculiarises his identity into a confessional minstrel whose private disclosures instil in the reader the allurements of secrecy. Harold is at once Chaucerian, Spenserian, Shakespearean and Homeric pilgrim to varying degrees.

The genesis of Byron's pilgrim, is also partly rooted in the Bardic tradition of minstrelsy which he had so recently satirised in English Bards and Scotch Reviewers (1807-11) and may also derive from the poetry of James Beattie (1735-1803), whose stanzaic style--which imitates Spenser's--is closely discussed in the preface to Childe Harold: ¹⁷

The stanza of Spenser, according to one of our most successful poets, admits of every variety. Dr Beattie makes the following observation: 'Not long ago I began a poem in the style and stanza of Spenser, in which I propose to give full scope to my

¹⁷ James Beattie was "Professor of Moral Philosophy and Logic at Marischal College, Aberdeen University from 1760 to 1793." Robert Crawford, The Scottish Invention of English Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998) 93.

inclination, and be either droll or pathetic, descriptive or sentimental, tender or satirical, as the humour strikes me; for, if I mistake not, the measure which I have adopted admits equally of all these kinds of composition.' Strengthened in my opinion by such authority, and by the example of some in the highest order of Italian poets, I shall make no apology for attempts at similar variations in the following composition; satisfied that, if they are unsuccessful, their failure must be in the execution, rather than in the design sanctioned by the practise of Ariosto, Thomson and Beattie. (B 20)

Like Beattie, Byron adopted the polyphonic style of the Spenserian stanza because it allowed him to develop a narrative voice which enabled a high degree of variation: "droll or pathetic, descriptive or sentimental, tender or satirical." Whilst it is quite clear that Byron modelled the style of his poem firstly on Spenser and then the "highest order" of the Italian poets--Dante, Petrarch, Tasso, Boccaccio and Virgil--it may be inferred that he owes a large debt to the practices of Ariosto, Beattie and Thomson. For example, in a letter to William Miller in 1811 Byron writes that the poem "is on Ariosto's plan and that is to say on no plan at all" (BLJ 2: 363).¹⁸

Whilst the stanzaic model of Thompson is similar to Spenser's, the sentiments of say The Castle of Indolence (1748), which satirises the wanton luxury and dissipation of indolence, do not at all reflect the liberties allowed by Byron's own protagonist in the introductory stanzas of his pilgrimage. There are, however, resonances of Childe Harold in Thomson's poem: "One day there chaunc'd into these Halls to rove / A joyous Youth, who took you at first sight; / Him the wild wave of Pleasure hither drove" (62, 550-52). Harold's social carousing shares some of the "social glee" (62, 555) of Thomson's "joyous youth" (62, 551), and the mystical alienation of Beattie's jejune Edwin is clearly reflected in Harold's

¹⁸ Byron's admiration for Ariosto's fabulous romantic epic may be later inferred from canto four of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, where he praises Ariosto, the "bard of chivalry", Dante, "the bard of hell", and Scott, "the Ariosto of the North. . ." (4. 40, 354-60).

early social ineptitude and his desire for separation from society before his departure for the continent.

In the Preface to The Minstrel; or, The Progress of Genius (1774), Beattie valorises the vocation of poetic bard and implies that the golden age of the minstrel lies firmly in the distant ages of time:

The design was to trace the progress of a Poetical Genius, born in a rude age, from the first dawning of fancy and reason, till that period at which he may be supposed capable as appearing in the world as a minstrel, that is, as an itinerant poet and musician;--a character which, according to the notions of our forefathers, was not only respectable, but sacred.

The sacred art of bardic song enjoyed a revival in the eighteenth century when writers such as Thomas Gray (1716-71) and Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832), began to use ancient forms of metrical romance as a vehicle to promote Celtic nationalism.¹⁹ At Parnassus, the narrator, Byron, laments that the current state of British minstrelsy is in a state of sorry decay. As soon as Childe Harold bids adieu to his native shores it is clear that he does not belong to a school of English nationalism. Part of the impetus for his pilgrimage is to recover a sense of identity, since his own national and cultural identity has been rescinded. In canto two, especially, the impulse of Harold's quest is a reorientation towards internationalist values and international philosophies. Byron's bardic figure is used to promote international political issues in contrast to the nationalistic poetics of the Welsh, Scottish and English schools.

The success of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage may be ascribed to its new narrative genre as a modern quest romance, which uses a semi-autobiographical narrator to enunciate a

¹⁹ For example, in "The Vision of Don Roderick" Scott champions the Scottish nationality of General Graeme. See p83.

position of psychological uncertainty and ennui within the relatively new genre of travel literature. His use of a confessional narrator figure perhaps derives from the European style of Rousseau's autobiographical Confessions, and Chateaubriand's René who, Schenk argues, made "a literary cult of his own person by means of exhibiting his ego" (133). Indeed René, serves as a useful comparison to Childe Harold:

All the characteristics of unredeemed Weltschmerz are present in René: the introspection, the misanthropy and quest for solitude, the unbounded craving of the soul as well as the perpetual dissatisfaction, the ennui and resultant melancholy, the disgust with life and the attempted flight--to past civilisations, to nature, to the new world, or even to suicide. (Schenk 126)

Like René, Childe Harold exhibits the characteristics of the alienated, deracinated individual who resorts to flight in an attempt to recover a sense of belonging in "past civilisations", history, nature and, in Harold's case, foreign climes and exotic alternative societies.

The public acclamation of Byron's new poetic travelogue may also be understood in its adoption of a pseudo-novelistic technique. In its blend of romance, realism, characterisation, and its dramaturgical displays of scenic tourism, it may be seen as a competitive poetic genre to the rival form of the novel. Part of the intrigue of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage lies in its public display of private emotional states: the psychological suffering, langour and emptiness Childe Harold feels before leaving England, and throughout the stages of his journey, accompany his questing impulse towards reinvention and finding a new self.

Many of the reviews of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage suggest its underlying popularity with the public was due to two factors: its undeclared status as a semi-autobiographical narrative and its intrigue as a work of travel writing. Samuel Rogers, for example, writes:

“The genius which the poem exhibited, the youth, the rank of the author, his romantic wanderings in Greece,--these combined to make the world stark mad about Childe Harold and Byron” (Rutherford, Critical 35). It is clear from Rogers’ review that the public were as equally fascinated with the shadows of Byron’s aristocratic lineage manifested throughout the poem, as with the delightful, and to many, new poetic representations of foreign cultures and geographies. The intensely personal nature of the poem is not only evident in the concealed figure of the poet but in his confessions and moral judgements, which foreground his own individuality as a solitary romantic who speaks directly and intimately to the reader.

In an article in The Quarterly Review of March 1812, George Ellis suggests the popular appeal of Byron’s poetic travelogue derives from its novelty as a narrative of tourism which is presented in the form of a poem:

We believe that few books are so extensively read and admired as those which contain the narratives of intelligent travellers. Indeed, the greater part of the community are confined, either by necessity or indolence, to a very narrow space on the globe, and are naturally eager to contemplate, in description at least, that endless variety of new and curious objects which a visit to distant countries and climates is known to furnish, and of which only a very limited portion can be accessible to the most enterprising individual. If, then, this species of information be so attractive when conveyed in prose, and sometimes, it must be confessed, in very dull prose, by what accident has it happened that no English poet before Lord Byron has thought fit to employ his talents on a subject so obviously well suited to their display? (Quarterly 7, 191)

Ellis proposes that the greater part of the reason for the popularity of Childe Harold is due to its means of describing the unfamiliar. The desire to explore unknown regions has always

been one of man's innate impulses and, Ellis suggests, Lord Byron is the first English poet to exploit the public interest in factual travel writing in the guise of a highly accessible poetic narrative.

The success of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage may also be understood in context of the proliferation of travel writing which followed Napoleonic intervention in Portugal and Spain. National newspaper reports fuelled interest in the peninsula and many writers responded by producing a series of articles, histories, travel accounts, poems, tracts relating in some way to the new interest shown by the public in Iberian affairs. Perhaps the most prominent writers who contributed works on the theme of Portuguese and Spanish affairs were Sir Walter Scott, Southey, Wordsworth and Coleridge, but it was Byron's fictionalised account of the observations of a modern tourist that proved the most singular publishing scoop of the time. Scott's "The Vision of Don Roderick" (1811)²⁰ uses Spenserian stanzas and recounts the conquest of Spain by the Moors, the restoration of Christian power and the invasion and defeat of Bonaparte. Scott is rather more patriotic than Byron, praising the British generals, Wellington, Cadogan and Beresford, and criticising the French for "the horrors they committed in the retreat from Santarem" (Quarterly 6: 227). It is of especial interest that Scott alters the orthography of General Graham to Scottish Graeme. Indeed the glorification of his "gallant countryman" (Scott 592) may be understood as the poem's pro-Scottish rhetoric to the detriment of the English nation. The poem is indeed an example of Scottish and bardic nationalism: "Last say thy conqueror was Wellington" (Scott 176). Southey's translation of The Chronicles of the Cid (1809) is a more detailed examination of Don Roderick's exploits against the Moors and, whilst "the character of the Cid is held up as a model for perfection", Southey concludes that "the knights of Spain had not attained the highest and most refined chivalry practised in France and England" (Quarterly 1: 150). Wordsworth's Convention of

²⁰ The Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott (London: Frederick Warne, n.d.). "The Vision of Don Roderick" was originally published on June 24th, 1811.

Cintra (1809)²¹ is drawn from accounts of the war reported in newspapers such as The Courier, which are perhaps rather generally unreliable as sources of evidence. Another problem with his tract is that it often fails to distinguish between the exact opinions of the Portuguese and Spanish governments, rather it considers events on the Peninsula as a whole. Coleridge complemented Wordsworth's Convention of Cintra (which was edited by De Quincey) by writing a series of articles in December 1809 and January 1810 for The Courier which, he remarked, he "should be proud to consider . . . as an appendix to Wordsworth's pamphlet."²² In the letters Coleridge openly declares his opposition to Bonaparte, "I have styled the present ruler of France as a wretch and a monster" (Coleridge, Essays 76).

Throughout the war the Quarterly Review ran a series of articles, reviews and poems relating both to public affairs on the Peninsula, and to accounts of the histories of Portugal and Spain by minor writers.²³ Whilst the majority of these articles were of a political nature and related to accounts of the war, Lord George Nugent Grenville's poem, which describes the picturesque beauties of the rock of Cintra at sunset, is an exception. Byron's poem, which also describes the idyllic scenery of Cintra, is even more distinctive because it blends poetic pictures of scenic tourism with satirical comment of the sort even newspapers only dared to

²¹ See The Prose Works of William Wordsworth, ed. W. J. B. Owen and June Worthington Smyser, vol. 1 (Oxford at the Clarendon P, 1974).

²² Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Essays on his Times in the Morning Post and the Courier, ed. David V. Erdman, vol. 2 of The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge (Routledge, Bollingen Series: Princeton U P, 1978) 77.

²³ See Quarterly Review vols. 1-8. "Affaires d'Espagne," Quarterly Review 1.1 (February 1809): 1-19. "Chronicle of the Cid Roderigo Diaz de Bivar, the Campeador, from the Spanish by Robert Southey 1808," Quarterly Review 1.1 (February 1809): 134 -153. "Narrative of the Siege of Zaragoza by Charles Richard Vaughan," Quarterly Review 1.1 (February 1809): 226-231. "A Narrative of the Campaigns of the British Army in Spain, Commanded by his Excellency Lieut. General Sir John Moore, Authenticated by Official Papers and Original Letters by James Moore," Quarterly Review 2.3 (August 1809): 203-234. "The Portuguese Observer," Quarterly Review 4.7 (August 1810): 1-24. "The Vision of Don Roderick; a Poem by Walter Scott Esq.," Quarterly Review 6.11 (October 1811): 221-235. "Tracts on the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions," Quarterly Review 6.12 (December 1811): 313-357. "Portugal. A Poem in Two Parts, by Lord George Nugent Grenville," Quarterly Review 7.13 (March 1812): 151-159. "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, a Romaunt by Lord Byron," Quarterly Review 7.13 (March 1812): 180-200. "Walton's Present State of the Spanish Colonies," Quarterly Review 7.14 (June 1812): 235-264. "Descriptive Travels in the Southern and Eastern Parts of Spain and the Balearic Isles, in the Year 1809, by Sir John Carr, 1811," Quarterly Review 7.14 (June 1812): 408-411. "Count Julian: a Tragedy," Quarterly Review 8.15 (September 1812): 86-92.

print in pictorial form. It also departs from regularised modes of publication in the series of notes at the end of each canto which offer a factually detailed exemplification of tourist attractions, cameos of enticement for would be travellers wishing to emulate the journey of their poetic hero.²⁴

In its mixture of genres as a semi-fictionalised narrative poem which patently considers contemporary European political issues within the medium of a verse travelogue, Childe Harold's Pilgrimage proved to be an overnight sensation. Its dramatic treatment of Peninsula affairs, its mixture of a staged fictional persona and the autobiographical figure of the writer, and its interest as a work of travel writing resulted in a winning formula for Byron's idiosyncratic 'Romaunt'.

(b) THE FIRST CANTO: PORTUGAL AND SPAIN

Portugal

Even to those privileged enough to undertake the Grand Tour, the inner recesses of Portugal had often remained unexplored because of a poor road network and the scarcity of accommodation and food. Obtaining cash was also difficult since banking facilities had still not developed in the relatively underdeveloped interiors of many European countries.²⁵ In introducing the reader to Cintra and Mafra, places outside the more explored city of Lisbon, Byron allows his audience the pleasures of vicarious tourism.

The recent conflict on the Iberian Peninsula meant that travel in Portugal allowed the

²⁴ Later in the nineteenth century Disraeli based his tour of the Levant on Childe Harold's route and Baedeker bowdlerized large sections of Byron's poem and incorporated them in his guides to Europe.

²⁵ "In the eighteenth century there was very little travel in Portugal outside Lisbon." See Jeremy Black, The Grand Tour in the Eighteenth Century (Stroud: Sutton, 1992) 79, 120. This situation is still very much the same for tourism in modern Portugal and Spain. For example, in "Spain . . . the islands and coasts account for some 90 percent of tourist destinations, leaving the interior a paradise which has not yet been able to be sold to the tourist." See Valene L. Smith, Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1989) 191.

additional interest of seeing, at first-hand, the actual location of recent events as documented in the daily newspapers. Gordon Kent Thomas notes that: “The effect on the public of the news of the Convention of Cintra²⁶ was explosive. The reports and interpretations published in the papers are said to have roused popular indignation to a pitch of excitement unparalleled in the nineteenth century” (33). Indeed, in his Convention of Cintra (1809), Wordsworth saw the intervention of the generals of the British army who allowed the safe withdrawal of French troops from Portugal as one of the most resounding political acts in his time.²⁷ Consequently public interest in the peninsula may have heightened its intrigue as a tourist destination.

(i) Lisbon

Byron may have chosen Lisbon as the initial destination from which Harold begins his tour, simply because of its convenient situation on the Atlantic seaboard from which to begin a tour of the East.²⁸ On his own tour Byron only chose Lisbon as a secondary destination having been unable to sail to Malta because of a "lack of wind", or simply because he missed the boat.²⁹ The importance of the sea in Childe Harold's Pilgrimage is exemplified in the opening stanzas of the poem and, indeed, at several stages throughout Harold's journey: “On, on the vessel flies, the land is gone, / And winds are rude in Biscay's sleepless bay” (l. 14, 199). The relevance of the sea journey is especially pertinent to travellers to Lisbon; the approach to the harbour reveals spectacular views of the Cintra

²⁶ See p 94-95 for a fuller explanation.

²⁷ See Wordsworth, Prose, 224.

²⁸ Jeremy Black cites “Lisbon as the obvious point of departure for a tour of Iberia and the Mediterranean” (British 79).

²⁹ See BLJ 1: 208, 210.

mountains, the white roofs of monasteries and the prospect of Lisbon itself. An earlier literary traveller to Portugal, Henry Fielding, recounts conflicting picturesque views of the forthcoming city from the deck:³⁰

As the houses, convents, churches & c. are large, and all built with white stone they look very beautiful at a distance, but as you approach nearer, and find them to want every kind of ornament, all idea of beauty vanishes at once. Whilst I was surveying this prospect of the city, which bears so little resemblance to any other that I have ever seen. . . . (106)

Childe Harold, too, is similarly excited by the splendid distant views that an arrival over the sea allows: “New shores descried make every bosom gay; / And Cintra’s mountains greet them on their way, / And Tagus dashing onward to the deep” (1.14, 201-03). The actual view from the harbour itself though, as Childe Harold and earlier pilgrims testify, is now more resplendent still since the ships-of-the-line of the British Navy are now at anchor:

What beauties doth Lisboa first unfold!
Her image floating on that noble tide,
Which poets vainly pave with sands of gold,
But now whereon a thousand keels did ride. . . . (1. 16, 216-19)

Childe Harold, whilst delighting in the beauties of the prospect of the city, is equally critical of the fickle Portugese who seem ungrateful to the British army for freeing their country from the incursions of “Gaul’s unsparing lord” (1. 16, 224). William Beckford was similarly

³⁰ Henry Fielding journeyed to Portugal for health reasons since its air and climate “were regarded as among the best in Europe” (Jeremy Black, *British* 79); he died, however, within hours of his arrival. See Henry Fielding, *The Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon*, 1755, ed. Tom Keymer (London: Penguin, 1996).

impressed by scenes of Lisbon from the river and the panorama of the Cintra mountains,³¹ but once he had explored the rambling mass of Lisbon's villages he felt more able to report his true feelings for the place:

The more one is acquainted with Lisbon, the less it answers the expectations raised by its magnificent appearance from the river. Could a traveller be suddenly transported without preparation or prejudice to many parts of this city, he would reasonably conclude himself traversing a succession of villages awkwardly tacked together, and overpowered by massive convents. (*Diaries* 61)

In his letters to his mother, Byron was also struck with the discrepancies between the beauties of the distant landscape and the horror of the inner city life of Lisbon's "dingy denizens": "[Lisbon] has often been described without being worthy of description, for, except the view from the Tagus which is beautiful, and some fine churches & convents it contains little but filthy streets & more filthy inhabitants" (BLJ 1:218). Henry Fielding, during his short tour of the city, was equally disappointed with the wretched situation of the city which he found to be both the "nastiest city in the world", though also "pleasantly situated":

About seven in the evening I got into a chaise on shore, and was driven through the nastiest city in the world, tho' at the same time one of the most populous, to a kind of coffee-house, which is very pleasantly situated on the brow of a hill, about a mile from the city, and hath a very fine prospect of the river Tago from Lisbon to the sea.

(107)

³¹ "The sun was just diffusing his last rays over the distant rocks of Cintra, the air balsamic, and the paths among the vines springing with fresh herbage and a thousand flowers revived by last night's rain." *The Travel Diaries of William Beckford of Fonthill*, 1787, ed. Guy Chapman, vol. I (Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1928) 38.

Such contrasts between picturesque tourism and the reality of inner city slums illustrate the difference between standard and authentic modes of touristic behaviour. The authentic traveller, in an attempt to discover the true ambience of the city, wishes his holiday experience to incorporate the horrors and even dangers of his destination in order to fulfil his pre-conceived expectation of reality. Indeed according to MacCannell:

“Social problems” figure in the curiosity of tourists . . . Couples from the Midwest who visit Manhattan now leave a little disappointed if they do not chance to witness and remark on some of its famous street crime. One is reminded that staged “holdups” are a stable motif in Wild West tourism. And tourists will go out of their way to view such egregious sights as the Berlin wall, the Kennedy assassination area and even the ovens at Dachau. (7)

Displaying social problems with scenes of the picturesque incorporates part of a polyphonic rhetorical strategy which allows Byron to present a realist, unexpurgated version of the landscape and its related political meaning. Childe Harold’s tour of the streets of Lisbon, and Byron’s own letters and notes to the poem, reveal the discrepancy between the apparent beauty of Lisbon and the uncleanness, poverty and crime of the Portugese:

But whoso entereth within this town,
That, sheening far, celestial seems to be,
Disconsolate will wander up and down,
‘Mid many things unsightly to strange ee;
For hut and palace show like filthily:

The dingy denizens are rear'd in dirt. . . . (1. 17, 225-30)

Early travellers to Portugal were often a prey to horrid scenes of crime. It was not unknown for robbers to murder their victims, and travellers were often advised to traverse the roads in large groups for safety reasons.³² Byron himself travelled with a fairly large entourage, but carried pistols to protect himself from the depredations of the evil villains whose violence Childe Harold describes along the way:

These are memorials frail of murderous wrath:

For wheresoe'er the shrieking victim hath

Pour'd forth his blood beneath the assassin's knife

Some hand erects a cross of mouldering lath. . . . (1. 21, 264-67)

In Lisbon the respected conventions of English society are absent, and the roads are danger-zones tourists are well advised to avoid. England in the eighteenth century had suffered from lawless roads, but the development of a rudimentary police force and severe penalties for highwaymen had, to a large degree, countered the problem of roadside crime. In Portugal this problem has not been eradicated although some inhabitants have the decency to erect crosses in memory of the victims.³³ Byron himself had a lucky escape in the city confines rather than on the more hazardous outskirts, as his notes to Canto I indicate:

It is a well-known fact, that in the year 1809 the assassinations in the streets of Lisbon and its vicinity were not confined by the Portugese to their countrymen; but that

³² See Jeremy Black, British 176-177.

³³ Southey, too, on his tour of Portugal, observed crosses erected where travellers had been murdered by banditti, but also suggested the "monuments are for people who have fallen in private quarrels." Robert Southey, Letters Written During A Short Residence in Spain and Portugal, 2nd ed. (London, 1799) 84.

Englishmen were daily butchered: and so far from redress being obtained, we were requested not to interfere if we perceived any compatriot defending himself against his allies. I was once stopped in the way to the theatre at eight o'clock in the evening, when the streets were not more empty than they generally are at that hour, opposite to an open shop, and in a carriage with a friend; had we not fortunately been armed, I have not the least doubt that we should have adorned a tale instead of telling one. (B 83)

Whilst the horrendous crimes and dangers of life in the remoter areas of Lisbon cause Childe Harold and Byron to question the validity of Portugal as a tourist destination, this is not always the case in modern tourism. Courting danger and death may be one way to satisfy the desires of an authentic experience for some modern tourists. For example, in August 1992 Le Monde Diplomatique reported the case of Italian travel agent, Massimo Beyerle, who was offering tourist trips to war zones such as South Lebanon and Dubrovnik for large sums of money (Diller and Scofidio 136). Whilst such cases are extreme they illustrate the human impulse of curiosity, which is one of the primary drives of sightseeing and tourism.

(ii) Cintra

Although Byron may have found Lisbon rather disappointing his sojourn in Cintra proved delightful. In a letter to Francis Hodgson he writes: "I must just observe that the village of Cintra in Estramadura is the most beautiful, perhaps in the world" (215). In a letter to his mother Byron lauds the pastoral beauties of Cintra but makes no critical reference to the recent convention of Cintra:

The village of Cintra about fifteen miles from the capitol is perhaps in every respect the most delightful in Europe, it contains beauties of every description natural & artificial, palaces and gardens rising in the midst of rocks, cataracts, and precipices, convents on stupendous heights a distant view of the sea and the Tagus, and besides (though that is a secondary consideration) is remarkable as the scene of Sir H D's convention. (BLJ 1: 218)

It is only in his poetic travelogue that Byron uses the Harold persona to express his real feelings and launches into a critique of the British Government, which he argues have thoroughly mishandled the Peninsula war in Portugal and Spain.

Byron displays the cultural vandalism and human sacrifice caused in the Peninsula wars through a series of emblematic pictures. The accumulated meaning of this series of unconventional touristic images urges the reader to construct a devalued version of contemporary European civilisation. Byron's symbolic criticism may be aligned with modern semiotic theories of tourism. In the standard critical work on tourism, The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class, Dean MacCannell proposes that there is a distinct "relationship between tourists and what they see (14)." The relationship between the expected and actual reality of the site itself (hence its authenticity) is for many tourists the pre-eminent factor of their leisure experience. The tourist's search for authenticity is, MacCannell argues, the primary object of tourism. The tourist engages in a narrative sequence of sightseeing in which he might learn about the sight through the media and then attempt to find the genuine article on his travels. Part of the pleasure of being a tourist is the disclosure of the reality of the actual sight, and the tourist's determination whether the article is genuine or spurious. The tourist uses judgement and discrimination as the basis of his evaluation of touristic reality.

Despite his plea, in the preface, that Harold was never intended as an example, (B 21)

Harold's song is full of judgements against society. In Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Childe Harold may be constructed as a proto-modern figure whose moral judgements on the Peninsula campaigns structure his acts of sightseeing. Such propensity for moral thought is, MacCannell argues, a deeply rooted part of the modern condition: "As man enters the modern world, the entire field of social facts--poverty, race, class, work--is open to ongoing moral evaluation and interpretation (41)." Moral thought is at the very heart of Harold's consciousness throughout his pilgrimage; in his exile Harold's continuing battle is with thought. The pursuit of a personal philosophy is the goal of his pilgrimage, a goal which is always on the receding part of the horizon:

What Exile from himself can flee?

To Zones, though more and more remote,

Still, still pursues, where-e'er I be,

The blight of life--the demon, Thought. ("To Inez" l. 84, 6, 857-60)

Harold's ongoing contemplations are personal responses to specific tourist sights. The beauties of Portugese and Spanish architecture become misappropriated markers which stand for the horror and mismanagement of the Peninsula war by the British Government and her agents--the generals.

MacCannell defines a tourist attraction as an "empirical relationship between a tourist, a sight and a marker (a piece of information about a sight)" (41). Markers may be alternatively understood as forming part of the science of semiotics where the sight is the signifier and the marker is the signified (117).³⁴ MacCannell notes that the "Statue of liberty is a sight which serves as a symbolic marker for the United States" (132), perhaps in the way

³⁴ Urry sees tourists as "semioticians reading the landscape for signifiers." John Urry. The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Society (London: Sage, 1990) 12.

that the rock of Cintra for writers such as Fielding, Beckford, Lord Greville and Byron served as a symbolic marker for Portugal. For Childe Harold the beauty of Portugal's buildings ceases to signify the grandeur of enlightenment civilisation; any touristic pleasure derived from observing architectural splendour is diminished by its contemporary political significance. Recent political events closely associated with the public architecture of Portugal question the validity of the tourist site as a means of enjoyment.

The beauty and luxurious idyll of Cintra becomes a focus in Childe Harold's Pilgrimage for an attack on the war policy of the Duke of Portland's cabinet: "Behold the hall where chiefs were late conven'd! / Oh! dome displeasing unto British eye!" (l. 24, 288-89). Napoleon invaded Portugal in 1807 and the Royal family departed and took refuge in Brazil. By the end of June the following year central Portugal had liberated itself and formed a junta based in Oporto (Livermore, New 252). In response to an appeal for help, the English Government sent a task force under Arthur Wellesley to assist in the expulsion of Napoleon. The French suffered substantial losses at the battle of Vimeiro and agreed to open negotiations to effect a withdrawal from Portuguese territory. These negotiations came to be known as the convention of Cintra, even though the actual agreement was ratified at Lisbon.

The terms of the agreement drawn up by a team of generals headed by Sir Hew Dalrymple, (recent governor of Gibraltar), allowed the easy evacuation of Junot's army in British ships to their native territory in France. When the news broke in the British press that the French had been allowed home a national furore soon followed. The moral conduct of Sir Hew Dalrymple was called into question. His behaviour was seen as treacherous. Of particular demerit was Dalrymple's action in allowing the French to transport war booty back home: "Woe to the conqu'ring, not the conquer'd host / Since baffled Triumph droops on

Lusitania's coast!" (1. 25, 304-05).³⁵ Dalrymple's misjudgement caused the British Government much embarrassment and despite his exoneration by a military board of inquiry, Canning, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, "adopted the course of inflicting a public disgrace on Sir Hew Dalrymple" (Fanshawe 121).

Despite his ostensibly odd management of the Convention, Byron's satirical anger with Dalrymple seems rather harsh. He was relatively inexperienced in military operations and was left with the unenviable task of disposing of a large and potentially hostile French war machine in a foreign country. The British army had suffered problems landing in Portugal due to strong tides and there had also been problems with provisioning the men. Added to this, Sir Hew did not feel he could recognise the decidedly amateurish diplomacy of the Bishop and Junta of Oporto, and he was perhaps rather too circumspect in his treatment of the vanquished. According to Hamilton's *Annals* (1829) "it became Sir Hew . . . to have assumed a higher moral tone in demanding all possible reparation from the enemy. An undue and punctilious regard was shown to the feelings of the French" (169). The court of inquiry, found that the argument about baggage was rather a case of misinterpretation over the precise meaning of military baggage: "It is evident that the words 'the baggage of an army, or the private property of the individuals composing it', can never be construed to mean the valuables of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent [of Portugal], nor the plunder of churches, the Royal library, nor the Museum of Natural history" (Fanshawe 54). The commission exonerated Dalrymple "from all blame in the transactions" (118) and approbated the "unquestionable zeal and firmness . . . exhibited throughout [the convention] by the Lieutenant Generals" (75). Through contemplating on recent scenes of history within the touristic experience Harold, like Spenser's red crosse knight, learns to "moralize his song."³⁶

³⁵ Marchand notes that "Byron eventually cut out three stanzas of personal attack on the generals and altered three others to a broader criticism of the Convention of Cintra" (1: 295). See also BLJ 2: 106.

Leaving the environs of Cintra, he begins to realise the responsibilities of a travelled man of the world and accept the dubious misgivings of his own recent past:

Though here awhile he learn'd to moralize,
 For Meditation fix'd at times on him;
 And conscious Reason whisper'd to despise
 His early youth, mispent in maddest whim;
 But as he gaz'd on truth his aching eyes grew dim. (l. 27, 319-23)

Byron uses, therefore, the education and moral progress of the figure of Harold to present a satirical invective against the power of the ruling establishment.

Spain

Childe Harold's tour of Spain takes up by far the largest part of the first canto and towards the end of his Iberian pilgrimage it is clear that Harold's moral consciousness has been fully awakened by the destruction and death he has witnessed in the wake of the recent battles on the Peninsula. Indeed, Childe Harold's Spanish tour, following so closely the recent campaigns of Wellesley at Talavera, Albuera and Barossa may be seen as a quest for identity, a journey of mind and being which materialises as he walks over the battlegrounds of the Peninsula and realises that the loss of the existing European political world order reflects the loss of his personal world order. The intrusion of Byron's personal voice at the end of the poem in an elegy to his friend, John Wingfield, mirrors Harold's sombre disillusion with the world. By ending the poem on a personal biographical note it is evident

³⁶ Stanza 1, line 9 of the prefatory stanzas preceding the first book of the *Faerie Queene*. See above for the comparable line in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (l. 27, 319).

that the poem is just as much a study of Lord Byron at work as it is of Harold.

Childe Harold's desire to visit Spain suggests his urge to flout convention, not only because the war was raging but simply because Spain was generally perceived as a rather undesirable destination. In the eighteenth century hardly any travellers visited Spain:

Spain was not regarded as the most interesting country to visit. Madrid lacked the cosmopolitan, accessible culture of Paris, and its society was perceived as dull and reclusive. Language was also a barrier, though most Spanish aristocrats spoke French.

There was no vogue for the beach, the mountains lacked the splendour and glamour of the Alps, the Roman antiquities were less well known than those of Italy and there was little interest in the Moorish remains. . . . Travellers to and in Spain encountered major difficulties. The journey there by land was very long, involved a passage of the Pyrenees and suffered from poor facilities for travellers. (Black, *British* 76-77)

Byron's own tour of Spain was rapid. He obviously did not wish to linger in a war zone and stayed only two days. However, in his fictional version of Childe Harold's tour, the detailed accounts of Spain protracted over several stanzas, suggests a visit of much longer duration.

The history of Spain up until the early nineteenth century is a history of subjection and conquest. In his pedestrian tours over the battlesites and battlefields of the Iberian peninsula, Byron addresses the destruction of cultural endeavour by imperial powers: Napoleonic and Moorish. Byron's observation that he is living in a world on the verge of Armageddon, that the very markers of civilisation are crumbling before his eyes, fuels a diatribe on the decline of human progress. The liquidation of art and architecture in modern Europe, the hopeless loss of human life, the discord and uncertainty of passing through a recent theatre of conflict force Harold to re-assess the comfort and accepted security of his

youthful life. His observations annihilate and redeem the guilt, "Sin's long labyrinth" (l. 5, 37), from which he is running away. War and death obliterate everything including the memories of Harold's dissipated youth. Harold arises from his Iberian pilgrimage a sombre and penitent figure. The fragmentation of his observed world and his personal world leaves him in a condition of angst in which judgement is the sole redress left to him. In recognising and judging the woes of the world Harold reforms his own personal world picture.

In Harold's tour of Spain the destruction of cultural sites in war inflames his anger at the injustice arising from invasion. Napoleon's imperialism causes not only senseless death but is a source of barbaric aesthetic destruction. In Harold's tour he is appalled to discover that several beautiful sites of Moorish civilisation³⁷ have been destroyed, "scath'd by fire" (l. 49, 516) by Napoleon's soldiers, whilst the "lovely domes" of Seville have been scorched in the French invasion of the 31st January 1810: "Blackening her lovely domes with traces rude" (l. 45, 481). This church until recently was part of the baroque heritage of Andalusia, a visible sign of the accomplishment of Spanish civilisation. The inside of many Sevillian churches consists of the finest and most highly wrought craftsmanship in sacred architecture throughout Spain.³⁸ The wanton destruction of such high art in the course of a war which in its proportions must have had implications of the apocalypse valorised, for Byron, the despoilation of these lovely symbols of Spain's heritage into markers of defiance of Homeric magnitude: "Is vain, or Ilium, Tyre might yet survive, / And virtue vanquish all, and murder cease to thrive" (l. 45, 483-84). Harold therefore appropriates sites of recent conflict as memorials of opposition against power and injustice.

³⁷ The legacy of the Moors may be encountered all over Spain in the beautiful romantic architecture of its Islamic civilisation. The Muslims of Granada evolved a new style of design, "characterised by the splendour of its decorative detail" (Altamira, 70). "Through the wildest flights of fantasy" Moorish architects created beautiful designs demonstrating "richness of imagination and intricacy of pattern" (Lees-Milne 135).

³⁸ James Lees-Milne, *Baroque in Spain and Portugal* (London: Batsford, 1960) 111-12.

(i) Battlefields

Similarly on his tour of the battlefields of the Peninsular wars Harold reclaims their geographies as spaces in which the idea of freedom in contemporary Europe is contested. Harold's observations of Spanish battlesites and war-damage in Portugal may be regarded as a desire to achieve an authentic tourist experience, a form of reality-questing. The "ungentle sport" (80) of bull-fighting may very well provide a spectacle for the mass tourist (exhilarating or sickening depending on one's desire for blood lust), but for the more thoughtful traveller markers of battlefields and blackened domes create an imaginative kind of authenticity. In this existential form of recreation the traveller absorbs evidence of scenes of recent conflict which allow the safety of feeling the aura of war without taking part in battle itself. Reality questing dispenses with seeking quiet spaces of escapism and rather uses the freedom allowed by escape to formulate ethical ideologies. Harold's anonymity as a tourist enables him to pass judgement on the injustices of war. This is more a matter of equating injustice with acts of political ideology rather than personal immorality. In the Ethics Aristotle suggests that injustice is partly determined by choice:

Since just and unjust acts are as we have described them, it is only when a person acts voluntarily that he does a just or unjust act. When he acts involuntarily his action is neither just or unjust, except incidentally; because people do perform actions to which justice and injustice are incidental. . . . An involuntary act, then, is an act done in ignorance, or if not in ignorance, outside the agent's control, or under compulsion. (191-92)

Harold's judgements are not against the involuntary brutality of the army but against the

political decision-making of the ruling order.

The symbolic significance of the battlefield as an invisible site of destruction is suggested in the series of stanzas recounting the battlefields of the Peninsula war: "Long mark the battlefield with hideous awe: / Thus only may our sons conceive the scenes we saw!" (1. 88, 907-08). Byron openly advocates that sites of battle should be memorialised. The bones on the battlefield "Let their bleach'd bones, and blood's unbleaching stain," (1. 88, 906) become, for Harold, synonymous with Golgotha and serve as a signifier or "marker" questioning the ethical morality of death in war. As Diller and Scofidio remark, "the battlefield, an otherwise undifferentiated terrain, becomes an ideologically encoded landscape through the commemorative function of the 'marker.' As a marker inscribes war onto material soil, it becomes the sight " (48).

The creation of a tourist site out of a vacated battlefield involves the use of imagination to augment and establish the meaning of place. Whilst hoofs on battlefields or damaged buildings offer evidence of recent conflict, the tourist is required to sustain a high degree of visual re-creation to compose the scene which delineates the recent theatre of war. The hoof-marks themselves mean nothing without prior knowledge that this was the site where a particular battle occurred. Similarly the observation of a dome damaged by fire is fairly meaningless unless we know the circumstances connected with the tourist attraction. The recent war may have left visible traces in which Harold could determine the position of his battlefields; for example, the "wounded ground" of canto 49, or the "fiery foot" of canto 45. The campaigns of Talavera and Albuera may similarly be identified as sites of battles by the imprint of horses' hoofs on turf. At Talavera: "Red Battle stamps his foot, and nations feel the shock" (1. 38, 422); and at Albuera: "Oh, Albuera! glorious field of grief! / As o'er

thy plain the Pilgrim prick'd his steed"³⁹ (l. 43, 459-60). Hoof-marks are visible markers of the recent war devastation which allow Harold to appropriate and sacralise the site.⁴⁰ As Thomas Keenan remarks "without the marker, the sight cannot attract attention to itself, cannot be seen and thereby cannot be a sight. . ." (Diller and Scofidio 103). However, to communicate this information to future tourists a more lasting marker would be needed to replace the symbol of hoofs, once it has worn off. A twentieth century example of this is the Bonnie and Clyde shootout area where, MacCannell notes, "it was hoped that marker involvement [such as a blue plaque] would obscure the fact that here was nothing to see" (128). In the same way a tree might mark the spot where a "celebrated troubador was waylaid. . . . Without its marker this tree . . . would be just a tree. It is the information about the tree (its marker) that is the object of touristic interest and the tree is the mere carrier of that information" (128). In the case of battlefields markers such as cemeteries, museums and reconstructed fortifications provide proof that some kind of military action occurred in the empty expanse of an often unploughed field. The original site has been obliterated over time and is now memorialised by a marker which assumes a larger significance than the original empty and unmarked tourist attraction. On the battlefield of Waterloo, for instance, martial music is played to suggest the scene of conflict and imbue the plain with an authentic atmosphere. Part of the reasoning behind the tourist's consumption of battlefields is related to the process of pilgrimage where a pilgrim visits a shrine to substantiate his faith in God. Part of Harold's motivation in touring battlesites is to prove to himself that the event actually occurred. Such affirmation of belief in some way fulfils part of his pilgrimage. The ascertainment of historical truth is one of the primary motives of tourism.

³⁹ Southey, in his poetic treatment of Waterloo, "The Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo" notices that the field of battle may be identified by "The stamp of numerous hoofs" (36, 12) and markers such as "shoes, belts and bandoleers" (39, 2). *Poems of Robert Southey*, ed. Maurice H. Fitzgerald (London: Oxford U P, 1909).

⁴⁰ Such positive identification of battlesites compare with the vanished scenes of war in the sea battles of Actium, Lepanto and Trafalgar in canto II, stanza 40.



MacCannell regards this “authentication of experience or the accomplishment of touristic certainty” as one of the ways in which “tourists negotiate the labyrinth of modernity” (135). His suggestion seems to be that tourists quest after issues of truth and construct social reality as a means of confronting the condition of modernity, and in the absence of God find comfort in secular revelation. Harold, however, takes his confirmation of the tragedy of war a step further and responds to these negative touristic images by weighing the morality and ethics of leaders and nations. He is particularly scathing, for example, about the mismanagement of the allied forces at the Battle of Talavera (27-28th July 1809) and the subsequent huge loss of life. Both French and British armies suffered terrible casualties and on hearing of the rapid approach of Soult’s forces, Wellesley was forced to retire to the south of the Tagus. This invalidated his victory since Talavera was soon re-occupied by the French army, which now captured hundreds of British wounded who had been left behind. Muir remarks:

Talavera was the largest and bitterest battle the British army had fought in sixteen years of war. . . . The glorious and hard-fought victory was barren, for despite it the French were in a better strategic position. Wellesley’s campaign [was] . . . a costly failure. . . .

News of the subsequent allied retreat, and particularly stories of Cuesta’s ‘abandonment’ of the British wounded, fuelled the reaction and further soured the popular mood towards Spain. (Muir 100-01)

Harold is suitably critical of the abandonment of the hospitalised men and the call to arms in the previous stanza suggests his criticism may be directed at the mismanagement of Cuesta:

“Saw ye not whom the reeking sabre smote; / Nor sav’d your bretheren ere they sank beneath

/ Tyrants and tyrants' slaves?" (1.38, 416-17). The whole futility and waste of war is conveyed by the few inches of territory that the soldiers have been fighting over. The soldiers are simply the minions of generals who dispose of their lives "to feed the crow on Talavera's plain" (1. 41, 448).⁴¹ Generals and soldiers alike are finally the instruments of "despots" (1. 42, 456), who regard soldiers not as human beings but faceless and expendable items, "broken tools that tyrants cast away" (1. 42, 453). Harold bitterly laments that the battlefield is ultimately a burial ground which signifies the decaying ideals of political meglomaniacs who pay for their ambitious dreams with human life.

Similarly, the invisible marker of the battlefield of Albuera becomes a site signifying the immorality of war; in its irony, Harold's moralising song parodies the style of Spenser's red crosse knight in the opening stanzas of the Fairie Queene:

Oh, Albuera! glorious field of grief!

As o'er thy plain the Pilgrim prick'd his steed,

.....

And shine in worthless lays, the theme of transient song! (1. 43, 459-67)

General Soult initiated the battle on the 16th May 1811, despite being heavily outnumbered.⁴² Byron's criticism is directed at the "worthless" (467) actions of the "chieftan" (465), William Carr Beresford, who "lost his nerve in the strain of battle" (Muir 151). Despite this the British infantry reformed and "eventually drove the French back in confusion" (151). Both sides sustained terrible losses and the engagement was not renewed:

⁴¹ This may ironically refer to Cuesta's inability to supply the British army. See John K. Severn, "The Wellesleys and Iberian Diplomacy 1808-12," Wellington, ed. Norman Gash 37. See also Muir 101.

⁴² The allies had 35,000 men and the French 24,000.

Just how terrible the slaughter at Albuera had been was brought home vividly to Wellington when he went there himself to supervise another siege of Badajoz. The men of one regiment were 'literally lying dead in their ranks as they stood', a phenomenon he had never encountered elsewhere. . . . An English officer who visited the ground a year later found it was still covered with bones. A soldier recalled that the whole ground was still covered with the wrecks of an army, bonnets, cartridge boxes, pieces of belts, old clothes and shoes; the ground in numerous ridges, under which lay many a heap of mouldering bones. It was a melancholy site; it made us all very dull for a short time. (Hibbert 106)

Bones, bloodstains and hoof-marks will disappear in time so Byron uses his own verse as an imaginative marker and memorial for future generations.⁴³ The irony in his poetic travelogue, however, ensures that future readers will question the real significance, in political terms, in what he saw as a rather pointless victory: "Long mark the battlefield with hideous awe: / Thus only may our sons conceive the scenes we saw!" (l. 88, 907-08).

As Abeele has suggested one of the primary functions of war tourism, nowadays, is to pay tribute to those who perished in the fight against fascism: "To remember is to memorialise the struggle of those who resisted . . . to warn against the resurgence of the fascist evil. . . . Co-memoration as public and collective memory and not representation is thus the dutiful function of the monument, reminding us as it warns us" (Diller and Scofidio 241-42). Byron's poetic representations of tourisms of war in Childe Harold and Don Juan take rather a more cynical view and question the political ideology, the very terrain over which wars are fought and the overlords who are initially responsible for causing war.⁴⁴

⁴³ Sir Walter Scott's "The Field of Waterloo A Poem" also uses the idea of a verse-memorial to sacralise the site of a battle. See The Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott (London: Warne, n.d.)

The battlefields in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, therefore, far from signifying liberty are symbols of death, powerlessness and the utter futility of warfare. Byron's ironic strategy in these closing stanzas suggests that the issue of freedom is highly complex and that deaths caused by political circumstances may have little 'real' value in liberating humanity from structures of power.

The fight for national liberty inevitably requires personal sacrifice. No wars are glorious. The filth of death and the dirt of bloodshed spare no glories for the families of the vanquished. The death of Byron's close friend, "the honourable J. W. of the Guards" (B 84), illustrates war's annihilation of the personal, and the anonymity of the forgotten, faceless soldier: "But thus unlaurel'd to descend in vain, / By all forgotten . . ." (l. 91, 931-32). Wingfield's death of fever away from the field of action seems doubly pointless; his death has contributed nothing to the cause, and the victories against Napoleon have still not liberated Spain, "Have won for Spain her well asserted right" (l. 90, 921). Childe Harold's attachment to the cause of freedom-fighting is totally deflated by the entrance of the narrator's voice, "Bursts from my heart, and mingles with the strain" (l. 91, 928), which aligns his bitter frustration at the death of his friend with his anguish at the seemingly lost cause of Spanish freedom. Byron's notes to Canto 91 perhaps explain why he feels able at the conclusion of his poem to dispense with his allusive narrative identity and firmly declare his position as an authorial figure, "If he that rhymeth now may scribble moe" (l. 93, 948):

In the short space of one month I lost her who gave me being, and most of those who had made that being tolerable. To me the lines of YOUNG are no fiction:

⁴⁴ To understand the deeper cynicism of Byron's treatment of war it is useful to consider Southey's war poetry. In his depiction of Waterloo (see footnote 39, p 101) Southey regards the battlefield as a shrine, "set where thou wilt thy foot, thou scarce canst tread / Here on a spot unhallow'd by the dead" (26, 5-6), compared to Byron, who sardonically regards it as a mortuary. Southey idealises Wellington by allowing the reader access to his private emotions in a poetic canto recounted as the pilgrim and reader traverse the field of Waterloo after the battle: ". . . they shew'd us here / The room where Brunswick's body had been laid / Wellington beheld the slaughter'd Chief / And for a while gave way to manly grief" (20, 1-6).

Insatiate archer! could not one suffice?
 Thy shaft flew thrice, and thrice my peace was slain,
 And thrice ere thrice yon moon had fill'd her horn.

I should have ventured a verse to the memory of the late Charles Skinner Matthews, Fellow of Downing College, Cambridge, were he not too much above all praise of mine. His powers of mind . . . have sufficiently established his fame on the spot where it was acquired, while his softer qualities live in the recollection of friends who loved him too well to envy his superiority. (B 84)

The close deaths of five of his dearest associates in differing circumstances underline the transience of life and the indiscriminating hand of death. Byron seems to imply in his interruption that, temporarily at least, the noble institution of friendship will always be a higher cause than the fight for freedom and liberation. How can Wingfield's meaningless death arising from an unresolved fight for liberty be any different, in the final causes of things, than the death of his mother, Matthews and Edleston? The intrusive tragedy at the end of the first canto questions notions of political idealism. Lord Byron's revelation that he is, after all, the private voice behind the public persona of Harold is an admission, now made palatable by personal tragedy and loss.

In the first canto of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage Byron adopts a highly sophisticated polyphonic ironic strategy that he uses to describe and interpret a series of touristic images which delineate the growth to maturity of a young man in contemporary society. The contradictory voices in the poem are presented as the contemplative aspects of thought of an imaginary pilgrim and narrator, and a real poet. The discursive nature of this joint personal debate leads not to a sense of personal renewal, which is one of the usual effects of pilgrimage, but to a state of alienation, and a lament for the injustices of mankind. The

recurring image of the battlefield, a public area of international disagreement, becomes a symbol of finality, destruction, ultimate chaos and essentially suggests the attainment of a destination. The battlefield becomes a symbol for personal confrontation, a theatre in which to reflect and understand one's own problems, through judging the immorality of war and observing the suffering of others. The touristic ascertainment of historical reality is mirrored in a quest for an understanding of self. In *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* both Harold's and Byron's position merges in an arena of teleological enquiry in which political causes are found meaningless and the value of personal friendship is all.

(c) THE SECOND CANTO: MODERN GREECE

In both cantos of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* Byron presents the narrative of a modern tourist in the early nineteenth century. In the second canto this series of pictures focuses on the sites of Athens, Constantinople and Albania, which in Classical times formed part of Alexander the Great's empire and later came under the jurisdiction of the Roman and Byzantine empires, but which now are all under Turkish occupation. Byron uses images of tourism to counterpoint a satiric, philosophic and self-reflexive quest which in its original display of Byron's own subjectivity promulgates a new kind of poetic travelogue.

As his pilgrim traverses the landscape of modern Greece, these personal, philosophical, political and geographical pictures portray contemporary European political issues, the aesthetic pleasure of enjoying scenes of nature, and the position of self in modern society, revealing the identity of the author in a way which shades the boundaries of autobiography and fiction. Different responses to scenes of travel are conveyed, for example, by considering the justification for Lord Elgin's appropriation of Greek antiquities, or by empathetically imagining the heroic achievements of modern and legendary heroic warriors.

Childe Harold's tourism raises issues of nationalist revolutionary politics, philosophical issues related to injustice, mutability and death, and provides the context in which Harold realises his expatriate status and begins to reconfigure his identity by actively becoming involved in issues of liberal idealism.

In the second canto Childe Harold is used as a naive figure who can be educated to display Byron's own Whig politics to an unsuspecting readership. In allowing an unworldly youth to undertake a pilgrimage in the collapsing regions of Greece in the crucial pre-revolutionary years of the early nineteenth century, Byron is able to use the metaphor of tourism to disseminate real issues of freedom. The psychological freedom which travel unleashes becomes an allegory to ascertain how the fight for geographical space between competing nations has informed the condition of mankind from ancient to modern societies. By the end of his Greek pilgrimage Childe Harold begins to lose his sense of homelessness and to find a sense of acceptance and community. This sense of return is illustrated with the poet's new vocation as national voice. The separation engendered by entering liminal space allows refuge, reflection and the creation of an active poetic voice which advocates justice and asserts independence for the Greek nation.

Preliminary

(i) Polyphony and the Self

As in the first canto Byron uses the poem as a forum in which to discuss his thoughts and opinions. There is an apparent lack of coherence in the overall design and in this respect the rambling structure of the poem, which frequently changes subject and leaves narrative threads hanging in mid-air, reflects the spontaneity of ordinary existence. Childe Harold's Pilgrimage displays a poetics of composition which provides a close insight into the mind of

an author at work; the reader witnesses the inner thought processes of a writer as he sets pen to paper and shares in the outer visualisations, or tour sites, which pass before Byron's eyes.

The poem at times is, indeed, a recorded dialogue with self: a diary of touristic experience.

The very nature of tourism perhaps accounts for the poem's fluctuating form of narrative. Indeed, in a letter to Shelley of the 20th May 1822, Byron regards the success of his earlier work as "exaggerated nonsense which has corrupted the public taste" (Wilkes 159).⁴⁵ Whilst it is perhaps rather self-critical to interpret his own work as meaningless, Byron's admission is useful in explaining the disorderly form of the poem. For a work which explores the meaning and experience of tourism to be encapsulated within a chaotic structure is perhaps rather appropriate in view of the fluctuating and haphazard nature of touristic practice, which forces tourists rapidly to consume sights in a limited amount of time. Indeed, the quest for new experience and encounter is one of the defining characteristics and motivations for tourism. As an aristocrat, Lord Byron had the time and financial security to pursue a life devoted to exploratory travel. Byron's tourism shares the discontinuous fragmentation of modern sightseeing⁴⁶ simply because no individual ever has enough time to consume all the pleasures of the world. Time restraints mean that for everyone, tourism is governed both by a striation of choice and by the changeability of temporary, fleeting experience. In its presentation of a selected and hurried series of pictures, Byron's unwieldy poem, with its unpredictable layers of polyphony mirrors the contrasting and prismatic form of modern tourism.

The heteroglot nature of dialogue which represents languages of satire, existentialism, historical, political, social and economic comment, autobiography, tourist aesthetics, culture, comedy, tragedy add up to a many-voiced discourse which may be interpreted under M. M.

⁴⁵ BLJ 9: 161.

⁴⁶ See Chris Rojek, *Ways of Escape: Modern Transformations of Leisure and Travel* (London: Methuen, 1993) 199-213, for a discussion of the contradictory and fragmented nature of modern leisure experience.

Bakhtin's twentieth century linguistic theory of stylistic genres in the novel.⁴⁷ Bakhtin's theory essentially considers language within a social context. Human interaction validates thought: language is mediated through our contact with others. Bakhtin suggests in his essay, "Epic and Novel Towards a Methodology for the Study of the Novel", that Childe Harold's Pilgrimage is an example of how a genre may become "novelised" (5). In this instance, the complex series of heterogeneous language systems which construct the verse narrative of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage suggest it as a candidate for 'novelizing'. In a later essay, "From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse", Bakhtin argues that the characteristic of the novel as a genre is its use of plurality of style (41). Indeed, "the language of the novel is a system of languages that mutually and ideologically interanimate each other" (47). The variegated discourse within Childe Harold's Pilgrimage may be articulated within Bakhtin's system of raznorečivost, that is literary language which is "a living mix of varied and opposing voices, developing and renewing itself" (49). Further, Byron's relationship to his hero, Childe Harold, may be fully understood as a social interaction of linguistic dialogism: "The hero is located in a zone of potential conversation with the author in a zone of dialogical contact" (45). Childe Harold's Pilgrimage may therefore be interpreted under Bakhtin's multi-voiced language system of dialogism, assuming its status as a verse-narrative may be 'novelized' or equated with its sister genre, the novel.

(ii) The Figure of the Tourist

As the Pilgrimage evolves Byron moulds his impressions of tourism onto a series of figures which allow his protagonist to develop morally and purposively. The whole issue of Harold's marginal identity as an exile figure is prominently foregrounded at the climax of his

⁴⁷ See The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: U of Texas P) 1981.

pilgrimage in Greece, not only in the Quixotic allusion to his English identity (“our country” [2. 93, 879]) but in the epiphanic vision the lonely traveller experiences by the sacred landscapes of Delphi and Marathon:

The parted bosom clings to wonted home,

But he whom Sadness sootheth may abide,

And scarce regret the region of his birth,

When wandering slow by Delphi’s sacred side,

Or gazing o’er the plains where Greek and Persian died. (2. 92, 864-72)

Hamid Naficy defines the condition of exile in terms of a lost homeland: “Exile suggests a painful or punitive banishment from one’s homeland. Though it can be either voluntary or involuntary, internal or external, exile generally implies a fact of trauma, an imminent danger, usually political that makes the home no longer safely habitable”(19). The political implications of Harold’s exile are not radical enough to describe his status as a pure exile. On the other hand, the emotion of displacement, “the parted bosom clings to wonted home” delineates Harold as an exile of sorts compared to victims of diaspora. As Naficy notes, “Exile suggests pining for home; diaspora suggests networks among compatriots. Exile may be solitary, but diaspora is always collective”(20). In no sense may Harold be associated with diaspora; his networks of friends are forged abroad, with for example, the Suliotes who give him shelter. According to Naficy’s schemes of expatriation, Harold’s status is a combination of exile and nomad. Nomadism may be defined as a life on the move, in which the traveller has no base to return to, and therefore his notion of a permanent home must be abandoned and replaced with a series of temporary venues whose anonymity allows a perhaps illusory

sense of freedom from an invisible enemy: "Nomadism dispenses altogether with the idea of a fixed home or centre. Whereas exile often occurs in relation to some looming authority figure who wields power over life and death, nomadism can involve active defiance or furtive avoidance of the sedentary authority of state and society" (20). Whilst Harold's constant mobility and continual shift of resting place in some way validates his definition as a nomad, the militant and seditious implications of nomadism are rather absent from Harold's experience. Indeed the persecutory aspects of flight which Naficy associates with nomadism may also be aligned with the Jewish diaspora in the Nazi regime. Exile and nomadism may therefore be understood as related phenomena which inform, to varying degrees, Harold's refugee status.

The nature of the exile figure develops in the first canto along a scale ranging from the alienated derelict in England to the drifter and fugitive of the early stanzas abroad. After his sea voyage, Harold ceases being a fugitive in Edenic Lisbon, where the aesthetic beauty of the countryside floods his mind with enough well being to dispel, or destabilise, Harold's self-label as derelict. The safe space of abroad allows him to find a new self-respect and assume the role of "backpacker", whose eventual judgements on the war in Portugal and Spain establish a developing morality which prepares for his re-acceptance into society in canto two. In the second canto the figure of the tourist develops into a more active series of types ranging from "trespasser" and "bedouin," into "national poet," a role which represents the simultaneous merging and disunity of Harold and the narrator into a Byronic voice which has found a home in society.

The "trespasser" is an upstart whose voice is that of a satiric spokesperson against folly and wrongfulness. His sense of freedom is illusory, but the peculiar temporality and release of tourism allows the trespasser to transgress boundaries and areas usually beyond accepted social convention. This no-man's-land of safety initiates in the writer the freedom of

thought and expression which allows derogatory and inflammatory remarks to be passed about targeted individuals. The freedom of trespassing parallels Harold's renunciation of his life in England, and authorises his audacity in pronouncing an attack on Lord Elgin at the beginning of the second canto. Harold's separation from the established conventions of society in England allow him to become an outspoken critic of affairs relating to England, such as the Elgin controversy. Harold's illusory sense of freedom abroad stems from the fact that, in his position as visiting tourist, he is not fully integrated into the system of the host community and relies on a false image of aloof independence to determine his identity because in his masterlessness he belongs to neither society. In the second canto, however, when he assumes the role of a "bedouin" amongst the tribes of Albania, Harold finds empathy with a foreign community.

Harold becomes a "bedouin" on his admittance to a nomadic and marginal group. The freedom permitted to outcasts in unpoliced territory further deregulates Harold's sense of anomie to the extent that he forges friendly relations with the tribes of remote Albania. This newly won sense of belonging to a communal group (which Herder sees as an essential aspect of the human condition)⁴⁸ inspires Harold to adopt the cause of Greek independence and become a poetic voice for the liberation of the Greeks against the Turks. Harold's purposive moral development in assuming the ethical causes of other nations is marked in his change of role from "bedouin" to "national poet", whilst contemplating on the actions of the heroic leaders of past Greek and Albanian civilisations.

The "national poet" has a serious vocation actively to communicate his ideals of liberalism to a wide audience, and to rally support for revolutionary change through strident lyrics of action (for example, 2. 73, 693-701). His calling forms part of his concern that modern nineteenth century society has not benefited from the radical philosophies of the

⁴⁸ For an explanatory account of his theory see Isaiah Berlin, Vico and Herder: Two Studies in the History of Ideas (London: Hogarth P, 1992).

Enlightenment but rather following the supremacist policies of Napoleon has taken a turn backwards into barbarism.

Byron's interest in the political and social issues prevalent in early nineteenth-century Europe suggests that his Europeanism belongs to an Enlightenment tradition of thought. Byron saw himself and may be understood literally as a man of the world. As Roy Porter remarks: "the philosophes mocked narrow-minded nationalism along with all other kinds of parochial prejudice. They liked to view themselves as men of the world, who belonged less to Savoy, Scotland or Sweden than to an international republic of letters" (Enlightenment 51). Byron's early tour of Europe, his post 1816 exilic status as a European, and his later involvement in the Greek independence movement deeply influenced the Europeanism of his oeuvre. As early as the first pilgrimage his discussion of the cause of the Spanish and South American revolutions suggests his support of European liberalism. His attack on Lord Elgin may be understood as belonging to Byron's love of pro-European attitudes and his dislike of anti-imperialistic values. Greece's monuments are at once part of her own heritage but are also symbols of the classical Greece enjoyed by educated Western Europeans. Consequently, Lord Elgin's acts of desecration may be regarded as an attack on the idealised images which serve as the foundation of poetics, drama, history, politics, indeed the idea of classical civilisation itself. Such behaviour acts against the purposes of national art and is little better than the imperialism of Napoleon.

Barbarism and Nationalism

In the second canto of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage Byron uses the figure of Lord Elgin as a symbol to deregulate the myth that modern Europe is an enlightened community and in the process the honour of England is increasingly questioned. The expropriation of

Greek antiquities by another country may be seen as an act of barbarism which has untold implications for European society and civilisation. Such unenlightened behaviour suggests that the modern empires of Western civilisation are retrogressive, and in their collective consent to the dispossession of Greece's sculptural heritage, modern European philosophy is savage and no better than the society of the Vandals and Goths.⁴⁹

We can all feel, or imagine, the regret with which the ruins of cities, once the capitals of empires, are beheld; the reflections suggested by such objects are too trite to require recapitulation. But never did the littleness of man, and the vanity of his very best virtues of patriotism to exalt, and of valour to defend his country, appear more conspicuous in the record of what Athens was, and the certainty of what she now is. This theatre of contention between mighty factions, of the struggles of orators, the exaltation and deposition of tyrants, the triumph and punishment of generals, is now become a scene of petty intrigue and perpetual disturbance, between the bickering agents of certain British nobility and gentry. (B 85)

Byron indirectly suggests that in allowing this wholesale pillage to occur modern European society has sunk into a new dark age which allows the appropriation of national property by the most powerful nation states. The depletion of the symbol of the highest form of Athenian democracy may be literally seen as ushering in a new age when nations levy enough power to carry out illiberal, interventionary acts which question Enlightenment ideals of community feeling and international responsibility, and which undermine reasoned hopes for an enlightened and free society of Europe. In his exclamatory position as satirist Byron uses

⁴⁹ The concept of a cyclical view of history is promulgated in the thought of Voltaire: "After raising itself for a time from one bog, it [the world] falls back into another; an age of barbarism follows an age of refinement. This barbarism in turn is dispersed, and then reappears; it is a continual alteration of day and night" (Porter, Edward 152).

Lord Elgin as a whipping boy to whom he addresses his anger at the sorry state of modern Greece. In an age when revolutionary liberal politics seemed to invite the possibility of an egalitarian Europe, both eastern hegemony and western imperialist attitudes had eclipsed Greece's claim to be the founder of democracy.

(i) The Decline of Modern Athens

Byron's tourism in Athens is underscored with feelings of dismay rather than pleasure. In 1810-11 Byron found that the attitude of the Athenians to their national heritage was largely apathetic. They were happy to let visitors despoil architectural treasures such as the Parthenon and carry away souvenirs from the actual tourist attraction itself, something inconceivable in modern tourist practice. It is possible that this indifference may have gradually devolved from the dissolution of their national identity in the previous three hundred years during which much of the ancient Greek empire had been under Turkish occupation. Athens was now part of the Ottoman empire, its subjects ruled by the Turks and liable to pay tribute to the Sultan in Constantinople.⁵⁰ Living under such circumstances, it is likely that the Athenian population would begin to feel ambivalent about the legacies of their ancient empire, but in truth their nonchalance may be explained by their lack of education. The despoilation of the Acropolis, the symbol of the once great Athenian empire meant little to modern Athenians who knew little of their own history. The Greek population only became aware of the historical value of their ruins as educated Western travellers informed them of the history of their past:

The direct tradition of knowledge of Ancient Greece had largely died out centuries

⁵⁰ See David Howarth, The Greek Adventure: Lord Byron and other Eccentrics in the War of Independence (London: Collins, 1976) 18.

before. The inhabitants of Olympia, Delphi and Sparta knew little or nothing of the interesting history of the towns they occupied. . . . The surviving ruins of ancient temples were ignored or used as building materials. . . .

In the eighteenth century a small change occurred. An increasing number of travellers from the west found their way to Greece. They were rich and educated and it was principally their interest in Ancient Greece that brought them. By the beginning of the nineteenth century the travelling gentleman with his pocket version of the classics, became a permanent feature of the Greek scene. These confident and successful men were amazed at the ignorance they found. They began to lecture the Greeks about their ancient history and established a regular circuit of famous sites to be visited. The Greeks picked up scraps of history and legend and repeated them back to subsequent visitors. In the towns frequented by tourists a superficial knowledge of Ancient Greece thus appeared, derived mainly from the West, but believed by many of the visitors, much to their delight, to be a genuine tradition from ancient times. (St Clair, Greece 13)

St Clair suggests that the modern Greek tourist industry grew, therefore, out of the efforts of Western travellers to revive the ancient myths, legends and history of classical civilisation on the ancient sites themselves by educating the descendants of ancient Greece in the folklore of their own heritage. However, when Byron visited Athens in the early nineteenth century, Greeks and Turks alike seemed more interested in the financial rewards which could be made out of permitting tourists and collectors to take home pieces of marble, rather than allowing their joint heritage to co-exist peacefully in nature.

In the early stanzas of the second canto, Byron describes a modern Greece in decay which sharply contrasts with the idealised classical images of his schooldays (2. 2, 10-18).

“The Goth, Turk, and time” (2. 12, 101) have all spared the monumental heritage of Athens until that is the Earl of Elgin has hammered the final nail home into the coffin of Greece’s declining national consciousness:

But when they carry away three or four shiploads of the most valuable and massy relics that time and barbarism have left to the most injured and most celebrated of cities; when they destroy, in a vain attempt to tear down, those works which have been the admiration of ages, I know no motive which can excuse, no name which can designate, the perpetrators of this dastardly devastation. (B 86)

It may well be that Lord Elgin took advantage of the occupied state of Greece and the carefree insouciance of the Turks in his appropriation of the Elgin marbles. The ethical case for and against the right of Lord Elgin to remove the better part of the Parthenon frieze to England is taken up by Byron in the early stanzas of the second canto of Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage:

The last, the worst, dull spoiler, who was he?
 Blush, Caledonia! such thy son could be!
 England! I joy no child he was of thine:
 Thy free-born men should spare what once was free;
 Yet they could violate each saddening shrine,
 And bear these altars o’er the long-reluctant brine. (2. 11, 94-99)

It is unquestionably wrong of Lord Elgin, Byron remarks in these stanzas, to despoil Greece of her ancient heritage. Byron is quick to point out Elgin’s Scottish descent and suggests he is

not a true-born Englishman.⁵¹ Elgin's ignoble actions form no connection with Byron's idea of English identity. His infamy is conveniently attributed to his Caledonian origins and the English nation is partially exonerated from his dubious misdeeds, her "free-born men" being responsible, however, for transporting the friezes by sea to England. Indeed, Elgin's excavations in Greece were self-financed, and the British Government did not really get deeply involved until the issue of housing and saving the marbles for the British nation came to a head in 1816. Byron's anger is, perhaps, initially partly displaced onto Elgin's Scottish ancestry in order to demonstrate his belief that Britain is, or ought to be, a country which espouses freedom. Bernard A. Hirsch notes Byron's dual position which criticises and absolves the country and ruling establishment of his birth:

As he witnesses Lord Elgin's "rape" of the Greek heritage, he feels betrayed. . . . He is openly critical of his country's foibles, her senseless wars, her shallow insipid society, and her political hypocrisy; but the Elgin marbles strike at the very foundation of his love of England, at his belief in her essential humanity and her noble heritage of freedom, and he cannot immediately confront this reality. (361)

Byron idealises the marbles as a symbol of Athenian freedom in the past, a legacy now betrayed by an island nation that for Byron is no longer synonymous with the very idea of values of freedom:

The ocean queen, the free Britannia bears

⁵¹ In the century following the Act of Union with Scotland in 1707 many prominent Scotsmen came to play a leading part in public life in England. For example, there was a substantial increase in the number of Scottish M. P.'s who represented English boroughs south of the border. Even as late as the nineteenth century a sense of distrust sometimes existed between the Scottish and the English, and had done so since the rebellion in 1745, if not also from the building of Hadrian's Wall. See Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale U P, 1992).

The last poor plunder from a bleeding land:

Yes, she, whose gen'rous aid her name endears,

Tore down those remnants with a Harpy's hand,

Which envious Eld forbore, and tyrants left to stand. (2. 13, 113-17)

Byron's disclaimer pointedly argues that the government of Great Britain did nothing to stand in Elgin's way and their early policy of non-intervention effectively sanctioned the importation of the monuments. Clearly, Byron's anger at such coercive national behaviour is enough to force him to question the grounds of his British identity. Whilst a Scotsman was responsible for removing "the last poor plunder from a bleeding land", (114) the ironically "free" (113) British nation assisted him in carrying the spoils back to "northern climes" (2. 15, 135). For Byron, such interventionist and illiberal acts are utterly reprehensible, and he subsequently distances himself from his identity as a British subject. The British are indeed referred to in the third person, "curst be the hour when from their isle they rov'd" (2. 15, 133), which suggests that the whole issue of the ownership of the Parthenon marbles may be seen as a paradigm for Harold's own crisis in situating his identity. Britain's appalling attitude further destabilises Harold's sense of Englishness and heightens his status as an exile.

Byron's dislike of Elgin is exaggerated to such an extent it borders on caricature.

Byron's anger at the loss of the Parthenon antiquities is directed mainly at the figure of Elgin who becomes a scapegoat for a complex international situation in which it is extremely difficult to ascertain where the fault lies. As far as Byron is concerned Great Britain is just as responsible as the Turkish empire, or the French empire, for the deplorable condition in which modern Greece finds herself. Lord Elgin conveniently acts as a mistaken symbol for Byron's uncertainty in wholly blaming his native country for adding to Greece's problems of sovereignty. Byron's denunciation of Elgin suggests that he has a hard heart, a barren mind,

and is completely lacking in emotion, "Cold as the crags upon his native coast," (2. 12, 102); in the view of later evidence though, surely Byron's censure is rather misplaced.

In his study Lord Elgin and the Marbles, William St. Clair cites Lord Elgin's testimony to the Select Committee in 1816 as evidence of the difficulty of assessing the probity of removing the ruins from their native soil. He suggests that, above all, Elgin was a decent man who removed the marbles at his own instigation and his own expense. He came up against innumerable difficulties in his aim of saving the sculptures from what he saw to be the daily damage caused by both visitors to the Parthenon who chipped away at the marble in order to obtain souvenirs, as well as the Turks and Greeks themselves who used the stones thoughtlessly as "a main source of building materials" (51). Lord Elgin reasoned that his sole intervention was the only way to save the ruins from complete destruction. He also believed that the collection and eventual display in England of these remarkable ancient antiquities would generate a revival of the arts in Great Britain and Europe, since it was easier for visiting artists to travel to London than to the more distant parts of the Aegean. Whilst these sentiments are admirable they do not detract from Byron's basic argument against Elgin, which was that however carefully he dressed up his defence of removing the ruins his act was essentially one of theft.

In the final published draft of Childe Harold Byron states that Elgin had no intention of returning the marbles: "thy mouldering shrines remov'd / By British hands, which it had best behov'd / To guard those relics ne'er to be restor'd" (2. 15, 130-32). For Byron, Elgin's robberies cause emotional pain, not only at the thought that in their non-intervention the British establishment indirectly approved the defacement of the Acropolis, but the more prosaic circumstance that it was no longer possible to enjoy the sight of the antiquities in their natural surroundings in the Aegean. Byron's tears are truly the suffering of a sentimental traveller, but his unfounded attack on Lord Elgin is quite mistaken; his reproof illustrates the

danger of subscribing judgemental principles to satirical poetry. Whilst Byron's liberal, moral idealism is admirable, further circumstances suggest the action of apportioning blame is largely futile.

The evidence Lord Elgin offered to the select committee which sat in 1816 to determine the fate of the marbles, and whether Elgin was entitled to financial recompense for his troubles, suggests, that despite the obvious doubts which arise regarding the actual morality of taking large sections of the Parthenon from its site and removing them entirely away from the people who owned them, Elgin was correct in removing the marbles. In his defence Lord Elgin argued:

Every traveller coming added to the general defacement of the statuary in his reach. . . . And the Turks have been continually defacing the heads; and in some instances they have actually acknowledged to me that they have pounded down the statues to convert them into mortar. It was upon these suggestions, and with these feelings, that I proceeded to remove as much of the sculpture as I conveniently could. . . . ⁵² (Lord 97)

John Galt, who associated with Byron in Athens, and who later wrote an account of his travels in the Levant,⁵³ recognised, notes St. Clair, "that the antiquities of Greece were being quickly destroyed by Turks and that if Elgin had not removed the Parthenon marbles the French certainly would" (198). Such evidence further strengthens the case for the moral integrity of Lord Elgin's act and, whilst it does not exactly absolve him from guilt, shows the pointlessness of blaming one person.

⁵² Report from the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Earl of Elgin's Collection of Sculptured Marbles (St. Clair, Lord 97).

⁵³ John Galt, Letters from the Levant (1813).

The case against Lord Elgin is a prime example of Byron's subjective position as a poet. He wields a considerable amount of power in his personal and libellous attack on Lord Elgin and it is thoroughly controversial whether his criticism is justified. Byron's response to Lord Elgin in his letters, poem and notes to the poem was negative. Byron seemed intent on ignoring the complicated nature of the case and damning Lord Elgin without giving him a fair hearing. The misrepresentation of public figures in poetry is an awkward issue, since the poet is allowed a certain amount of satiric latitude because of the fictive nature of the genre. At times, in Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Byron's satire is almost irresponsible in its calumnious and unjustified criticism; if it is understood, however, in the context and tradition of the school of satirists Byron admired--Juvenal, Horace and Pope--his defamatory rhetoric is sanctioned since it forms part of the artist's licence to ridicule. Byron wrongfully brought the whole weight of his satire down on Lord Elgin whose later subscription to the London Greek committee in 1821 demonstrates his pro-Greek sympathies.⁵⁴ It is possible that Byron chose to lampoon Lord Elgin partly because of his establishment status as an authority figure of the British empire,⁵⁵ and more pertinently because his actions could be regarded as an assault upon an occupied and disunified country whose only claim to identity lay in the remnants of her ancient heritage.

(ii) The Rise of Modern Greece

In the early nineteenth century the development of Greek nationalist movements was exacerbated by the high symbolic value western nations put on Greece's classical heritage,

⁵⁴ See C. M. Woodhouse. The Philhellenes (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1969) 73.

⁵⁵ Lord Elgin had from 1799 been the British ambassador at Constantinople, the Ottoman capital. See Woodhouse 13.

language and culture.⁵⁶ Throughout Childe Harold's Pilgrimage the legacies of classical Greece are used symbolically to suggest that modern Greece might return to her former glory and become free: "Hereditary Bondsmen! Know ye not / Who would be free themselves must strike the blow" (2. 76, 720-21). In Albania, Byron uses Childe Harold's initiation and temporary 'homecoming' into several tribal societies to illustrate the early regional activism which signalled the beginnings of revolution. Childe Harold's tourism in Albania subsequently forms part of his reformation into an early activist for the cause of Greek independence. His tour of the Albanian highlands also emphasises the fragmented and impalpable nature of the idea of a Greek nation. Greece in the sense of its ancient empire, no longer exists: "Fair Greece! Sad relic of departed worth!" (2. 73, 693). As Porter remarks, "before the outbreak of the war of independence in 1821, there was no clearly defined concept of the nation states among the Greeks. . ." (Romanticism 94). The emptiness and ruin of modern Greece is held out almost as a challenge to the weak, modern Greeks ("when Grecian mothers shall give birth to men, / Then may'st thou be restor'd; but not till then") (2. 84, 795-96) to galvanise them into some sort of action:

Ancient of days! August Athena! Where,
 Where are thy men of might? Thy grand in soul?
 Gone.
 The warrior's weapon and the sophist's stole
 Are sought in vain, and o'er each mouldering tower,
 Dim with the mist of years, grey flits the shade of power. (2. 2, 10-18)

In the second canto of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage Byron describes the customs and

⁵⁶ See Richard Clogg, A Concise History of Greece (Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1992) 1.

dress of several regional tribes throughout the Turkish empire, for example, “the wild Albanian” (2. 58, 514), “the men of Macedon” (517), “the Delhi” (518) and “the bearded Turk” (521); portraits of heroic regional warriors throughout Greece and Albania are used to propound the possibility of a united struggle to obtain political independence from the Ottoman empire. These wild and untamed men, Byron purposes, perhaps have the mettle required to rid ‘Greece’ of her troublesome overlords. Among such wild men, Harold begins to feel less of an outcast and receives the “welcome hand” offered by several races of so-called savage men whose barbarity is possibly exaggerated by the hideous reputation of one or two excessively violent tribes. Indeed, according to Edward Dodwell, who toured Greece between 1801 and 1806, the barbarities of pirates are more precisely associated with the Turks than the Albanians under Turkish occupation.⁵⁷ Dodwell found that the pirates who operated around the islands of Ithaca ransomed travellers for money and practised facial disfigurement if the payment wasn’t forthcoming:

One of the thieves takes a letter to the prisoner’s friends, demanding a certain sum for his liberty. If the sum demanded can be paid, a person accompanies the thief to the place appointed; and on his depositing the money, the prisoner is set at liberty. . . . But woe to the unfortunate prisoner who is unable to raise the sum demanded; the least he can expect is the loss of his nose and ears. . . . The depriving people of their ears and noses, is a practice common to most parts of Turkey. (1. 58-59)

Certainly, the mountain tribes in Albania have a fierce reputation as Childe Harold discovers, but their hospitality to strangers suggests that their motives are more genuine than the bloodthirsty Turks: “Fierce are Albania’s children . . . Their wrath how deadly! but their

⁵⁷ A Classical and Topographical Tour through Greece During the Years 1801, 1805 and 1806, by Edward Dodwell in Two Volumes (London, 1819).

friendship sure," (2. 65, 577-83). An earlier traveller to Greece, J. B. S. Morrit,⁵⁸ noticed a similar dichotomy between open friendship and piratical hostility amongst the Mainote tribes of the Morea in Southern Greece, but he suggests their aggression may be more contextualized within a rhetoric of warfare:

The robbery and piracy they [the Mainotes] exercised indiscriminately in their roving expeditions they dignified by the name of war; but though their hostility was treacherous and cruel, their friendship was inviolable. The stranger that was within their gates was a sacred title and not even the Arabs were more attentive to the claims of hospitality. When we delivered our letters of recommendation to a chief, he received us with every mark of friendship. . . . (Walpole 43)

The friendship shown to Harold by the tribes of Utraikay and the Suliotes is visible in their feasting, singing and dancing (2. 71, 631-39). Their songs of defiance may be regarded as the initial stirrings of resistance against the Ottoman empire. The ritualistic and aggressive elements of these tribal 'ceilidhs' is indicative of a desire to display regional independence in the unfortunate circumstance of living in an occupied country. The Mainotes, Sulliotés, Chimariotes and Illyrians engage in extrovert performance as a means of consolidating their national identity. The song, "Tambourgi, Tambougi" (2. 72, 1-11, 649-92), is evidence of the patriotic struggle that was beginning haphazardly in the highlands of Albania, Roumeli, Attica, Eastern Greece and the Morea in the early nineteenth century, and was to come to a head in the Greek wars of independence:

⁵⁸ Morrit's account was published in an anthology of early nineteenth century travel writing edited by Robert Walpole, the grandson of Horace Walpole, the author of *The Castle of Otranto* (1764). See "Account of a Journey through the District of Maina in the Morea: Communicated by Mr Morrit," *Memoirs Relating to European and Asiatic Turkey, and other Countries of the East; Edited from Manuscript Journals by Robert Walpole*, 2nd ed. (London, 1818) 33-59.

Tambourgi! Tambourgi! Thy 'larum afar
 Gives hope to the valiant, and promise of war;
 All the sons of the mountains arise at the note,
 Chimariot, Illyrian, and dark Suliote! (2. 72, 1, 649-652)

The use of folk songs as a political weapon of resistance⁵⁹ may be understood in the context of Enlightenment thinkers such as Herder, whose collections of folksongs “contributed . . . to the building of a national German literature” (R. Clark 260). In his Correspondence on Ossian and the Songs of Ancient Peoples (1773) Herder remarks: “All unpolished peoples sing and act; they sing about what they do, and thus sing histories. Their songs are the archives of their people, the treasury of their science and religion . . . a picture of their domestic life in joy and in sorrow, by the bridal bed and the graveside” (Berlin, Vico 171). The tribes of Albania and Eastern Greece have no visible history, unlike the peoples of Attica and the Morea, whose memories are signified in their monuments and sculptures. The heritage of the Northern tribes is solely passed down through oral folklore.

In “Tambourgi,” Byron’s use of folk song is directly related to political reform and what the nationalist historian, Anthony D. Smith, labels vernacular mobilization, “whereby an indigenous intelligentsia uses folk culture to mobilize middle and lower strata” (17). The use of language to further political reform by consolidating feelings of national identity is a recognised aspect of nationalist philosophy. Byron’s inclusion of choric songs in the notes, and a war song which emphasises the revolutionary feelings of diverse regional tribes,

⁵⁹ Byron’s interest in songs as a form of self-expression is evident in Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage in Childe Harold’s love song “To Ianthe”, his song of exile “Childe Harold’s Goodnight”, and in the war song “Tambourgi”. Indeed, as early as 1807, Byron had projected a visit to Scotland to collect local folk songs which he planned to incorporate into a publication of verse: “I mean to collect all the Erse tradition, poems, & & c. & translate, or expand the subjects, to fill a volume, which may appear next spring, under the denomination of “The Highland Harp” . . . (BLJ 1: 132). Although Byron’s Scottish trip never took place his aesthetic interest in song form is emphasised in the Albanian folk songs which he collected and translated as part of the travel notes to his poem. These songs are reproduced in: (B 91).

suggests his interest in language as a political medium. The majority of Greeks at this time spoke Romaic and called themselves Romaioi, or Romans, a legacy of the Roman empire at Byzantium.⁶⁰ Indeed, Porter sees the Romaic language as, to a degree, giving the disparate communities of the Ottoman empire some unity (Romanticism 96). A common language could effectively ease an organised uprising throughout the dispersed geographies inhabited by the Greek peoples. That there had been such attempts to unify the Greeks through language is suggested by Byron in his notes, “I must have some talk with this Learned Theban”, in which he addresses the translations of Korais,⁶¹ or “Coray, the most celebrated of living Greeks” (B 98). It may be argued that the sustained military exploits which followed Ali Pasha’s defiance of Ottoman authority in Constantinople, and effectively ushered in the Greek revolution, was preceded by the attempts of nationalists such as Korais and Byron to unify the Greek peoples through language and poetry:

Inspired by the French Revolution [Korais] devoted himself to furthering the cause of Greek independence. Laying great stress on the classical inheritance of the Greeks, he sought to systemize the written language of his country in accordance with classical tradition. The result, something between the classical tongue and the common speech, was not merely of academic interest; for, in Greece as in other countries, the codifying of the written language, so that it became intelligible to all peoples and classes, was a powerful factor in calling into being a new nation. (Heurtley et al. 89)

Whilst Korais’s works were directed at attempting a centralised unification of Greece through language, Byron’s poetic examination of the different regions and peoples of Greece seems to

⁶⁰ See Woodhouse 27.

⁶¹ Adamantios Korais (1748-1833), a Classical scholar who passionately believed that education could emancipate the Greeks from Ottoman rule. See Clogg (29).

imply that a new independent and unified Greek nation may only be effected through inter-regional co-operation, since the “true-born sons of Greece” (2. 83, 783) have relapsed into a “degenerate horde” (2. 83, 791). The struggle to liberate Greece, Byron suggests, must be led by “men of might” (2. 2, 11) and in modern Greece these men are the tribes of Albania:

Fierce are Albania's children, yet they lack
 Not virtues, were those virtues more mature.
 Where is the foe that ever saw their back?
 Who can so well the toil of war endure? (2. 65, 577-80)

Images of the Past: Idealisation and Revolution

In the second canto of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage Byron idealises the past to assert a modern Greek tradition of nationhood; the heroism of Scanderbeg, for instance, may be held out as an example to rouse contemporary passions of revolt. As Porter remarks:

All cultures use their perception of the past to define and validate themselves in the present. Under the impact of Romanticism and the consolidation of the nation states throughout Europe in the nineteenth century, perceptions of the past were more radically revised than they had been since the Renaissance. Each nation set about discovering and asserting the value of the tradition or (traditions) that in the past had shaped it towards its present condition and in the present continued to guarantee its differences from rivals and its potential for realising its unique aspirations in the future. (Porter, Romanticism 99)

Byron would rather see images of the past used as symbols of liberal idealism and icons of Greek national identity; not as belonging to English gentlemen's notions of their own borrowed history and public school identity. The topographical tour of Edward Dodwell, who visited Greece before Byron, between 1801-06, illustrates the possessive attitudes of contemporaneous western writers who appropriate Greek myths and history in a form of imaginative imperialism:

The land which had been familiar to my ideas from early impressions, seemed as if by enchantment, thrown before my eyes. I beheld the native soil of the great men whom I had so often admired; of the poets, historians, and orators, whose works I had perused with delight, and to whom Europe has been indebted for so much of her high sentiment, and her intellectual cultivation. . . . (Dodwell 78)

It is evident from Dodwell's raptured prose that exposure to the actual landscape which peopled the heroes of his boyhood effected in him a highly emotional and creative state. His arrival in Greece is a highly satisfying experience which fully lives up to his expectations. Dodwell's account contradicts the negative experience of many tourists when faced with the reality of the tourist site. As Chris Rojek has noted, "we often experience a sense of anticlimax, disbelief or incredulity when we set eyes on a long-imagined sight. Following the vocabulary of psychoanalysis we might call this tourist denial" (Urry and Rojek 56). Perhaps Dodwell's total negation of any tourist denial is related to a well-developed and liberated imagination. A largesse of mind able to accommodate the distance between expected and actual images of travel. The extent to which the faculty of imagination is required to make sense of the difference between how a tourist might imagine classical Greece, and how the actual reality of modern Greece is, may for those familiar enough with

ancient history and legend be attributed to a facility for association:

No country in Europe abounds with so many spots, which teem with the most captivating associations. A deep interest seems, as it were, to breathe from the very ground, and there is hardly a locality which is not consecrated by some attractive circumstance; or which some trait of heroism, of greatness, and of genius, has not signalized and adorned. (Dodwell 1-2)

Imagination and association are therefore essential qualifications for the creative tourist and writer, if he is to make sense of the discrepancy between the actual and expected landscape. Dodwell's travel writing, whilst sharing Byron's interest in the value the landscape has in its past history, does not perhaps address the realism of contemporary Greece. This sanitised version of the past is remarked upon in the song "To Inez" in the first canto:

Yet others rapt in pleasure seem
 And taste of all that I forsake;
 Oh! may they still of transport dream,
 And ne'er, at least like me, awake! (l. 84, 7, 861-864)

Whilst Dodwell and other British travel writers appropriate Greece's past for England, Byron allows Greece the intellectual sovereignty of her own past.

(i) Associations of Heroism

Byron uses associations of past national heroism to illustrate that Greece is a country

renowned for revolutionary resistance. For Byron, Greece is a land rich in historical associations, a place which abounds in an atmosphere of heroism and of greatness. As Spencer comments, "it is a usual experience that places strongly stimulate the imagination and make more vivid the idea we have of famous men" (Fair, 49). For Childe Harold, the very land and mountains of Albania are infused with the noble and heroic deeds of its famous warriors: "Iskander" or Alexander the Great of Macedonia, and "he his name-sake" Albania's national hero, Scanderbeg:

Land of Albania! where Iskander rose,
 Theme of the young, and beacon of the wise,
 And he his name-sake, whose oft-baffled foes
 Shrank from his deeds of chivalrous emprise. . . . (2. 38, 334-37)

In the notes to his poem Byron, like Gibbon, wishes to see Scanderbeg as a national hero comparable with Alexander and Pyrrhus:

Albania comprises part of Macedonia, Illyria, Chaonia, and Epirus. Iskander is the Turkish word for Alexander; and the celebrated Scanderbeg (Lord Alexander) is alluded to in the third and fourth lines of the thirty eighth stanza. I do not know whether I am correct in making Scanderbeg the countryman of Alexander, who was born at Pella in Macedon, but Mr Gibbon terms him so, and adds Pyrrhus to the list, in speaking of his exploits. (B 87)

Gjergj Kastrioti-Skenderbeg, or George Castriot, of Scanderbeg was born in 1405 in the Kastrioti clan in Northern Albania, and as a boy trained in military arts at the court of

Sultan Murad II, where he earned the name of Skenderbeg, after Iskander, a hero of the Turks. Initially helping the Turks to ward off the Hungarians at the town of Niš in 1443 he later left the Turkish army in the company of three hundred Albanian comrades-in-arms and marched on his homeland. He entered Krüge on the twenty-eighth of November 1442 and proclaimed it the principality of the Kastrioti. Throughout the remainder of his life Scanderbeg consistently repulsed the counter-attacks of Mohammed II, 'the conqueror', and it was only after his death that the enormous Turkish army were able to bring the region under submission.⁶²

In The Decine and Fall of the Roman Empire (1776-88) Edward Gibbon praises Scanderbeg's chivalry and his status as an icon and hero of Albanian national independence:

In the fulness of conquest Mohammed the Second still felt at his bosom this domestic thorn; his lieutenants were permitted to negotiate a truce, and the Albanian prince may justly be praised as a firm and able champion of his national independence. The enthusiasm of chivalry and religion has ranked him with the names of Alexander and Pyrrhus; nor would they blush to acknowledge their intrepid countryman but his narrow dominion and slender powers must leave him at a humble distance below the heroes of antiquity, who triumphed over the East and the Roman legions. His splendid achievements, the bashaws whom he encountered, the armies that he discomfited, and the three thousand Turks who were slain by his single hand, must be weighed in the scales of suspicious criticism. (6: 464-65)

The positioning of the Scanderbeg stanza, preceding the entry of Childe Harold into Albania, suggests that Byron thought that by imitating Scanderbeg's spirited attitudes the modern

⁶² See Ramadan Marmullaku, Albania and the Albanians (London: Hurst, 1975) 12-15.

Greeks might free themselves from Ottoman dominion. In Myths and Memories of the Nation Anthony D. Smith argues that modern national intelligentsias use historic myths as a means of consolidating feelings of national identity: “So the ethnic myth became a charter for revolution . . . creating new political communities on the basis of a sense of community derived from historic memories and a myth of common descent” (61). Idealised heroic figures are used as propaganda to stir the community into armed revolt. Stanza 73, which follows the Albanian call to arms, “Tambourgi! Tambourgi!”, effectively ends Childe Harold’s Albanian tour and resituates him back in Athens, but his crie de coeur for freedom and liberation seems partly to be directed at the legendary exploits of the Albanian prince Scanderbeg:

Fair Greece! sad relic of departed worth!
 Immortal, though no more! though fallen, great!
 Who now shall lead thy scatter’d children forth,
 And long accustom’d bondage uncreate? (2. 73, 693-96)

Greece, Byron suggests, is desperately in need of a modern Scanderbeg to lead her “Scatter’d children forth”⁶³ to break the considerable length of the Turkish occupation. In idealising images of Scanderbeg, Byron identifies him as a historical hero whom the modern Albanians could emulate in their own struggle for sovereignty.

Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage is full of reflections on heroism, both personal or iconic heroism as in the case of Scanderbeg, and collective heroism as with the stanzas on the Marathonomachai (‘Marathon-fighters’). For Byron, the memorialised spirit of ancient Greece has far greater meaning than the decayed ruins worshipped by antiquaries. Byron

⁶³ Compare stanza 65 in which Byron also refers to the Albanians as children.

uses his tour of the battlesite of Marathon to evoke the glory and heroism of the ancient Greeks, and as a means of raising issues of personal liberation and political revolutionary freedom.

The polyphonic structure of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage layers images of history with Harold's contemporary soliloquies and recreations of the past. In idealising heroic valour Byron enables a reformation of the present. The future of the Greeks, Harold and the figure of the poet himself may be transformed through empathising with a spirit of past endeavour. Commenting on Byron's uses of history Peter Manning concludes:

For Byron inquiry into history is an extension of inquiry into the self, and the atypically external use he makes of the past . . . is a further clue to the external nature of his self-presentation in the poem. . . .

Byron seeks not merely to establish an authorized version of his past and personality, but also to place the identity he invents in European history. His self-definition requires that he connect himself with the men and events that have shaped his culture and that he become influential equally with them: he studies history in order that he may enter it. (Byron 97, 201)

This sense of the past is most evident in the stanzas which evoke the heroism of past national heroes, and Byron uses these heroic cameos--as in the first canto--to raise moral, ethical, and nationalist revolutionary issues but he now posits the possibility that contemplating on scenes of past heroism and defiance elicits a raised consciousness, or increased awareness in the beholder, which may be effected to change or revolutionise reformatory thought.⁶⁴ Such an

⁶⁴ The strange phenomena by which an area of land can stir human emotions in those receptive to feel or engage in the touristic myth is remarked upon by Samuel Johnson in his Journey to the Western Isles: "Whatever withdraws us from the power of our senses; whatever makes the past, the distance or the future predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings. Far from me and my friends be such frigid

emotion of inspiration may be used to question the rationale on which personal identity is based, to urge the seeker or pilgrim to find the object of his quest by re-thinking the very grounds of his existence. Emulatory thought is the outcome of idealisation and hero-worship, and may be directed towards actions of public reform, self-improvement, or poetic creativity. In topographical literary tourism, these flashes of revolutionary inspiration usually take place in peripheral vicinities outside the realm of everyday life, or in foreign spaces, abroad.

That such desire for the past is the pre-eminent motive for pilgrimage in the poem is suggested after the stanzas on Marathon:

Yet to the remnants of thy splendour past
 Shall pilgrims, pensive, but unwearied, throng;
 Long shall the voyager, with th' Ionian blast,
 Hail the bright clime of battle and of song. . . . (2. 91, 855-58)

To Byron, the coastline of the Ionian sea is redolent with images of The Iliad, an amalgam of the literary legends of Homer's warriors and the historical legends of ancient history.⁶⁵ The resolution of cantos 1 and 2 of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage occurs whilst Harold is reflecting on images of heroism on the modern Greek landscape of Marathon. Here his tourism of war is transfigured into an appropriation of more positive values as he pleads for the sons of the Marathonomachai to revive the spirit of their fathers. The battle-site of Marathon, which is twenty two miles North-East of Athens, is in the shape of a crescent and nearly six miles in

philosophy as may conduct us indifferent and unmoved over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery or virtue. That man is little to be envied, whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona." Samuel Johnson, A Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland, 1775, ed. Peter Levi (London: Penguin, 1984) 140-41.

⁶⁵ For a precise definition of legend and myth see Robert A. Segal, Hero Myths, A Reader (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000) 31. Myths are forged at the beginning of time and recount the creation of the world by gods or men with superhuman powers. Legends concern more recent history and describe the battles, heroic deeds and power-struggles, between opposing dynasties, which emerge in the founding of modern nations.

length: plenty of space in which to marshal one's thoughts. The site contains a huge mound (45 metres in diameter⁶⁶) to those who courageously gave their lives in fighting off a redoubtable Persian army, whose large forces seemed inevitably set on conquering a smaller company of Athenian hoplites. In the face of such overwhelming odds it seems the sheer spirit of survival, instinct, and bravery against the hordes won the day for the Athenians.⁶⁷ For Byron, the battlefield of Marathon, whilst a symbol of the spirit of a group of men to stand up for their basic human right of freedom, forged a personal image of activism on his conscience. Whilst in the first canto Harold used the figure of the battlefield to judge the political moralities surrounding acts of warfare, in the second canto the sign of an empty battlefield is used purposively in a call for revolution. Harold implies that if the ancient Greeks could overcome the latter-day Persian empire, so too can the modern Greeks defy the modern 'Persian' empire. The image of the battlefield is not valorised intrinsically therefore, but associatively.

In Finden's Illustrations of the Life and Works of Lord Byron (1833), John Galt remarks, "It will surprise you, perhaps, to hear, that I do not think [Byron] had much taste for the picturesque, though a very lively feeling on interesting scenes, especially where the associations were exciting: it was more associations than sights in which he delighted" (Spencer 48). For Harold, the very name of Marathon conjurs up visions of past glory which may be relived again: "When Marathon became a magic word; / Which utter'd, to the hearer's eye appear / The camp, the host, the fight, the conqueror's career" (2. 89, 843-45). Harold's imaginative tourism is for him the apogee of the pleasure of travel. His earlier anger at Lord Elgin for de-idealising the images of his boyhood is displaced in his creative tour-de-force of imagination:

⁶⁶ See John Boardman, N.G.L. Hammond, D. M. Lewis and M. Oswald, eds., The Cambridge Ancient History, 2nd ed. vol. 4 (Cambridge:Cambridge U P, 1988).

⁶⁷ The Persians lost 6,400 men and the Athenians 192.

Till the sense aches with gazing to behold
 The scenes our earliest dreams have dwelt upon:
 Each hill and dale, each deepening glen and wold
 Defies the power which crush'd thy temples gone:
 Age shakes Athena's tower, but spares gray Marathon. (2. 88, 832-36)

The spirit of the heroism of the ancient Marathonomachai lives on long after the battlesite has effectively disappeared. In this sense imaginative recreations of ancient Greece have a higher value to Harold than disappointing images of a barbarised and decaying Acropolis.

(ii) Idealisation of Nature and the Past

In both cantos of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage there is a strong sense that the ancient Gods and Goddesses have deserted or abandoned Greece, and that the modern traveller's interpretation of antiquity is markedly different than idealised representations acquired from classical literature. This is most evident in the sadly depleted marbles and discolouration⁶⁸ of the Parthenon which, in its ruined aspect, presents a disappointing spectacle to the tourist expecting to observe the perfect symmetry of Grecian sculpture. In the second canto Byron emphasises the need to conserve and preserve the spirit of the past, and to be responsible for

⁶⁸ Dodwell describes this phenomenon in his tour of Greece: "Great part of the Parthenon, which once sparkled with the chaste but splendid brilliancy of the Pentellic marble, is now covered with the warm and mellow tint of an autumnal sun-set. The whole of the western front has acquired from age an ochreous patina, which is composed of deep and vivid hues. The eastern front is still more picturesque. Some parts of the columns are nearly black, which was probably caused by the smoke of some neighbouring cottages. The most prevailing colour is a reddish yellow of different degredations. . . . The south side of the temple is of a very light colour; indeed in some parts the marble nearly retains its original whiteness. The northern side which receives only the departing rays of the sun is of a cold tint, and in some part covered with an almost imperceptible lichen of dusky green" (344).

the monuments of ancient Greece, which symbolise not only the grandeur of classical Greece, but could symbolise the possibility of a unified modern Greek nation state.

In the retrospective Parnassus stanzas in the middle of canto one, when Childe Harold is in the middle of his Spanish pilgrimage, Byron resumes his dialogue from the very first stanza now lamenting again, that as he surveys the mythical realms of Parnassus the spirit of Apollo⁶⁹ can no more longer be found there: “Though here no more Apollo haunts his grot, / And thou, the Muses’ seat, art now their grave, / Some gentle Spirit still pervades the spot,” (1. 62, 634-36). Whilst the spirit of ancient Greece seems truly dead there is in the singing sea (638) and sighing grass (637) some spirit, some modern remnant, of the ancient lore of the past. In modern Greece, as on the mount of Parnassus, Childe Harold finds refuge in the meadows and riverbanks where a deity of nature dances over the waters (2. 54, 485) and sleeps in the light of the moon (2. 54, 486).

This spirit of nature which soothes Childe Harold in his distress recurs at several stages throughout his pilgrimage, usually to provide a respite to his troubled feelings: “Dear Nature is the kindest mother still, / Though always changing, in her aspect mild; / From her bare bosom let me take my fill,” (2. 37, 325-27). It is tempting in view of Byron’s cynicism to regard his use of nature as a sexual metaphor; in view, however, of the later consolation he finds in nature this earlier usage is probably sincere.

In Song of the Earth, Jonathan Bate defines nature three ways. Firstly, as a concept of the “non-human which might refer to biological and ecological processes.” Secondly, as “the structures, processes and causal powers that are constantly operative within the physical world.” This might encapsulate “environmental questions, the appreciation of landscapes, the preservation of wilderness and the valuation of green spaces.” Thirdly, nature means “the nature of immediate experience and aesthetic appreciation” (34). Adapting these definitions,

⁶⁹ Apollo was the son of Zeus. His functions included healing, purification, prophecy, poetry and music.

Byronic nature means the idea of a space which marginalises the human and allows an aesthetic rejuvenation, in which the alienated observer finds consolation and unison with the landscape. Freedom from society enables Harold to assume values of simplicity and natural regeneration: "To sit on rocks, to muse o'er flood and fell, / To slowly trace the forest's shady scene, / Where things that own not man's dominion dwell," (2. 25, 217-19) . . . "This is to be alone; this, this is solitude!" (2. 26, 234). In this sense, nature may provide the only space where man is able to find freedom. The sacred respite of nature allows Harold temporarily to reject the unkindness of human civilisation. Such a return to nature is achieved only by sacrificing the benefits of human communities: "According to [Rousseau's] argument, to be in touch with instinct--to be in touch with nature--is to be at liberty. Our original freedom is compromised by the necessity to live under the rule of institutions, that is to say, compromised by education, by government, by the rule of civil law" (Bate Song 31).

In Childe Harold's Pilgrimage the utter profundity of loss wrought within the movement of modern pilgrimage can only ultimately be ameliorated by believing in the benevolence of nature: "Still in his beam Mendeli's marble's glare; / Art, Glory, Freedom fail, but Nature still is fair" (2. 87, 826-27). In the face of retrogressive human values, nature offers a temporary respite to pilgrims from benighted modernity: "And yet how lovely in thine age of woe, / Land of lost gods and godlike men! art thou!" (2. 85, 801-02). Whilst the last vestiges of Greece's ancient civilisation are being plundered by entrepreneurial opportunism, Byron recognises that the myths and legends of courageous Greek warriors will not be annihilated, but find immortal repose in the language of history. Consequently, Byron uses Harold as a spokesperson to plead to mankind to be responsible for the preservation of Greece's classical heritage, and honour the ruins of Greece as the symbols of liberty with which they were originally intended:

Let such approach this consecrated land,
 And pass in peace along the magic waste:
 But spare its relics--let no busy hand
 Deface the scenes, already how defac'd
 Nor for such purpose were these altars plac'd:
 Revere the remnants nations once rever'd
 So may our country's name be undisgrac'd. . . . (2. 93, 873-79)

Harold's plea to "busy hand(s)" to "spare the relics of the magic waste" of Greece may be regarded as a reminder that Lord Elgin's values are wrong, and that enlightened societies should revere symbols of the past. In modern Europe's current age of barbarism, the readiest way to preserve the idealised splendour of the past is to keep alive the spirit of Athenian society by preserving its symbolic remnants. By doing so the modern Greek nation might find the will to renew their former glory and become free again.

(iii) Exile, Repatriation and Transfiguration

Childe Harold's cry to preserve "these altars" (2. 93, 877) suggests he sacralises the ruins for the symbolic meaning of democracy which they were originally intended to represent. Consequently, the ruins must wholly belong to the Greek nation in body and spirit. Harold's plea to "our country" (2. 93, 879) suggests Britain may be absolved from her recent disgrace by allowing the Greeks the total sovereignty of their own heritage and myths. In view of his uncertain status as an exile and expatriate the sudden reversion to "our country" suggests that Harold is suffering from homesickness and a longing for return. The condition of homesickness is naturally related to states of exile, homelessness and alienation. Harold's

estrangement from home is reconciled on the “congenial earth” of Greece: “He that is lonely hither let him roam” (2. 92, 866). The “sadness” of exile is “soothe(d)” (2. 92, 869) in Harold’s walking tours by the healing streams of Delphi, and during his imaginary contemplations on the battlesite of Marathon. It is here that he finally renounces his identity as an Englishman and ceases to care as passionately for the country of his birth: “And scarce regret the region of his birth” (2. 92, 870). Harold’s release is wholly bound up in his self-appointed role as poetic ambassador for the ideals of Greece, his ultimate identity crisis involves a secular leaping forth, a commitment to fervent political activism.⁷⁰ He temporarily finds a measure of liberty by involving himself in a worthy cause. Susan Sulieman sees the condition of exile as providing the exact spatial conditions for such epiphanies of activism to occur: “Exile is an immense force for liberation, for extra distance, for automatically developing contrasting structures in one’s head, not just syntactic and lexical but social and psychological; it is, in other words, undoubtedly a leaping forth” (20).

Childe Harold’s exile involves, therefore, not only a displacement of his English identity, but embracing a new land and understanding his place in the world as belonging to a series of values which fuses his old world of England, with its schoolboy myths and legends of history, with the new world of Greece, whose inhabitants furnish a rugged and open friendship Harold can identify with and whose heritage he would rather see, in his plea to conserve it, as not being part of an English appropriation of classical history, but forming part of his own new pan-European identity.

Once Harold has transgressed the boundaries of homelessness by situating his identity in Greece, there is nowhere left for him to go but to return home. The deaths of five of Byron’s close personal circle, in the space of a few months, provided him with a perfect coda for his pilgrimage which foregrounds the figure of the author in a personal and deeply

⁷⁰ In direct contrast to Kierkegaard’s idea of a sacred leap of faith in: Søren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling: Dialectical Lyric* by Johannes de Silentio, 1843, trans. Alastair Hannay (London: Penguin, 1985).

moving elegy. Byron's unhappy return fulfills the apogee of Romantic art and may be compared to the tragic homecomings of Caspar David Friedrich's Romantic wanderers:

Although the painter Caspar David Friedrich returned, time and time again and with obvious enthusiasm, to his native region in the Baltic Southern rim, it is never with joyousness or a sense of plenitude that find expression in the images which these home-comings inspired.

The apotheosis of anxiety is reached in The Monk by the Sea (1809), where the Baltic locale is dramatized in the confrontation of a single figure and the desolate immensity of sea and sky. . . . Home-coming here becomes a tragic encounter with an indifferent emptiness. (Porter, Rewriting 152)⁷¹

Byron's homecoming, too, is filled with the emptiness of anxiety and his pilgrimage collapses into the disiecta membra of a requiem to the memory of his beloved friends. Writing his own biographical cameo into his poem provided, for Lord Byron, a means of containing and expressing his grief. The appearance of the figure of the poet is a recurring feature at the end of each canto of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage and suggests that, despite their differences, Harold and Byron are inseparably linked. The tragic circumstances of his repatriation force Byron once more to assume the mantle of "the fabled Hebrew wanderer" ["To Inez" (1. 84, 5, 854)] : "then must I plunge again into the crowd" (2. 97, 909). Edleston's death necessitates Byron to leave England again (at least figuratively with Harold) to remove himself from the bane of terrible unhappiness: "Would he had ne'er return'd to find fresh cause to roam" (2. 95, 899). The escape from tragedy may be partially soothed by distance. In travelling with Harold imaginatively back into the additional stanzas, Byron finds

⁷¹ Roger Cardinal, "Romantic Travel" in Roy Porter, Rewriting the Self: Histories from the Renaissance to the Present (London: Routledge, 1997) 135-55.

release from the woes of the world. The creativity of imaginative travel with Harold obliterates the distresses of Byron's personal life; the possibility of re-assuming the pilgrimage in the future momentarily suppresses the despair of death. The final transfiguration of Harold into Byron confirms, as in canto one, that the poem may be read as the fragmented representations of a poet conceiving his work.

Lord Byron's travels abroad and his adoption of European attitudes, beliefs, even dress, turned him into a legendary spokesperson for the affairs of nineteenth-century Europe. Byron's observations of the turmoil of recent war and the injustices of empire allowed him throughout his Mediterranean pilgrimage to develop the distinctively pessimistic, cynical yet romantic voice which distinguished his forthcoming poetic style as 'Byronic'. After his foreign tour Byron's fame and success as a poet was established. The first two cantos of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage are infused with the spirit, history, politics and causes of predominantly European nations, and their publication forged Byron's reputation as a major poet of European stature. The worldly experiences his protagonist undergoes promote philosophies of liberal idealism, which seek to valorise the idea of integrated nation states and glory in the possibility of a peaceful and united European community. Lord Byron's expatriation wholly informed his youthful poem with the value and spirit of the countries he encountered abroad. Despite his reservations the poem is at once both Lord Byron's and Harold's biography of travel.

Der Dichter Spricht: Shelley, Rousseau and the Perfect Society

During his sailing tours on Lake Geneva with Lord Byron, Shelley read Rousseau's Julie ou La Nouvelle Héloïse (1761) for the first time, perhaps wishing to understand the novel's popular acclaim, as well as visually experience the 'real' landscape of the novel. Shelley's contact with the actual scenes of St. Preux's exile led to a higher understanding of La Nouvelle Héloïse by enhancing his theatrical perception of the novel in the real and imaginative diorama of the Genevan landscape, and provoked him to conceive a new attitude to Rousseau which celebrated him as an iconoclastic literary writer as well as a political theorist. In Switzerland, the influence of Rousseau's divine imagination inspired Shelley in his vision to improve English society.

Whilst he was touring Switzerland Shelley documented his response to the landscape in two letters to Thomas Love Peacock,¹ which were later subsumed with his joint journal with Mary Godwin of their 1814 tour to Switzerland and published as History of a Six Weeks' Tour through a Part of France, Switzerland, Germany and Holland: With Letters descriptive of a Sail Round the Lake of Geneva and of the Glaciers of Chamouni.² This work demonstrates his dissatisfaction with aristocratic rule in Europe and implies that the authoritarian power structures in society may be reformed through considering the ideas of Rousseau. His commentary overtly criticises the enforced systems of belief which political and religious dynasties have exercised over mankind throughout history, including the horrors of the Burgundian empire, the iconoclasm of Reformation Europe, and the injustices of the aftermaths of the French Revolution. Shelley's letters to Peacock contest the conformist realism of travel writing by politicising a diversity of subjects: historical, political,

¹ Shelley's relationship with Peacock, and Peacock's own career as a satirical novelist are examined by Marilyn Butler in Peacock Displayed: A Satirist in his Context (London: Routledge, 1979).

² The first section of History comprises a reworking of the 1814 journal kept by Shelley and Mary Godwin of their 1814 tour of Switzerland. The second section comprises two letters (I and II) written by Mary Godwin (addressee unknown), and two letters (III and IV) written by Shelley to Peacock. For a discussion of the relative attributions of this heterogeneous work see Murray 429-35. History of a Six Weeks' Tour was published by T. Hookham and C. and J. Ollier in London in 1817.

philosophic, aesthetic and anthropological issues are examined in a sensitive narrative which advocates sensibilities of romantic humanism.

Modes of Tourism

It is highly debatable whether any of the Shelley circle may be constructed as tourists in the usual sense. They may be defined as tourists in their participation in prescribed touristic activities, however, their desertion of regularised itineraries establishes their status as anti-tourists in James Buzard's sense (see below).³ Their profession as writers also separates and distinguishes their identities from common humanity and suggests their tourism may have a different outcome, specifically in the production of a text.

James Buzard, in his model of tourism, divides tourists into two classes: tourists and anti-tourists. The anti-tourist determines his identity by segregating himself from the crowd. It is in his isolation that he forges his individuality and achieves a unitary existence: ". . . anti-tourists or practitioners of the 'romantic gaze' required the crowd they scorned and shunned, for they built their traveller's identities in opposition to the crowd" (153). In Lawrence Sterne's model of tourism in A Sentimental Journey (1768) he identifies several classes of tourists:

Thus the whole circle of travellers may be reduced to the following heads.

Idle Travellers

Inquisitive Travellers

Lying Travellers

Proud Travellers

³ See also p 8-11.

Vain Travellers

Splenetic Travellers

Then follow the Travellers of Necessity

The delinquent and felonius Traveller

The unfortunate and innocent Traveller

The simple Traveller

and last of all (if you please) The sentimental Traveller (meaning thereby myself). (11)

Sterne further suggests that in his capacity as writer he deserves a unique category of traveller created especially for himself: "I am well aware, at the same time, as both my travels and observations will be altogether of a different cast from any of my fore-runners; that I might have insisted upon a whole nitch entirely to myself" (11). Writers, therefore, through their unique individuality manifested in the ability to produce a text, lay claim to a higher identity, which in Sterne's case forces him to identify his status as a tourist completely in a class of his own. His very individuality defies classification.

Sterne's complex typology suggests the line between tourist and anti-tourist is not as black and white as Buzard suggests. It is perhaps impossible to ascribe any sort of common identity to mankind. Models of tourism which classify typologies of behaviour are useful to a degree in establishing common patterns of behaviour, but such models must consider the variegated temperament of the human species if they are to accurately reflect specific rather than general models of human behaviour. Buzard's dualistic model, whilst useful in some respects, is simply too general to accommodate all the complexities of the different species of traveller known collectively as tourists.

James Buzard's definition of cultural tourism may also be problematical for the

nineteenth century, since the adjective 'cultural' dates from around the 1870s. Only from this time may we inscribe our modern understanding of culture to relate to the "works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity . . . music, literature, painting, sculpture, theatre and film" (Williams 90). Certainly from the sixteenth century the noun culture suggested some "process of human development" (87). Herder's Ideas On the Philosophy of the History of Mankind (1784-91) suggest that by the eighteenth century culture indicated "a particular way of life, whether of a people, period or group" (90). Williams also suggests that by the eighteenth century the term culture describes "a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development" (90). Shelley's veneration of touristic places associated with Rousseau emits a culture of aesthetic and political thought. His empathy for the scenes of La Nouvelle Héloïse may be understood as an appreciation of the beauty of the intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic perfection of humanity.

Shelley and Byron were initially social exiles and émigrés rather than tourists. Byron was never to return to England and Shelley settled permanently in Italy in 1818. Their motives for leaving England in 1816 were also of a more permanent nature than a temporary holiday. Byron left England to avoid the public scandal resulting from the breakdown of his marriage to Annabella Milbanke. Shelley left England to avoid debt⁴ and to avoid the problems arising from his relationship with Mary Godwin. He may also have been concerned about the forthcoming publication of "Alastor" (1816) and re-circulation of "Queen Mab", which was perceived by the authorities as seditious.⁵ When the packet for Calais sailed Shelley did not know if he would ever return to England. His departure with Mary Godwin

⁴ In 1816 a series of bad harvests forced much economic hardship, poverty and debt. Shelley's own financial problems must have been exacerbated by this crisis. See Kenneth Neill Cameron, Shelley The Golden Years (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard U P, 1974).

⁵ For a discussion of the controversy surrounding the publishing history of "Queen Mab" (1813) see Michael Henry Scrivener, Radical Shelley: The Philosophical Anarchism and Utopian Thought of Percy Bysshe Shelley (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton U P, 1982). Shelley printed and circulated "Queen Mab" privately in 1813. It was later revised and published by Shelley in the "Alastor" volume of 1816 under the title "The Daemon of the World." The definitive version was finally published in 1876. (See H 762)

was not an act of tourism but a definitive split with his family, home and country. In spite of this, once abroad both poets initially took on the status of sightseers acquiring the aesthetic pleasures associated with Rousseau's La Nouvelle Héloïse.

However, the kind of tourism in which Shelley engaged in the summer of 1816, is far more complex than standard leisure experience. Shelley's travel writing deconstructs standard tour narratives which largely represent scenes and events with a high degree of realism. In Switzerland, Shelley's senses responded in varying degrees to the 'real' political site of the castle of Chillon, and the ideal and aesthetic site of Julie's garden in the castle of Clarens. Both sites are in reality constructs of imagination. The events associated with the "real" site have passed into history or mythology; the historical site of Chillon may just as well be a fiction of the imagination as any site associated with La Nouvelle Héloïse. For the tourist, both sites are empty; it is up to the individual imagination to re-people the landscape and replay past events. Imagination is therefore a central aspect of the tourist experience. Our response to the political site of the battlefield of Waterloo engages all sorts of aesthetic emotions and senses but only if we use our imaginations. In Shelley's writing he indulges in an imaginary composition of the landscape, which does not mimetically reflect reality but poses a multiform perspective open to individual interpretation.⁶

Switzerland

In the nineteenth century, as today, the image of Switzerland was associated with alpine scenery and freedom. The image of Switzerland as a land of freedom from oppression has its roots in the fifteenth-century myth of William Tell and his stalwart upholding of

⁶ Camus has noted how the conception of realism is arbitrary and depends on personal judgement and interpretation: "Moreover, realism cannot dispense with a minimum of interpretation and arbitrariness. Even the very best photographs betray reality--they result from an action of selection and impose a limit on something that has none" (234).

justice against an oppressive Habsburg overlord. The myth of William Tell is contained in the white book of Sarnen (Bonjour 78), which suggests that the Swiss Confederation came into being in the late thirteenth century. The cantons of Uri and Unterwalden were first settled under the Roman empire as independent colonies. The canton of Schwyz was similarly under Roman jurisdiction, but was populated by Swedish emigrants who had left their homeland due to over-population. In the thirteenth century the three cantons submitted to the King of Germany, Rudolf of Habsburg, and later to the counts of the Tyrol who thoroughly abused their liberties. In reaction, representatives from Uri, Unterwalden and Schwyz met in the woods of Rütli in 1291 and swore an oath to drive out their oppressors (Bonjour 79).⁷ Bonjour suggests that the “union of August 1291 must be interpreted in a highly political sense, and becomes the defiant organization of free men to resist the intolerable burden of Habsburg oppression” (80). The founding of the Swiss confederation is therefore heavily associated with the fight for liberty.

The myth of William Tell, which is not accepted by modern historians (Hughes 78), derives from the story of the Austrian official, Gessler, who set his hat on a staff and ordered all who pass by to salute it. Tell defied this order and was forced by Gessler to shoot an apple from his son’s head. On his way to prison Tell escaped from a boat on the shores of Lake Uri at Tellenplatte, and later ambushed and assassinated Gessler in the woods between the Lakes of Lucerne and Zug. This act of terrorism precipitated an uprising in which castles were burned to the ground, and throughout the following century a prolonged power struggle between the united cantons and the Habsburgs continued without resolve. Regardless of any historical doubt over Tell’s acts of rebellion, he has from this time been celebrated as a figure of liberty for the Swiss peoples. Wordsworth’s sonnet, “Thought of a Briton on the subjugation of Switzerland” (1806-1807), shows how powerful the image of Switzerland as a

⁷ This act of defiant union is celebrated annually by the Swiss peoples on the first of August. See Christopher Hughes, *Switzerland* (London: Benn, 1975) 77.

land of freedom was at this time:

They were thy chosen music, Liberty!
 There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee
 Thou fought'st against him; but hast
 vainly striven. . . . (lines 4-6)⁸

In this sonnet the image of Switzerland is desecrated by the 1798 invasion, as in the comparable treatment of liberty by Coleridge in "France, an Ode."⁹

The idea of liberty in Switzerland is therefore mythologically and historically associated with the struggle of the cantonal unions to uphold their identity by fighting off outside oppression. In 1798, Switzerland, which was now composed of thirteen cantons, was forced to surrender her liberty to Napoleon. After the invasion he declared Switzerland a free democratic republic, the "one and indivisible Helvetic Republic" (Bonjour 222), increasing the number of cantons to eighteen and centralising their government. In 1803 the act of mediation restored political sovereignty to the old cantons. However, Switzerland was still a principality of France and, as such, far from being a free nation. In 1812 almost ten thousand Swiss conscripts were annihilated during Napoleon's retreat from Moscow. Once Napoleon was defeated in 1815, liberty was restored to the Swiss nation. The Congress of Vienna restored the Swiss constitution to its pre 1798 status as an ancient feudal society with differing vestiges of power allotted to the twenty two cantons. For revolutionists, such as Helen Maria Williams, the return of a semi-aristocratic form of government saw the end of a dream for a Swiss revolution. The concept of a united and egalitarian Europe was not altogether dashed

⁸ William Wordsworth, *The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth*, ed. Ernest de Selincourt and Helen Darbishire, vol. 3 (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1947).

⁹ See footnote 42, p171.

with the repulse of Napoleon as the revolutions of 1830 and 1848 testify. For Switzerland, however, such notions of a unified Europe were far from the minds of their ambassadors in the long negotiations which formed the treaty of Vienna. The long domination of Napoleon forced the Swiss to fight for a radical independence from European affairs, manifested in their new status as a country of neutrality, totally free from the aggressive militaristic manoeuvres of the continent that surrounded her geographical boundaries on all sides. One result of neutrality was the “right of asylum”, something which had to varying degrees been “exercised in Switzerland from early times, primarily in favour of religious refugees, but later in favour of political exiles also” (Kohn 57).¹⁰ Consequently, the image of Switzerland as a country of asylum must have had some resonance for Shelley in 1816, and may provide one possible motive for Geneva as the destination of his exile. Perhaps also, the idea of a society which allowed the practice of such peculiarised identity and independence of mind made the new Switzerland very desirable for Shelley as a possible new home. A feudal society downplays the strong central machinations of government, which Shelley detested. In *Political Justice* (1793), Godwin remarks that government, “even in its best state is an evil, the object principally to be aimed at is, that we should have as little of it as the general peace of the human society will permit” (106). The removal of a dominant central authority with a devolution of power to regions, or smaller republics, is one possible option to reform and lessen the role of government. As Dawson has suggested: “Shelley shared Godwin’s belief that a federation of small, autonomous republics was the most perfect form of government that could be envisaged as practicable” (30). In fact, Shelley had cited the Swiss republics as one such perfect form of government. Dawson notes: “In a *Philosophical View of Reform* he acknowledged the impossibility of direct democracy in large nations, and added that “the

¹⁰ In the fifteenth century Zwingli had declared in his “Exhortation to the Godly confederates” that: “All who have been unjustly exiled from other countries have found a refuge in the confederation . . . For it is clearly to be seen that your freedom is of good not only to yourselves but to the stranger also, that he may find refuge and respite under your protection as in a place of sanctuary” (Bonjour 27). Edgar Bonjour, *Swiss Neutrality, its History and Meaning* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1946).

most enlightened theorists have therefore proposed the dividing them into a great multiplicity of legitimate govern[ments], federated republics” (30).¹¹

Shelley’s tourism in the cantons of Switzerland in 1816 suggests, though, that any hopes that the new feudal systems of government might offer a better society and permanent place of settlement were short-lived. Whilst delighting in the aesthetic beauty of a Genevan landscape so deeply associated with La Nouvelle Héloïse, Shelley preferred not to settle permanently in a country whose new feudalist government did not answer his idea of a perfect society.

Shelley’s entries in the joint journal he kept with Mary Godwin on their first tour of Switzerland in 1814¹² suggest he was familiar with the political sympathies of Helen Maria Williams, who had visited Switzerland in 1794. On Friday the fifth of August 1815 the journal reads, “In the evening we sallied forth in search of H. M. Williams. . . . She is absent from the country” (Journals 10). Helen Maria Williams was a member of the English radical circle which existed in Paris in 1792 and included Thomas Paine amongst its members. Mary Wollstonecraft had been introduced to Williams during her stay in Paris in 1793, and Shelley may well have come across Williams’ political ideas second hand through Godwin, or indeed Mary Godwin.

In 1794 Williams was forced to leave France because her association as a “friend of the Gironde, of Madame Roland . . . of Robespierre” (H. Williams 1: 2) threatened her safety. She fled to Switzerland and later in 1798 published an account of her visit in A tour in

¹¹ See I P 7: 340. This passage is one of Shelley’s notes extant in the original manuscript. “A Philosophical View of Reform” was first published in 1920.

¹² Mary Shelley’s part of this journal comprises the earlier part of History describing their 1814 tour. In some respects Mary’s account is more vivid than Shelley’s and openly describes the damage resulting from the French wars. (For example, her account of the desolation to Nogent caused by the Cossacs [M 189].) She also briefly describes a visit to “a small obelisk erected to the glory of Rousseau” (M 210) and the feelings aroused by the sight of the chapel of Tell on the shores of Lake Uri: “At a distance on the shores of Lake Uri we could perceive the chapel of Tell, and this was the village where he matured the conspiracy which was to overthrow the tyrant of his country; and indeed this lovely lake, these sublime mountains, and wild forests, seemed a fit cradle for a mind aspiring to high adventure and heroic deeds” (M 197). Murray suggests that this passage may have been written by Shelley in 1817 (M 430).

Switzerland; or, a view of the present state of the governments and manners of those cantons: with comparative sketches of the present state of Paris. Williams was highly committed to the cause of the French Revolution. Her Tour and series of Letters from France suggests her pro-Napoleonic sympathies (in direct opposition to Shelley).

In Volume two of a Tour she intertwines descriptive scenes with an overt and highly politicised commentary on the revolutions in La Vallais, Freiburg, Basle and Solothurn. Williams is particularly critical of the Bernese aristocracy and forms of Swiss democracy, which she argues are in fact disguised oligarchies. Williams seems to suggest in her Tour that the minor revolutions and discontent throughout the cantons imply that a new system of government--even if it be French intervention--is a necessary evil. Williams' Tour links the myth of Tell to the idea of liberty and freedom, which inhabits the very essence of place in the Swiss landscape: "No place [the chapel of Tell] could surely be found more correspondent to a great and generous purpose, more worthy of an heroic and sublime action than the august and solemn scenery around us" (H. Williams 1: 141). Williams represents her tour of the site of the Tell legend in terms of engaging the reader's emotions and sensibilities:

Two hundred years since, the tree yet stood erect in the market-place, to which the son of William Tell was bound. On this sacred spot is built a kind of sacred tower, and at some little distance, where it is said the father stood, when he shot the apple from his son's head, a public fountain is erected, called Tell's fountain; on which is placed the frowning statue of this generous deliverer of his country. There must surely be some defect in the heart, which feels no enthusiastic glow, while we tread over the spots where those heroes have trod, who have struggled for the liberty of mankind, or bled for their rights. (1: 145-146)

The association of myth, landscape and emotion is taken to an almost religious pitch by Williams when she visits the actual spot on which Tell assassinated Gessler: "To those who think that all means against tyrants are lawful, this spot will appear the most sanctified place in Switzerland; and if assassination can be justified in any case, this has perhaps the greatest claim to pardon" (2: 109). The site of Tell's act of heroism inflamed William's imagination with the valorous deeds of Tell's myth, investing the ground of the chapel as holy ground or a sanctuary. William's Tour is overtly concerned with historical and contemporaneous revolutionary politics and implies that the Swiss cantons are ripe for political revolution and reformation, as indeed they were after Napoleon's invasion in 1798. Shelley's History in its subtle and indirect allusions to political events seems a more objective, although less detailed account of the Swiss nation at a particular moment in history.

Repressive Institutions

(i) Government

Shelley's desire for an egalitarian society is firmly rooted in a Godwinian passion for equality. "There is no such disparity among the human race as to enable one man to hold several other men in subjection, except so far as they are willing to be subject. All government is founded in opinion" (Godwin 63). For Shelley, a poet and philosopher must influence or recreate the opinions of mankind, before a change in society is effected. As Dawson remarks, "since opinion is so powerful a determinant of man's social existence it follows that all political reform must begin with a reform of opinion" (108). To reform our understanding of the world in imagination, through poetry is the first step in demythologising the existing order.

In its reportage of oppression History of a Six Weeks' Tour illustrates the authoritarian practices of political and religious systems throughout European history. Shelley is rather circumspect in his documentation of the recent events of Napoleon's recent imperialistic regime. However, he alludes to the very crux of Napoleonic intervention in his brief mention of the Berne uprising:

The lake was calm, and after three hours of rowing we arrived at Hermance, a beautiful little village, containing a ruined tower, built, the villagers say, by Julius Caesar. . . . The town itself, now an inconsiderable village inhabited by a few fishermen, was built by a Queen of Burgundy, and reduced to its present state by the inhabitants of Berne, who burnt and ravaged everything they could find. (M 212)

In January 1798 patriots from the canton of Vaud¹³ captured the castle of Chillon¹⁴ in La Valais--which was under the jurisdiction of the aristocratic Bernese oligarchy--and proclaimed the republic of Lac Lemman.¹⁵ This was followed by a number of similar uprisings in other cantons, which Napoleon used as an excuse to invade Berne,¹⁶ whose aristocrats had dissociated themselves from these small revolutionary uprisings. The Bernese bravely repelled Napoleon's first invasion, but succumbed after losing 900 men on his second attempt.¹⁷ Shelley's allusive remark about the inhabitants of Berne is not exactly clear.

¹³ To clarify the geographical position of the cantons of Switzerland see: An Historical Atlas of Modern Europe from 1789-1922, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford U P, 1924).

¹⁴ Chillon was used as a state prison until 1798. R. R. Palmer, The Age of the Democratic Revolution. A Political History of Europe and America, 1760-1800, vol. 1 (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton U P, 1964) 403.

¹⁵ See Palmer 409-410.

¹⁶ The added advantage of invading Berne was the confiscation of the funds of the particularly rich Bernese treasury. See E. Bonjour, H. S. Offler and G. R. Potter, A Short History of Switzerland (Oxford at the Clarendon P, 1952) 22.

¹⁷For a fuller account see Bonjour et al 220.

However, considered in conjunction with the symbol of the ruined tower which no doubt may be interpreted as a sign for the oppression wrought by an earlier occupying force,¹⁸ Shelley is perhaps suggesting the Bernese soldiers destroyed their town as the Romans had done 1740 years previously.

One other possible explanation may be that the revolutionaries who had forced uprisings in the Lower Valais, Fribourg, Solothurn, Lucerne and Basle united their efforts to revolutionise Berne, the “military mainstay of the old confederation” (Bonjour 220). Certainly the Vaudois asked for French assistance because the Bernese did not recognise their new independent republic. La Harpe, an aristocrat from the Vaud, welcomed French intervention, which he saw as the solution to the divided Swiss constitution. Peter Ochs of Basle preferred the idea of an independent Swiss revolution and the convention of a united Swiss assembly.¹⁹ Both men had been invited to a dinner with Napoleon in December 1797 in which the fate of revolutionary Switzerland was decided, and that “France should sponsor revolution in Switzerland” (Palmer 409). The French responded and occupied the Vaud on the 26th January 1798.²⁰ This was not their desired policy. They had tried to effect an internal revolution in Switzerland by raising discontent in cantons where republican feelings ran high.

As far as Shelley’s remark concerning “the inhabitants of Berne, who burnt and ravaged everything they could find” (M 212), this may refer either to a revolution in Berne by pro-French republican Swiss (especially the Vaudois), or to the defenders of Berne who destroyed their town to stop it falling into the hands of the invading French armies of 1798. In any case, Shelley’s comments on military history with its inevitable legacies of loss or

¹⁸ In 58 B. C. Julius Caesar invaded Switzerland or Transalpine Gaul. It was the policy of the inhabitants to burn their towns, villages and crops on evacuating their homeland. Transalpine Gaul was totally subsumed under Roman occupation during the dictatorship of Augustus. (See Bonjour 25).

¹⁹ See Palmer 408.

²⁰ See Samuel F. Scott and Barry Rothaus, Historical Dictionary of the French Revolution 1789-1799 (Westport: Greenwood P, 1985) 462.

suspension of liberty may be interpreted as his concern for the championship of human rights.

In his allusion to the Bernese conflagration, Shelley also indirectly refers to the history of Burgundian influence in the Vaud. In the fifteenth century the Valois Dukes of Burgundy ruthlessly dominated the political and cultural affairs of Western Europe (Vaughan 3). The aggrandizing manoeuvres of Charles the Bold demonstrate the “increase in the authority of central governments that took place during the fifteenth century” (3). Although Switzerland was not a nation in the fifteenth century,²¹ its lands did nevertheless enjoy independence until Charles the Bold occupied the regions of Strasbourg, Basel and Berne.

After the treaty of Westphalia the cantons of Switzerland enjoyed freedom until Napoleon founded his system of a democratic republic. Whilst for earlier Romantics like Helen Maria Williams, Napoleonic intervention had promised a solution to the poverty experienced under the feudal system, by Shelley’s visit republican idealism had long been exposed as Napoleonic imperialism.²²

If Napoleon’s regime was flawed then neither did Shelley approve of the new regime in France. Fortescue explains that “the allied powers viewed a Bourbon restoration as the best means of securing the stability of France and the peace of Europe” (5). Shelley, however, regarded the restoration of the Bourbons as a backward step in the development of mankind. In a “Philosophical View of Reform” he remarks on the failure of the French revolution:

The Revolution in France overthrew the hierarchy, the aristocracy and the monarchy, and the whole of that peculiarly insolent and oppressive system on which they were based. But as it only partially extinguished those passions which are the spirit of these forms a reaction took place which has restored in a certain limited degree the old

²¹ Its independence in international law was not recognised until the peace of Westphalia in 1648 (Bonjour 3). Switzerland was not a unified region until after the Congress of Vienna in 1815.

²² For Shelley’s anti-Napoleonic sentiments see “Feelings of a Republican on the Fall of Bonaparte” (1816) (H 526).

system. (I P 7: 14)

The return to the old system of monarchy was similarly adopted in Italy; Shelley had the foresight to suggest neither system would last. The Bourbon dynasty, he argues, is doomed to fail, as did the dynastic systems of the Valois Dukes of Burgundy which culminated in the rule and authoritarian government of Charles the Bold in the fifteenth century: "How impossible it is for the ancient system of opinions, or for any power built upon a conspiracy to revive them, permanently to subsist among mankind" (M 215).

After the Congress of Vienna in 1815, many Italian states returned to the authoritarian rule of pre-revolutionary monarchies. One such was Piedmont²³ where Victor Emmanuel the first resumed his throne after sixteen years of exile on the island of Sardinia.²⁴ The Congress restored the old orders in France and Italy to prevent the outbreak of public disorder and bring stability to Europe. Unfortunately a return to the old system brought poverty and unrest, the sort of unrest experienced under the reign of the father of Victor Emanuel the first, when thirteen Piedmontese peasants had petitioned the King for foodstuffs.²⁵ Woolf concedes that there is a paucity of information available about Piedmontese history in the early period of the Risorgimento,²⁶ but notes that the new monarchy in Piedmont adopted pre-1798

²³ For geographical clarification of the positions of Evian (in Savoy), Piedmont, and the Republic of La Valais, during the Swiss confederation; during the rise of Napoleon and the formation of the Helvetic Republic in 1798; and at the Congress of Vienna, see: The Times Atlas of European History, 2nd ed. (London: Times Books, 1998).

²⁴ See Frank J. Coppa, Dictionary of Modern Italian History (Westport: Greenwood P, 1985) 433.

²⁵ Stuart Woolf, A History of Italy 1700-1860. The Social Constraints of Political Change (London: Routledge, 1991) 159.

²⁶ "The term Risorgimento ("rebirth") has traditionally been used to denote the formative period of the modern Italian state, approximately from the intervention of Napoleon's army in 1796 to the proclamation of the Kingdom of Italy in 1861. Contemporaries, however, used the term rivoluzione Italiana, which described more accurately, the conspiracies, uprisings, and wars that led to the dissolution of Restoration governments and the emergence of a liberal, constitutional state" (Coppa xviii).

legislation²⁷ “to the extent of driving the Jews back to the ghetto, [and] harassing the Waldensians. . .” (244). Exact historical evidence in the English language of the history of Piedmont in 1816 is scarce, and as such Shelley’s role as travel writer and historian is highly valuable. Shelley certainly saw himself as some sort of historical commentator. In a letter to Hogg of August 1815 he writes:

You will see in the papers the continuance of the same system which the allies had begun to pursue; and a most spirited remonstrance of the King of France’s ministers against the enormities of their troops. In considering the political events of the day I endeavour to divest my mind of temporary sensations, to consider them as already historical. This is difficult. Spite of ourselves the human beings which surround us infect us with their opinions: so much as to forbid us to be dispassionate observers of the questions arising out of the events of the age. (J 1: 430)

Shelley’s Tour commentary provides the best contemporary evidence of a fairly obscure period in Italian history and is therefore a valuable source for analysing historical events:

The appearance of the inhabitants of Evian is more wretched, diseased, and poor, than I ever recollect to have seen. The contrast indeed between the subjects of the King of Sardinia and the citizens of the independent republics of Switzerland, affords a powerful illustration of the blighting mischiefs of despotism, within the space of a few miles. (M 214)

²⁷ The French assumed control of Piedmont in 1798.

The comparison between the town of Evian under the central control of a monarch, and the “independent republics of Switzerland” whose many cantons had by 1816 reverted to systems of feudalism (or regional control by landed aristocratic families), seems to infer, at least, that the Swiss example of rule affords less poverty.

(ii) Society and Education

The most exciting travel writing produces sketches which document the peculiarities of the local inhabitants, or tribe:

On returning to the village, we sat on a wall beside the lake, looking at some children who were playing at a game like nine-pins. The children here appeared in an extraordinary way deformed and diseased. Most of them were crooked, and with enlarged throats; but one little boy had such exquisite grace in his mien and motions, as I never before saw equalled in a child. His countenance was beautiful for the expression with which it overflowed. There was a mixture of pride and gentleness in his eyes and lips, the indications of sensibility, which his education will probably pervert to misery or seduce to crime; but there was more of gentleness than of pride.

(M 212-13)

In his role as anthropologist,²⁸ Shelley asks us to consider what might be done to relieve these children of their suffering and in so doing indirectly critiques the institutions which underpin society. Shelley remarks that this gentle child, who in his native state has exquisite grace and sensibility, will be corrupted in the course of society’s education. The

²⁸ The first recorded use of anthropologist is in 1798. *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. . 1989.

boy's conditioning will change his character for the worse. In "Speculations on Morals" (1815-19) Shelley's opinions on education are rather different:

Thus an infant, a savage, and a solitary beast, is selfish, because its mind is incapable [of] receiving an accurate intimation of the nature of pain as existing in beings resembling himself. The inhabitant of a highly civilised community will more acutely sympathise with the sufferings and enjoyments of others, than the inhabitants of a society of a less degree of civilisation. He who shall have cultivated his intellectual powers by familiarity with the finest specimens of poetry and philosophy, will usually [sympathise more] than one engaged in the less refined functions of manual labour.

(IP 7:75)

Here, Shelley suggests that familiarity with poetry and philosophy produces a more refined disposition capable of sympathy and benevolence. The boy of Nernier will, in the future, suffer the competitive institutions of school, family and work and be perverted by society. Of course, that situation may be remedied in later life when the child might have recourse to the arts, but the general implication seems to be that the institutions of society prohibit sensitivity and that an indifferent attitude is a pre-requisite of survival in a harsh society. These gentle children in their uneducated state, unperturbed by the acquisitive restraints of modern society live in the savage and egalitarian state of nature described by Rousseau in his "Discourse on Inequality" (1755).²⁹ In this work Rousseau argues that one of the causes of inequality derives from seeking the approval of one's fellow man. This argument is related to his earlier "Discourse on the Sciences and Arts" (1750) which suggests that the advancement of science and the arts has corrupted morals (Dent 18) since man pursues learning only to better himself

²⁹ See Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *A Discourse on Inequality*, trans. Maurice Cranston (London: Penguin, 1984).

in the eyes of his fellows.³⁰ Despite Shelley's more favourable position on the arts in terms of the positive effects of a sentimental education, he shares with Rousseau a belief that the conventions or "artificial distinctions"³¹ of society are largely responsible for inequality. In the sort of utopian and egalitarian society Shelley and Rousseau advocated, such distinctions were altogether absent.

(iii) Religion

For Shelley, such a utopia would be free from the oppressive institutions of society: that is contemporary systems of government and religion. Shelley's oppositional views on religion are reflected in *History* in his representation of the oppressive effects of Catholicism in early Reformation Switzerland.³²

At the commencement of the Reformation, and indeed long after that period, this dungeon was the receptacle of those who shook, or who denied the system of idolatry, from the effects of which mankind is even now slowly emerging.

Close to this long and lofty dungeon was a narrow cell, and beyond it one larger and far more lofty and dark, supported upon two unornamented arches. Across one of these arches was a beam, now black and rotten, on which prisoners were hung in secret. I never saw a monument more terrible of that cold and inhuman tyranny, which

³⁰ Rousseau's belief that the arts, particularly the theatre could exert an immoral influence on society is also voiced in his "Letter to M. d' Alembert on the Theatre" (1758).

³¹ See Shelley's "Essay on Christianity" (1816): "There is more equality, because there is more justice among mankind, and there is more justice because there is more, or more universal knowledge. To the accomplishment of such mighty hopes were the views of Jesus Christ extended, such did he believe to be the tendency of his doctrines: the abolition of artificial distinctions among mankind" (M 269).

³² For Shelley's earlier critical view on the Reformation see "An Address to the Irish People" (1812): "We will now examine the Protestant Religion. Its origin is called the Reformation. It was undertaken by some bigoted men, who showed each other how little they understood the spirit of Reform, by burning each other" (M 13-14).

it had been the delight of man to exercise over man. It was indeed one of those many tremendous fulfilments which render the "perniciis humani generis" of the great Tacitus so solemn and irrefragable a prophecy. (M 217-18)

Whilst this passage so obviously refers to the prison in which Francois de Bonivard was imprisoned,³³ Shelley's prisoners are purely those who "denied the system of idolatry." Bonivard was a Catholic during his imprisonment and only later became a convert to the Protestant faith. He was imprisoned in Chillon for his political beliefs, which opposed those of Duke Charles the third of Savoy. His rebellious attitude is reflected in his many quarrels with the consistory of Geneva, who prosecuted him for card-playing and ex-communicated him in 1564 for writing seditious poetry after Calvin's death. It is perhaps rather revealing that Shelley does not mention Bonivard directly, since undoubtedly he would have approved of his rebellious sympathies. Mary Shelley's argument that Shelley may have felt eclipsed by the acclaimed genius of Byron that summer,³⁴ may offer a solution to the absence of this figure of Swiss history who firmly belongs to modern tourist itineraries on Lake Geneva. Now, of course, tourists associate Bonivard with Byron's poem. Possibly Shelley did not wish to refer to him because he felt Byron's newly composed poem would overshadow his own efforts. Shelley, consequently ignored this myth and informed his description of the castle with a discourse on the horrors that emerge when enforced systems of belief are prescribed in a tyrannical society.

Shelley saw the prisoners as champions of free speech, imprisoned for their refusal to

³³ In his ecclesiastical career Bonivard (1493-1570) was abbot of the Benedictine monastery of St. Victor and Canon of Geneva. He also found vocations as a poet, historian and literary intellectual, as well as being something of a political agitator in local Genevan politics. See William E. Monter, Calvin's Geneva (London: Wiley and Sons, 1967).

³⁴ This argument is suggested in "Note on the Revolt of Islam by Mrs Shelley": "Perhaps during this Summer his genius was checked by association with another poet whose nature was utterly dissimilar to his own" (H 156). For a critical study of the Shelley-Byron relationship see Charles E. Robinon, The Snake and Eagle Wreathed in Fight (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins U P, 1976).

concur with the idolatrous and inhuman tyrannies of Catholicism. Injustice arising out of the misuse of public power has been a characteristic of mankind since the first societies and, he argues, will always be part of man's obstinate nature: "render the 'pernicies humani generis' of the great Tacitus so solemn and irrefragable a prophecy" (M 218). Shelley sees the Reformation as a liberating force which has overthrown the existing Catholic order of religion, only to retain the violent and factional methodologies which it is "the delight of man to exercise over man" (M 218). This view is historically developed in "A Philosophical View of Reform":

From the dissolution of the Roman Empire, that vast and successful scheme for the enslaving [of] the most civilised portion of mankind, to the epoch of the present year, have succeeded a series of schemes, on a smaller scale, operating to the same effect. Names borrowed from the life; and opinions of Jesus Christ were employed as symbols of domination and imposture; and a system of liberty and equality (for such was the system preached by that great Reformer) was perverted to support oppression.--Not his doctrines, for they are too simple and too direct to be susceptible of such perversion--but the mere names. Such was the origin of the Catholic Church. . . . (IP 7: 5)

Shelley argues that the egalitarian doctrines of Jesus have been distorted by religious leaders throughout history to their own powerful advantage, because of the flaws inherent in human nature "pernicies humani generis" (M 218).

Shelley's own religious beliefs defied received opinion. His views on religion are represented in 1816 by his inscriptive act of signing three hotel registers in Greek as "lover of mankind, democrat and atheist" (Cameron 74). Metaphorically defacing the guide-book may

be seen as an act of social iconoclasm defying the conventions of innkeeping which bound continental visitors to declare their identity. Shelley viewed such practices as intrusive. Byron later saw one of these inscriptions and erased it to protect Shelley's reputation, unfortunately to no avail, since it later appeared in the Quarterly Review and London Chronicle, which both later attacked Shelley for his nonconformist views on prescribed religious systems.³⁵ In fact, Shelley's description of himself as a democrat also laid him open to criticism since, as Dawson notes, "the term democrat as late as 1830 was still a term of abuse, or condemnation, amongst the ruling classes, and whigs as well as Tories carefully dissociated themselves from its implications" (45). Journalism, of course, often grasps on the negative, scandalous, dubious or unfortunate aspects of current affairs and Shelley's status as a "lover of mankind" was conveniently forgotten. Shelley's views on the established church are better understood if we regard him wholly as a "lover of mankind" in the best Christian tradition. His argument with the church was mainly with what may be loosely termed ecclesiastical machinery, or the hierarchy of archbishops, bishops and high-ranking ministers who constructed laws which did not necessarily reflect the sentiments of the bible.

Shelley's disagreement with the church is also connected to his dislike of dogma and absolute belief, which he demonstrated in his four inscriptions of αθεος in the guest-registers at Chamonix and Montanvert. Shelley's decision to politicise this ritual of tourism was, Gavin de Beer has argued, a response to the kind of platitudes which tourists such as Hugo William Williams recorded in hotel registers piously declaiming that the wonder of God inhabits the landscape of the alps. At Chamonix in 1816, Williams had written: "The mind is struck with the powerful work of God . . . the proudest of mankind must be overpowered with a sense of human weakness, and in silent adoration do homage to almighty power" (de Beer 10). His adoration of such breathtaking scenery is understandable given the beauty of the

³⁵ See Cameron 31.

alps, but his suggestion that man should defer to the almighty in response to the overwhelming magnificence of the alps suggests a subjection to unknown forces and a wholly inequitable relationship with God. Had Shelley seen a number of such entries graciously connecting the grandeur of the alps with the glories of God, it is no wonder he responded by making a public declaration of his unconventional attitudes to establishment values, for the consideration of tourists like Williams who were too willing to overlook the equally destructive forces of nature which lie dormant in the beautiful snowscapes.

Shelley's signatory act de-establishes the entire revelatory experience behind many tourists' visits to the alps. Tourists may not initially journey to the alps to see God, but the overwhelming reaction of the majority when faced with 'miracles' of nature is to feel that wondrous and sublime views suggest the handicraft of God. Jonathan Culler remarks that "the tourist is interested in everything as a sign of itself, an instance of a typical cultural practice. . . . Tourists persist in regarding objects and practises as cultural signs" (155). If, to most tourists, the image of the alps conveys a sign of God's creation then Shelley's iconoclasm is doubly damning, because it destroys the climactic focal point of the vast majority of the general public's acts of sight-seeing.

Both of Shelley's tour poems of 1816 take up this rhetoric of contention with God and assume an 'atheistic'³⁶ stance which counters the received response to finding God in the alpine landscape. It is perhaps necessary further to define what Shelley means by 'atheism' especially if we consider that, intentionally or not, much of his poetry is infused with a divine presence which suggests a love of God and mankind. In the "Advertisement" to his pamphlet, the "Necessity of Atheism" Shelley argues that the author is "Thro' deficiency of proof. An ATHEIST" (M 2). This definition hints at Shelley's sustained interest in causality, shown by

³⁶ The term atheism had a quite different meaning in the early nineteenth century. As in earlier periods of religious history its pejorative meaning did not distinguish between 'atheists' who believed in God and did not attend church, and 'atheists' who did not believe in God. See Armstrong 331-32.

his later adoption of some of Hume's philosophies in their manner of scientific and skeptical inquiry. His position is more fully explained in the recollections of Trelawny: "It is a word of abuse to stop discussion, a painted devil to frighten the foolish, a threat to intimidate the wise and good. I used it to express my abhorrence of superstition; I took up the word, as a knight took up a gauntlet, in defiance of injustice. The delusions of christianity are fatal to genius and originality: they limit thought" (Mullan 274). This definition makes no mention of an unbelief in God, but rather strongly advocates a disbelief in the institutions of religion which peddle God in an unthinking, unjust and institutionalised manner. It is evident, therefore, that Shelley's atheism is far from simple and has room for a consideration of God in some degree.

Shelley's atheism may be compared to the climate of the Reformation in its rejection of an established system of religion. In "A Philosophical View of Reform" Shelley shows semi-approval for the European Reformation; he calls it "the progress of philosophy and civilisation which ended in that imperfect emancipation of mankind from the yoke of priests and kings. . ." (I P 7: 6). What is notable about the history of the Reformation in Switzerland in the 1520s is the developing use of iconoclasm, which Eire defines as "opposition to images" (79), literally "breaking of images."³⁷ (This in turn may be seen as an act of breaking with public consensus.) Iconoclasm developed as a "political revolutionary tactic" (107) to destroy the pre-conceived practices of Catholicism by removing the idols of worship from churches and cathedrals. For example, in Berne on the 28th of January 1528 "the images and altars of the Cathedral were destroyed by a mob" (155). The Berne disputation followed Geneva's act of cleansing its churches in 1524,³⁸ but the acts of iconoclasm in Berne had serious, far-reaching consequences for the spread of the Reformation in Switzerland. It was

³⁷ J. B. Sykes, ed. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 7th ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987).

³⁸ Carlos M. N. Eire, *War against the Idols. The Reformation of Worship from Erasmus to Calvin* (Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1986) 106.

only through Berne's aggressive evangelism that Geneva adopted Protestantism in 1536.³⁹ Following Calvin's directives "Geneva [consequently] became the exporting centre of the reformed faith in Western Europe" (Eire 279). Shelley sees the enforcement of Catholicism as "a cold and inhuman tyranny, which it had been the delight of man to exercise over man" (M 218). There is arguably little difference between doctrinal systems laid down by the authority of the church and those laid down by the authority of government. In the reformation, and indeed up to 1798, the castle of Chillon served as the penal detention centre for all dissidents: those who "denied the system [of all kinds] of idolatry" (M 217)--religious and political. As Eire argues, "Iconoclasm is a revolutionary act. It is a direct act of violence against the accepted social myth" (151).

Shelley's own adoption of iconoclasm, or the breaking of a received body of opinion, urged gradual rather than violent reform. Writing with regard to the speed of electoral reform, Shelley in "A Philosophical View of Reform", comments that "it is better that we gain what we demand by a process of negotiation which would occupy twenty years, than that by communicating a sudden shock to the interests of those who are the depositaries and dependents of power" (I P 7: 52). This gradual view of reform depends highly on the negotiator's powers of conversation and arbitration, and a belief that change will eventually occur over a period of time: "it is no matter how slow, gradual and cautious be the change; we shall demand more and more with firmness and moderation" (46).⁴⁰ That such an approach was prudent is certified, because it took a further thirteen years for the reform bill to be passed. The memorials of oppression Shelley had observed in the Swiss landscape convinced him that society could only be reformed by diminishing the authoritarian nature of power systems. On the shores of Lake Geneva Shelley soon came to realise that Rousseau's

³⁹ Eire 124.

⁴⁰ Compare Godwin, in *Political Justice*: "The true instruments for changing the opinions of men are argument and persuasion. The best security for an advantageous issue is free and unrestricted discussion. If then we could improve the social institutions of mankind, we must write, we must argue, we must converse" (115).

ideas might after all offer a solution to inequality.

Rousseau

Perhaps Shelley's dislike of violent political agitation is related to his preference for the comparatively peaceful philosophies of Rousseau, which enjoyed a revisionary Renaissance following the publication of Hazlitt's article, "On the Character of Rousseau", in the Examiner in April 1816. This article suggested that readers should reconsider the implications of Rousseau's sentimental thought. Given Shelley's own tendency for sensibility it is possible his conception of the figure of Rousseau changed around this time. As Edward Duffy has suggested, Shelley refers to Émile in a superficial way in "Queen Mab", as early as 1811, (90-91) whilst by 1815 a developed interest may be inferred from his insistence that Claire Clairmont translate one of Les Rêveries du promeneur solitaire (1780) (93). Timothy Clark suggests, further, that given Mary Godwin's habit of reading books on her husband's recommendation, Shelley would have also read the Confessions (1782-89) by 1815, which appear in Mary Godwin's reading list for that year (206). Shelley's pronounced enthusiasm for Rousseau around 1816 is, of course, articulated through his prose and poetry composed in response to his Swiss tour. Shelley clearly thought Rousseau's thinking was in some way going to be of especial significance for the future of mankind. He concurred with Rousseau's hatred for the luxurious society life exhibited by the civilized coteries of Paris. For society to be effective it must abandon such foppish machinery and lead an elegantly refined and simpler life:

[Rousseau] addressed the most enlightened of his compatriots, and endeavoured to persuade them to set the example of a pure and simple life, by placing in the strongest

point of view his conceptions of the calamitous and diseased aspect which, overshadowed as it is with the vices of sensuality and selfishness, is exhibited by civilized society. (M 266)

Undoubtedly, Shelley's new conception of Rousseau as a saviour for the blights of humanity is linked to the emergence of a new Europe after the downfall of Napoleon. In Revolutionary Europe opinion on Rousseau had been divided. In England, Wollstonecraft, Paine, Priestley and Coleridge (Duffy 42) followed Burke's anti-Rousseauistic leanings. In his declamatory "Letter to a Member of the National Assembly" (April 1791), Burke had denounced Rousseau's philosophies as indirectly being responsible for the French Revolution (Duffy 38).⁴¹ Given Wordsworth and Coleridge's change of attitude to revolutionary France, after Napoleon's invasion of Switzerland,⁴² it may be assumed that pre 1815 opinions of Rousseau in England were not too high.⁴³ Once Europe had been liberated from the harsher exigencies of Napoleon's rule, the writings of Rousseau may equally have been dissociated from the recent order of Revolutionary France. This new interest in Rousseau is documented, for example, by Hazlitt in his essay, "On the character of Rousseau":

The only quality which he possessed in an eminent degree, which alone raised him above ordinary men, and which gave to his writings and opinions an influence greater, perhaps, than has been exerted by any individual in modern times, was extreme

⁴¹ Duffy suggests that Burke blamed Rousseau's moral philosophy and its effect "on the manners of society" rather than his political philosophy, for the French Revolution (39). Maurice Cranston, further comments that "it is as author of the second discourse that Rousseau has . . . been held responsible for the French Revolution" (Rousseau, *Discourse* 29).

⁴² See Coleridge's poems of political recantation (1798) especially "France: an Ode," *Poems*, 4, lines 64-68.

⁴³ Edward Duffy notes that in Europe, "the pre-revolutionary cult of Rousseau was not political but aesthetic. What it saw Rousseau promulgating was not so much liberty, equality and fraternity as the feeling heart, the simple life, and the familiar bond" (39). It was this model of Rousseau which Shelley and Byron elected in the summer of 1816.

sensibility, or an acute and even morbid feeling of all that related to his own impressions, to the objects and events of his life. (Wu 90)

Hazlitt concludes that Rousseau's status was raised far above "ordinary men", because of his refined and "extreme sensibility". This masterful sensibility infused his writings to such an "eminent degree", remarks Hazlitt, that his ideas have influenced modern society more than any other individual. This conclusion is not dissimilar from Shelley's own comments in "Essay on Christianity" where he adduces Rousseau's criticisms of le Paris monde which advocate a return to higher and more refined sensibilities of existence.⁴⁴ It is evident, therefore, that by 1816 with the conflagratory measures of the Napoleonic wars receding into the past, leading commentators such as Shelley and Hazlitt re-welcomed Rousseau as a figure whose writings might suggest methods of reforming the power structures of the emerging new European order.

Both Shelley and Byron spent a great deal of time during their tour of Lake Geneva thinking, reading and discussing Rousseau and La Nouvelle Héloïse. Shelley notes "I read Julie all day" (M 217) and "We returned to St. Gingoux before sun-set, and I passed the evening in reading Julie" (M 216). La Nouvelle Héloïse, which was published in Paris in 1761, posits a perfect society where free love is permissible and the repressing structures of the contemporary marriage institution are liberated. In such an ideal society Julia and St. Preux enjoy their tragic love-affair, even though Julie has later to sacrifice her ideals and marry Wolmar to preserve the semblance of the institution of marriage. St. Preux's noble deed in ending his affair with Julie may be read as a critique of the institution of marriage, on which the patriarchal rights of lineage depended in eighteenth-century Europe. Part of the novel therefore allows the imaginative construction of an ideal community, where sexual and

⁴⁴ See footnote 60. p 202.

patriarchal politics are abandoned and a state of free love is allowed to exist. The simpler routines of such an idyllic natural life are shown to work in contradistinction to the corruption of the demi-monde in Paris.

Rousseau's original conception of La Nouvelle Héloïse is recounted in Book nine of the Confessions:

The impossibility of attaining the real persons precipitated me into the land of chimeras; and seeing nothing that existed worthy of my exalted feelings, I fostered them in an ideal world which my creative imagination soon peopled with beings after my own heart. . . . Altogether ignoring the human race, I created for myself societies of perfect creatures celestial in their virtue and in their beauty, and of reliable, tender, and faithful friends such as I had never found here below. (398)

It is evident, therefore, that Rousseau intended his novel as a model of a utopian community, the sort of society which later, in the nineteenth century, may have attracted Shelley because it proposed ideals of love similar to his own. Shelley's own relationship with Mary Godwin and Claire Clairmont came under scrutiny in 1816,⁴⁵ and rumours of a "league of incest" at Geneva (Cameron 29) developed in English society. In his diary, Polidori alludes to an anomaly in this triangular relationship: "P[ercy] S[helley], the author of *Queen Mab* came; bashful, shy, consumptive; twenty six; separated from his wife; keeps the two daughters of Godwin, who practise his theories" (Holmes 325). Polidori does not elucidate what these theories may have been, although Shelley's earlier "notes" to "*Queen Mab*" suggest that the

⁴⁵ Shelley refers retrospectively to the gossip of English society in a letter to the Countess Guiccioli of 9th August, 1821: "The natives of Geneva and the English people who were living there did not hesitate to affirm that we were leading a life of the most unbridled libertinism. They said that we had formed a pact to outrage all that is regarded as most sacred in human society. Allow me, Madam, to spare you the details. I will only tell you that atheism, incest, and many other things--sometimes ridiculous and sometimes terrible--were imputed to us. The English papers did not delay to spread the scandal, and the people believed it" (J 2: 328).

underlying principle of his theory of free love was criticism of the institution of marriage:

Love withers under constraint; its very essence is liberty; it is compatible neither with obedience, jealousy, nor fear; it is there most pure, perfect, and unlimited, where its votaries live in confidence, equality and unreserve. . . . Any law which should bind them [lovers] to cohabitation for one moment after the decay of their affection would be a most intolerable tyranny. The marriage institution is . . . such an intolerable tyranny. (H 806)

In early nineteenth-century Europe, society was not liberated enough to accept Shelley's idealised vision of love, whose perfection could only be found within the pages of Rousseau's novel.

La Nouvelle Héloïse received high popular acclaim following its publication. Wells remarks that: "During the more than seventy editions it enjoyed by the year 1800, the work generated an unprecedented amount of excitement, curiosity and criticism, and was destined to become the most widely read--as well as the most heatedly debated--novel of the pre-Revolutionary Enlightenment in France" (1046). Response to the novel was divided. Whilst the general public "read the novel with rapture, the reaction of men of letters [was] hostile" (Attridge 227). Voltaire disliked the novel for what he saw as its indecency, whilst Grimm felt the work to be inconsistent (236). Rousseau received numerous personal letters from correspondents who were profoundly affected by his work. Many such correspondents were eminent and well-connected members of Parisian society. The poet and journalist, Margency, wrote to Rousseau in 1761 that "I believe that your charming Julie actually exists and I believe it for the honour of the humanity which I love. I believe that such a perfect character is not often found in society. . . (Cranston, Noble 255). It may well be that such kinds of

reactions forced Rousseau to discuss the very authenticity of his characters in the second preface to his novel, published later in 1761. In the preface he takes on the role of an editor to the letters. The “book shows how people feel, behave and express themselves when they have led a simple, quiet existence away from the turmoil and hypocrisy of the towns” (Mylne 168). Rousseau, though, does not admit the work is a fiction. He “repeatedly implies that the people and letters are real” (167). In Geneva, as in Paris, response was divided. The public and the press liked the novel. One review in the Journal Helvétique in February 1761 was particularly favourable: “This book will be ranked among the finest that have honoured this century” (Cranston, Noble 263). Genevan magistrates and clergy, on the other hand, were upset by dubious moral scenes in the novel. In fact, “the Consistoire of Geneva pronounced the novel ‘very dangerous for morals’ ” (Noble 263). Attridge suggests that after ten or fifteen years the notoriety of the novel had died down, particularly due to the bigger scandal which broke out over the publication of Émile and The Social Contract in 1762 (265). Leaving aside any accusations of corruption and immorality, the novel’s sophisticated treatment of adulterous love, in conjunction with its idyllic setting in the calm retreat of Clarens, showed readers an antidote to the less seemlier, vulgar and brash sides of Parisian society.

Rousseau, Tourism and the Transformation of Perception

That some sort of semi-regularised tourist industry existed celebrating Rousseau’s novel is suggested by Helen Maria Williams in her A Tour in Switzerland:

The country around Vevey, where Rousseau has placed the scene of his charming romance, is become classic ground. . . . On our left, as we journeyed towards the Vallais, we passed the village of Clarens, embosomed in the trees at the foot of a

mountain; farther on is the castle of Chillon, seated in the lake; over which, on the opposite side, hang the dark rocks of Meillerie. It would be hopeless to attempt a new sketch of these enchanting regions after the glowing description of Rousseau, which has already been so often detailed by the hundred sentimental pilgrims, who, with Heloise in hand, run over the rocks and mountains to catch the lover's inspiration.

(2: 179)

William's labels her tourists "sentimental pilgrims" and their sentimental tourism is informed by the guiding text of La Nouvelle Héloïse. Now, in 1794, her own response to La Nouvelle Héloïse has diminished and the glories of the novel are extinguished in the oppression wrought by the government of Berne, who subjugated prisoners in the Castle of Chillon in Lausanne:

All in nature is still romantic, wild, and graceful, as Rousseau has painted it; but the soothing charm associated with the moral feeling, is in some sort dissolved. The soft image of the impassioned Julia no longer hovers around the castle of Chillon, which is now converted into a Swiss Bastille, and guarded by stern soldiery. The tear of sensibility which has so often been shed over this spot for the woes of fiction, may now fall for sorrows that have the dull reality of existence. It is not the imaginary maternal shriek that pierces the ear, it is the groan of the patriot rising from the floor of his damp dungeon that rends the heart. (2: 180)

Williams suggests that ideal tears shed over scenes of fiction have been replaced by real emotions and a radical sensibility roused in response to the real sufferings of political prisoners. Unlike Shelley's imaginative dreamscape, Williams can only invest the landscape

of Geneva with factual associations of suffering in the fight for liberty. In contrast, Shelley differs from Williams, in adopting a duality of mind which fully acknowledges the aesthetic and imaginative propensities of the landscape associated with the impassioned spirit of Julia.

Both Shelley and Byron read Rousseau's novel in conjunction with visiting the scenes and events of the story:

I have traversed all Rousseau's ground with the 'Héloïse' before me; and am struck to a degree that I cannot express, with the force and accuracy of his descriptions and the beauty of their reality: Meillerie, Clarens, and Nevy, and the Château de Chillon are places of which I shall say little, because all I could say must fall short of the impressions they stamp. (BLJ 5: 82)

In a letter to John Murray of 27th June 1816, Byron suggests that the force and accuracy of Rousseau's descriptions in La Nouvelle Héloïse perfectly reflect the vivid breathtaking actuality of the landscape before him, a landscape which is equally if not more beautiful in its reality. Shelley is similarly struck by the heightened aesthetic pleasure which occurs by reading particular scenes in the novel, and observing the reality of those scenes: "It is inconceivable what an enchantment the scene itself lends to those delineations, from which its own most touching charm arises"⁴⁶ (M 212).

⁴⁶ Rousseau relates his imaginative working methods in creating the landscapes of Meillerie and Clarens etc. in Book nine of The Confessions: "In order to place my characters in a suitable setting, I passed the loveliest places I had seen in my travels one after another in review. But I found no woodland fresh enough, no countryside moving enough to suit me. The valleys of Thessaly would have satisfied me, if I had seen them; but my imagination was tired of inventing, and wanted some real locality to serve as a basis, and to create for the inhabitants I intended to place there the illusion of real existence. I thought for some time of the Borromean islands the delicious sight of which had enraptured me; but I found too much ornament and artifice about them for my inhabitants. I needed a lake, however, and finally I chose that lake around which my heart has never ceased to wander. I fixed on that part of its shores, which my wishes long ago chose as my dwelling-place in that imaginary state of bliss which is all that fate has allowed me. My poor Mamma's birthplace had still a special attraction for me. Its contrasting features, the richness and variety of its landscape, the magnificence and majesty of the whole, which charms the senses, moves the heart, and elevates the soul, finally determined me, and I established my young pupils at Vevey" (401).

Shelley's conception of the living reality of Rousseau's description of Meillerie operates on at least two levels. Firstly, he admires the landscape because it enhances his perception of the novel. Secondly, whilst he is wholly willing to believe in the imaginative truth of the novel, at the same time he admires the beauty of the landscape in its own right:

Meillerie is the well-known scene of St. Preux's visionary exile; but Meillerie is indeed enchanted ground, were Rousseau no magician. Groves of pine, chestnut, and walnut overshadow it; magnificent and unbounded forests to which England affords no parallel. In the midst of these woods are dells of lawny expanse, inconceivably verdant, adorned with a thousand of the rarest flowers, and odorous with thyme.

(M 215)

Shelley's imaginative and actual perception of the landscape illustrates why writers may blur the division between fact and fiction, imagination and reality. To reproduce reality as we would like it is the technique through which artists convey how they see the beauties of the world. As Camus remarks, "man can allow himself to denounce the total injustice of the world and then demand a total justice which he alone will create. But he cannot affirm the total hideousness of the world. To create beauty, he must simultaneously reject reality and exalt certain of its aspects. Art disputes reality, but does not hide from it" (224). On landing at Clarens, Shelley has a similar experience to Helen Maria Williams and finds that the landscape is no longer infused with the exalted spirit of Julia: "I never felt more strongly than landing at Clarens, that the spirit of old times had deserted its once cherished habitation. A thousand times, thought I, have Julia and St. Preux walked on this terraced road, looking towards these mountains which I now behold; nay treading on the ground where I now tread"

(M 218). Unlike Williams, however, his duality of mind can accommodate dull reality and intense imagination, for Shelley still ardently believes in the pedestrian idylls of Julia and St. Preux.

Shelley's creation of a theatrical landscape fashioned out of the imaginary scenes of La Nouvelle Héloïse is a strange illusory phenomenon of mind which he wholly attributes to the influence of "one mind", the individual genius of Rousseau:

I read Julie all day; an overflowing, as it now seems, surrounded by the scenes which it has so wonderfully peopled, of sublimest genius, and more than human sensibility. Meillerie, the Castle of Chillon, Clarens, the mountains of La Valais and Savoy, present themselves to the imagination as monuments of things that were once familiar, and of beings that were once dear to it. They were created indeed by one mind, but a mind so powerfully bright as to cast a shade of falsehood on the records that are called reality. (M 217)

Shelley implies that the places, mountains, castles and beings of Julie afford a sense of precognition, their "familiarity" and "dearness" are simply the consequence of having rediscovered their imaginative and textual forms in the real landscape. Faced with the startling reality of an artistically created and imagined form, transmogrified into a 3-D image, Shelley's response is to pay homage to the castles, mountains, people and places of Geneva. They become visible "monuments" of the imagination, objects to be celebrated and acknowledged, just as we might honour the site of a battle. Such an act is a figure of metonymy; the panorama of Meillerie becomes a symbol for all that is "dear" about La Nouvelle Héloïse and its astonishing creator, Rousseau.

Tourism and Idolatry

Shelley's belief that the invisible landscape of Rousseau is more imaginatively powerful is reflected in his visit to the castle of Clarens. Visiting castles is part of standard touristic behaviour but Shelley does not write about the castle and its history; instead he pays homage to the imaginary figure of Julie and her creator, Rousseau: "We gathered roses on the terrace, in the feeling that they might be the posterity of some planted by Julie's hand. We sent their dead and withered leaves to the absent" (M 219). This highly personal and mutual act of secular worship to the living spirit of Rousseau's creations may have inadvertently precipitated the destruction of the grove of Julie under the orders of the convent of St. Bernard:

We went again to "the bosquet de Julie," and found that the precise spot was now utterly obliterated, and a heap of stones marked the place where the little chapel had once stood. Whilst we were execrating the author of this brutal folly, our guide informed us that the land belonged to the convent of St. Bernard, and that this outrage had been committed by their orders. I knew before, that if avarice could harden the hearts of men, a system of prescriptive religion has an influence far more inimical to natural sensibility. (M 219)

This act of inverse iconoclasm, Shelley implies, was carried out to stop the unsanctioned veneration of a literary idol on holy ground; a transgressive form of behaviour which trespassed into the mysteries of the monk's own sacramental ceremonies.

Shelley's adoration of the creator of Julie is quite dissimilar from Byron's worship of Gibbon. Shelley was thoroughly versed in the violent political upheavals analysed in

Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire (1776-88). In the months preceding the birth and tragic death of their first child in March 1815, Shelley frequently read Gibbon aloud to Mary. Perhaps the unhappy feelings associated with the memories of this routine coloured Shelley's reactions when he visited the ruins of Gibbon's house in Geneva:

The rain detained us two days at Ouchy. We however, visited Lausanne, and saw Gibbon's house. We were shewn the decayed summer-house where he finished his History, and the old acacias on the terrace, from which he saw Mont Blanc, after having written the last sentence. . . .

My companion gathered some acacia leaves to preserve in remembrance of him. I refrained from doing so, fearing to outrage the greater and more sacred name of Rousseau; the contemplation of whose imperishable creations had left no vacancy in my heart for mortal things. Gibbon had a cold and unimpassioned spirit. I never felt more inclination to rail at the prejudices which cling to such a thing, than now that Julie and Clarens, Lausanne and the Roman Empire, compelled me to contrast between Rousseau and Gibbon. (M 219-20)

For Shelley, the figure of Gibbon is overshadowed by the mightier genius of Rousseau. Shelley preferred to immortalise the "sacred name of Rousseau" and his "imperishable creations", which he indirectly classifies as celestial beings (M 220). For Shelley, the characters of La Nouvelle Héloïse are divinities who walk the hinterland in spirit.

In his fascination with the mind of Rousseau, Shelley conceives the power of such genius to be that of an alchemist. Rousseau's imagination transforms the dull base metal of the Genevan landscape into a resplendent gold. In a letter to Hogg, Shelley, whilst referring to Rousseau's ability to illuminate the landscape through his fiction, equally remarks that it is

Rousseau's status as a "mighty genius" which adds further fascination to the places he visited:

Geneva is far from interesting, & is a place, which for the sake of scenery I should never have made my habitation. I have seen Vevai, Clarens, Meillerie . . . I have read La Nouvelle Héloïse at these places, a book which tho in some respects absurd & prejudiced, is yet the production of a mighty genius, & acquires an interest I had not conceived it to possess when giving & receiving influences from the scenes by which it was inspired. Rousseau is indeed in my mind the greatest man the world has produced since Milton. (J 1: 493)

Shelley considered Rousseau and Milton to be the two pre-eminent heroes of Christendom. Milton's discourses on divorce, or reform of the marriage contract, in their time proposed revolutionary principles for restructuring a patriarchal institution which underpinned the structure of seventeenth century society. Comparably, in the nineteenth century, Shelley's ideas on free-love threatened too many assumptions of the ruling order. How exciting, therefore, it must have been to visit Byron at the Villa Diodati with its Miltonic associations. Milton visited his friend Dr John Diodati, the Genevan Professor of theology, on his return from Italy in 1639. Milton's "Elegy to Charles Diodati" (1626) almost seems to contain a conduct of living, a modus operandi which mirrors Shelley's literary quest around the paths of Lake Geneva to attain the secrets of Rousseau's imagination:

If this be exile, to have retired to my father's house, and there carefree to live in pleasant leisure, then I refuse neither the name nor the lot of an exile, and gladly enjoy such banishment. Would that no heavier blow had fallen on the lamentable bard

who was exiled to the land of Tomis.

Here may I freely give my time to the tranquil muses; and here my books, which are my life, absorb me wholly. . . .

Give place, O heroines, once so often lauded, and whatever mistress captivated wandering Jove. Give place, O Achaemenian maidens with foreheads high-turreted, and all you who dwell in Susa and Memnonian Nineveh; and even you, O Grecian nymphs, and you Trojan and Roman women, acknowledge yourselves inferior. (Milton 89-91)

Milton seems to enjoy his status as exile in his father's house since it enables him to contemplate his muses, the heroines of his imagination. Shelley also in his temporary exile communed with the mythical and cultural muses who inspire composition. According to Mary Shelley, Shelley's reading list for the year was prodigious:

In the list of his reading I find, in Greek, Theocritus, the Prometheus of Aeschylus, several of Plutarch's Lives, and the works of Lucian. In Latin, Lucretius, Pliny's Letters, the Annals and Germany of Tacitus. In French, the History of the French Revolution, by Lacratelle. He read for the first time, this year, Montaigne's Essays, and regarded them ever after as one of the most delightful and instructive books in the world. The list is scanty in English works: Locke's Essay, Political Justice, and Coleridge's Lay Sermon, form nearly the whole. It was his frequent habit to read aloud to me in the evening; in this way we read, this year, the New Testament, Paradise Lost, Spenser's Fairy Queen, and Don Quixote. (H 536)

Shelley had therefore communed with the Greek and Roman muses throughout the year and

most notably read Paradise Lost during his residence at Montanvert. This is strong evidence that the sense of place may be further transformed by imaginatively becoming involved with the figure of an inhabitant. In tourism, such behaviour is facilitated by the written records that artists bequeath to posterity. Shelley's reading of Milton enhanced his perception of the Villa Diodati, much as his reading of La Nouvelle Héloïse enhanced his perception of Meillerie.

Shelley's Tour may be evaluated in two distinct divisions: as a selective history of the repressive practices of dynastic, religious and societal systems, and as a secular pilgrimage to the figure of Rousseau. Shelley's History communicates dissatisfaction with the injustices of society and government, and suggests that reform might begin by adopting a more questioning, indeed iconoclastic, attitude. By reforming processes of thought, by adopting new ways of thinking, as suggested in the real or imaginative pose presented in La Nouvelle Héloïse, mankind might be able to break free from established systems of enforcement which deter development, and gradually create a utopian society. For Shelley, the figure of Jean Jacques Rousseau became an icon for such a perfect society, and his ideas could be emulated and reconstructed in poetic form. Shelley's tourism is therefore most conveniently defined as a secular pilgrimage to his beloved Rousseau.

Shelley's Humanism: Secular Enthusiasm and Religious Sentiment

During Shelley's residence on Lake Geneva in the summer of 1816 only a few miles away, on the opposite shore, a distinguished group of international intellectuals met regularly at the salon of Madame Germaine de Staël. Whilst Lord Byron sailed over the lake on several occasions to join this coterie of leading European thinkers--which included Barante,

Bonstetten, Constant, Necker, Schlegel and Sismondi⁴⁷--there is no evidence in Shelley or Byron's letters that suggests Shelley visited Mme de Staël. Shelley did not wish to be associated with her fiery reputation as a dissenting political writer and consequent status as an anti-establishment political figure in Europe, after the seizing and pulping of her anti-Napoleonic work, *De L'Allemagne*, in Paris in 1811, on the eve of its publication.⁴⁸ This is wholly understandable given his own concern about his revolutionary reputation evolving from his expulsion from Oxford, his demagoguery in Dublin in 1812, and more recently in the controversy concerning the re-publication of "Queen Mab." Shelley had no wish to be seen in league with any contentious figure,⁴⁹ especially so public a figure as the exiled de Staël, because he feared for his own safety once he returned to the politically treacherous climate of England.⁵⁰ Byron, who had no intention of returning to England, did not have the same need to protect his public reputation, which was perhaps already irreparably damaged. Shelley's absence from de Staël's international circle does not however, preclude assent with her philosophies. We may construe that he absorbed some of her ideas in conversation with Byron, and even if this is not wholly certain, Shelley's ideas on religion in his Genevan works converge in places with the religious sentiments of de Staël and Constant.

⁴⁷ (i) Baron de Guillaume Prosper-Brugierè Barante (1782-1866), historian, literary critic and diplomat. In youth a devoted admirer of Mme de Staël.

(ii) Charles Victor de Bonstetten (1745-1832), friend of the Neckers and de Staël.

(iii) Benjamin Constant (Henri-Benjamin Constant de Rebeque) (1767-1830), famous author of *Adolphe* and renowned political philosopher. A former companion of De Staël, in Paris and at Coppet.

(iv) Mme Albertine Necker de Saussure (1766-1841), cousin by marriage and intimate friend of de Staël.

(v) August Wilhelm Von Schlegel (1767-1845), German scholar, translator, friend of Mme de Staël.

(vi) Leonard Sismonde de Sismondi (1733-1842), historian and political economist, especially famous for *L'Histoire des Républiques Italiennes du Moyen Age, 1809-1818*, 16 vols.

Joyce M. H. Reid, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of French Literature* (Oxford; Clarendon P, 1976).

⁴⁸ For a further explanation of the censorship of this work, and its relationship to inspiration, see Timothy Clark, *The Theory of Inspiration* (Manchester: Manchester U P, 1997) 148-150.

⁴⁹ This of course, may explain the mysterious absence of Byron's name from anywhere in the text of *History of a Six Weeks' Tour*. In view of their close friendship that summer, Shelley's designation of Byron as "my companion" (M 213) may be viewed as political expediency, rather than as a rebuffal.

⁵⁰ Madame de Staël, herself, in her essay "On Exile" noted that Napoleon exiled Mme Récamier simply for entering "the chatéau of an unhappy female friend" (Staël, *Major* 372).

De Staël formulated her early ideas on literature and its relationship to society in De la Littérature Considérée, dans ses Rapports avec les Institutions Sociales (1800).⁵¹ Haydn Mason remarks that in this work de Staël was “seeking to define the spirit of literatures at various times and places and to trace its origins” (239). Her idea that climate shapes national character⁵² to some extent derives from the thinking of Montesquieu; the nature of literature, supposes de Staël, may be influenced through national identity. One can see the influence of this work on De L’Allemagne⁵³ in its suggestion that the divide between ancient and modern literature develops from the commencement of the Christian religion.⁵⁴

In De L’Allemagne, Staël classifies literature into two schools. The Southern school derives from myths of classical and pagan antiquity, and is related to the classicism of Homer with its structured perfection of form. The Northern school is a modern school and is associated with the more recent religion of Christianity, and it descends from narratives of Christian and medieval chivalry:

The name “Romantic” was recently introduced in Germany to designate the poetry originating with the troubadors’ chants, born of Chivalry and Christianity. We have to postulate that the realm of literature is divided between Paganism and Christianity, North and South, antiquity and the Middle Ages, Chivalry and Greek and Roman institutions, if we are to judge ancient or modern taste from a philosophical point of view. (Major, 299)

⁵¹ For a discussion of this work’s relationship with De L’Allemagne, and on the thinking of Shelley, see Timothy Clark, Embodying Revolution: The Figure of the Poet in Shelley (Oxford at the Clarendon P, 1989).

⁵² See de Staël, Major 176.

⁵³ De L’Allemagne was finally published in London in 1813.

⁵⁴ See Haydn Mason, French Writers and their Society 1715-1800 (London: Macmillan, 1982) 239-243.

In De L'Allemagne Staël makes a distinction between classical and romantic literatures and in so doing attempts to introduce the idea of Romanticism to the European nations (Isbell 90). The principle behind the philosophy of the Northern school is the concept of enthusiasm. Staël defines enthusiasm as “rallying the harmonies of the universe, it is love of the beautiful, elevation of the soul, but above all it signifies God in us” : “L’enthousiasme ce rallie à l’harmonie universelle: ‘C’est l’amour du beau, l’élévation de l’âme, la jouissance du dévouement, réunis dans un même sentiment qui’ a de la grandeur et du calme. Le sens de ce mot chez les Grecs en est la plus noble définition: L’enthousiasme signifie Dieu en nous” (5:187).

In the Enlightenment, thinking was divided on the issue of whether inspiration was determined through either the grace of God or human intention. Shaftesbury, for example, in his Characteristics (1714) firmly locates the concept of enthusiasm as a spiritus mundi: “The transports of poets, the sublime of orators, the rapture of musicians, the high strain of the virtuosi; all mere enthusiasm! Even learning itself, the love of arts and curiosities, the spirit of travellers and adventurers; gallantry, war, heroism, all enthusiasm!” (Ashfield 77). Shaftesbury’s pagan deities bear a remarkable similarity to Shelley’s spirit of beauty in “Hymn to Intellectual Beauty”, and like Shelley, his deities ascend from the past world of classical antiquity: “Mysterious voices are either heard or fancied: and various forms of deity seem to present themselves, and appear more manifest in these sacred sylvan scenes; such as of old gave rise to temples, and favoured the religion of the ancient world” (Ashfield 77).

Robert Lowth, too, associates the spirit of enthusiasm with secular forces, which lend a godly disposition to a poet whose own brilliance is reflected from the influence of another:

When, therefore, a poet is able, by the force of genius, or rather of imagination, to

conceive any emotion of mind so perfectly as to transfer to his own feelings the instinctive passion of another, and agreeably to the nature of the subject, to express it in all its vigour, such a one, according to a common mode of speaking, may be said to possess the true poetic enthusiasm, or, as the ancients would have expressed it, “to be inspired; full of the god;” not, however, implying that their ardour of mind was imparted by the gods, but that this ecstatic impulse became the god of the moment.

(Lowth 183-84)

Lowth suggests that true inspiration is a divine force associated with a higher cause and manifest in the writings of the prophets, Moses, David and Isaiah; but which nevertheless bears the mark of human transference:

I am indeed, of opinion, that the Divine Spirit by no means takes such an entire possession of the mind of the prophet as to subdue or extinguish the character and genius of the man; the natural powers of the mind are in general elevated and refined; they are neither eradicated nor totally obscured; and though the writings of Moses, of David, and of Isaiah, always bear the marks of a divine and celestial impulse, we may nevertheless plainly discover in them the particular characters of their respective authors. (Lowth 174-75)

Benjamin Constant’s ideas on religious sentiment and enthusiasm are expressed in his essay “On Religious Liberty” in his Principles of Politics Applicable to All Representative Governments (1815). Constant believes that the moral excellence of man is governed by emotional feelings: “There is in emotion, whatever its cause, something which makes our blood flow faster, which communicates to us a kind of wellbeing which doubles the sense of

our existence and our powers, and that, by doing so, renders us capable of greater generosity, courage, or sympathy, than we normally feel” (278). Constant associates enraptured states of being or “reverie” with a sympathy for religious feeling: “How would you define reverie, that intimate quivering of the soul, in which all the powers of the senses and thought come together and lose themselves in a mysterious confusion? There is religion at the bottom of all things. All that is beautiful, all that is inanimate, all that is noble, partakes of the nature of religion” (279). Constant’s confessed Protestantism finds the truth of religion in the world and in the actions of man, but he shares with de Staël the idea that the emotions (love, glory, devotion, melancholy) (277) create in the mind the seat of religious sentiment.

Shelley’s poetry combines the ideals of the classical school with the enthusiasm of the modern school. An enthusiastic state of inspiration to Shelley, though, is how the intellect of man may distinguish itself from God. Coleridge, in comparison, who had also been inspired by the Swiss landscape, considered that God could reveal his presence in a mind filled with the emotion of sublimity. Coleridge’s poetical responses to Switzerland are recounted in his “Hymn before Sun-Rise in the Vale of Chamouni” published in the Morning Post on 11th September 1802. As Charles Robinson (Snake 36) and Angela Leighton (58) have shown, Shelley is likely to have read this poem in an edition of The Friend he saw in Geneva that summer. Coleridge’s reaction to the Vale of Chamouni is perfectly expressed in his own footnote to the poem: “Indeed, the whole vale, its every light, its every sound, must needs impress every mind not utterly callous with the thought--who would be, who could be an Atheist in this valley of wonders” (Complete, 377). Sacred religious enthusiasm is also reflected in the poem itself where Coleridge uses natural phenomena to account for the existence of a wondrous God whose divine presence inhabits the sublime landscape:

Who made you glorious at the Gates of Heaven

Beneath the keen full moon? Who bade the sun
 Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with living flowers
 Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet?--
 God! Let the torrents, like a shout of nations,
 Answer! and let the ice-plains echo, God! (Poems 54-59)

Coleridge's rainbow and flowers confirm ecstatically the quiddity of God in a way which contrasts and differs from Shelley's responses to the Swiss alps, but if we remove the concept of a godhead from both poet's hymns, their rhetoric of beauty in nature is perhaps rather similar. Shelley's zeal for the beauties of nature resides in the exciting period of youth where the discovery of metaphysics and enquiries into the first cause are heightened with an enthusiasm of particular intensity. For Shelley this spirit is especially coherent in his love of nature: "Thus let thy power, which like the truth / Of nature on my passive youth / Descended, to my onward life supply / Its calm" (ME 7, 78-81).⁵⁵ For Shelley, however, the beauty and splendour of the garden of nature is not consanguineous with the glories of God. Shelley's hymn is addressed to a pagan spirit, the spirit of Beauty, whose peculiar resemblance to the Christian God suggests that the poem is disputing the received beliefs and practices of the established Christian religion. If the hymn is not addressed to God, the worshipping of a false idol--the spirit of beauty--is blasphemous, by default. Shelley's hymn may therefore be interpreted as a profane hymn which employs religious forms, vocabulary and ideas in order to destabilise any reader's unquestioning adherence to the authorised truths and ceremonies which are the bedrock of ecclesiastical doctrine, whilst imparting a belief in the love and humanity of man.

⁵⁵ Subsequent references from "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" and "Mont Blanc" are taken from The Poems of Shelley, ed. Geoffrey Matthews and Kelvin Everest, vol. 1 (London: Longman, 1989).

(i) Investigations of Divinity

Shelley's love of knowledge, and it might be noted divine inquiry, is firmly rooted in the age of the Enlightenment, when Ashfield suggests there was a "change from an epistemology based in theological belief and debate to one in which man must find from within himself the grounds of knowledge" (1). Both Shelley's tour poems of 1816 are redolent with an enlightenment epistemology which practise attitudes of sceptical enquiry rather than unquestioned acceptance in theological ideas.

"Mont Blanc" shares the same existential specificity as "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" but differs in that it may also be evidently classed as a topographical poem. The concept of particularised locations is a specific determination in topographical poetry. Klaus Hofmann suggests that "Poetry, written at a place, written in response to the place, and, strictly speaking, poetry writing the place" may be defined as topographical (Smethurst 65). Mary Shelley's description of the circumstances surrounding the composition of both Shelley's Swiss poems suggest the especial significance place has in our understanding of these works:

As a poet, his intellect and composition were powerfully influenced by exterior circumstances, and especially by his place of abode. . . . In 1816 he again visited Switzerland, and rented a house on the banks of Lake Geneva; and many a day, in cloud or sunshine, was passed alone in his boat--sailing as the wind listed, or weltering on the calm waters. The majestic aspect of Nature ministered such thoughts as he afterwards enwove into verse. (H 156)

Mary Shelley's note to "The Revolt of Islam" suggests that "the majestic aspect of nature" and the "thoughts" engendered by those views are the resounding criteria in Shelley's 1816

poems. Sublimity resides not only in the spectacle of the alps themselves, but also in the grandeur of mind associated with such “thought.” As Angela Leighton has noted “the development of a theory of the sublime in the eighteenth century is marked by a gradual shift from an objective to a subjective discourse” (25). For Shelley, the intellectual pleasure derived from observing mountain scenery forms an expression of mind which results in the written utterance of a composition that questions the existence of God, and that argues vehemently with conformist responses of finding the presence of God in the icy landscape:

Thou hast a voice, great mountain, to repeal
 Large codes of fraud and woe; not understood
 By all, but which the wise, and great, and good
 Interpret, or make felt, or deeply feel. (ME 3, 80-83)

To apprehend the true phenomenology of the landscape one must belong to the intellectual elect, the “wise, and great, and good” (3, 82); minds whose powers of sensibility determine a largesse of heart deep enough to comprehend the powerful and terrifying aspects of the scenery without submissively assigning their cause to the fearful works of God. The voice of the mountain, truly understood, rejects connection with God and allegorises such possibilities as an incomprehensible Babel of tongues:

The wilderness has a mysterious tongue
 Which teaches awful doubt, or faith so mild,
 So solemn, so serene, that man may be,
 But for such faith, with nature reconciled. . . . (3, 76-79)

Such abstruse language in its dissenting incomprehension of tongues immediately produces unsettling doubt, but perhaps Shelley's elect find in such breathtaking visitations of mind a serene composure which reconciles their hearts to the goodness of nature, "or faith so mild" (3, 78). The intricacy of diction and complexities of language in these lines, suggest that the scenery of Mont Blanc instils emotion in those whose sensibility is refined enough to dissociate nature's lovely terrors from the originating cause of existence.

The beauty and sublimity of breathtaking scenery is often associated with intense emotion and in "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" Shelley attempts to discover the power or source behind this originating scene of beauty, and in so doing deconsecrates the tenets of the Christian religion. Despite Shelley's iconoclastic ideas on religion, the poem valorises a religious vocabulary and even addresses a mystical spirit in order to create a personal synod in which existential questions are examined but are unresolved. In Shelley's poem the spirit of beauty is addressed as a God and is confirmed by the poet to perform the same healing functions of a divinity: "Thy light alone . . . Gives grace and truth to life's unquiet dream" (3, 32-36). Shelley's spirit of beauty also engenders a state of hope that universal freedom may be permissible, "with hope that thou wouldst free / This world from its dark slavery" (6, 69-70), but at the cost of submission to a higher power: "I vowed that I would dedicate my powers / To thee and thine--have I not kept the vow?" (6, 61-62). Shelley reveals that peace and contentment are relics available for exchange to a pilgrim willing to acknowledge his deity's power in the form of worship: "Thus let thy power, . . . to my onward life supply / Its calm--to one who worships thee" (7, 78-81). The covenant decreed by Shelley's deity critiques the Biblical injunction to fear God, by binding his disciple to fear himself: "thy spells did bind / To fear himself" (7, 83-84). A point of agreement is, however, reached in the Christian ethic of mutual human benevolence "and love all human kind" (7, 84). This is reflected in the earlier trinity of "Love, Hope and Self-esteem" (4, 37), where "self esteem"

replaces the “faith” of the biblical version from the book of Corinthians. Such emphasis on self-esteem suggests that the divinities of our own intellect become the focus for our own personal creed of life. Indeed, Harold Bloom asserts that the “substitution [of self-esteem for faith is] the essential and inevitable one in Shelleyan religion”. A reversion to humanism allows the possibility that man may find “reverence for the divine in [him]self, by imaginative self-esteem, worship of what Blake calls . . . ‘Human form divine’ ” (39-40). The absence of faith from Shelley’s Hymn, concluding in his injunction that man should fear himself rather than God, serves to question one of the major principles on which adherence to the almighty is based. In confronting the illogicalities of theism the poem achieves its strength as a consistory for debating points of religion.

(ii) Divinity and Inequality

Shelley’s continuing interest in the philosophies of Rousseau in the summer of 1816 is related not only to the theatrical landscapes of La Nouvelle Héloïse, but also to his political philosophies. Shelley concurs, for example, with those of Rousseau’s views which attack institutional religion. Both writers also agree that morals and received belief or custom unduly influence the large majority of the populace in their personal, religious and political thinking. It is equally the aim of both writers to persuade men to change their traditional beliefs on morals and religion, in order to effect an enlightened political position in which a reformed society may be created. In his “Essay on Christianity” (1817), Shelley--like Rousseau in his Social Contract (1762)--equates man’s capacity to believe, with his moral judgement and his conception of what is good:

The nature of the belief of each individual also will be so far regulated by his

conceptions of what is good. Thus, the conceptions which any nation or individual entertain of the God of its popular worship may be inferred from their own actions and opinions, and from the actions and opinions which are the subjects of their approbation among their fellow men. (M 258)

Ultimately then, the prevailing view of society in any given situation depends on a consensus of opinion regulated by the general approval of mankind, in which the opinion of one's fellow man (which may in turn derive from pre-established customs and beliefs inherited through generational thinking) assumes an inordinate position in the fundamental decisions involved in administering society. The idea of approved custom is discussed by Rousseau in his Discourse on Inequality (1755):

To the extent that ideas and feelings succeeded one another, and the heart and mind were exercised, the human race became more sociable, relationships became more extensive and bonds tightened. People grew used to gathering together in front of their huts or around a large tree; singing and dancing, true progeny of love and leisure, became the amusement, or rather the occupation, of idle men and women thus assembled. Each began to look at the others and to want to be looked at himself; and public esteem came to be prized. He who sang or danced the best; he who was the most handsome, the strongest, the most adroit or the most eloquent became the most highly regarded, and this was the first step towards inequality and at the same time towards vice. (Rousseau, Discourse 114)

Rousseau proposes that society is regulated through competition, which arises out of a desire for public esteem and regard. Since these prizes are not available to all, a state of inequality

will occur. If, therefore, we can reform man's concept of public esteem, it might be possible to level the barriers which create inequality.

In the Social Contract Rousseau examines the right of political institutions to authorise their power through religious institutions. In this work Rousseau argues that "religion is essential to a sound political order" (Giddin 176). Whilst "the sovereign enacts the law . . . civil religion endows it with a sacred character" (176). Consequently, a state of peace and harmony is maintained through the people's acceptance of political authority, through the guise of a religious authority which lays no more claim to truth than sovereignty. In his Leviathan (1651) Hobbes had argued that men surrender their true freedom to enjoy protection. The cost of allegiance to a monarch is the right to enjoy one's property. Rousseau, however, believed that men could live in civil society and still enjoy political freedom. Through leaving a state of nature and entering civil society man learns to develop his intellectual capacities to the fullest potential:

And although in civil society man surrenders some of the advantages that belong to the state of nature, he gains in return far greater ones; his faculties are so exercised and developed, his mind is so enlarged, his sentiments so ennobled, and his whole spirit so elevated that . . . he should constantly bless the happy hour that lifted him forever from the state of nature and from a stupid, limited animal made a creature of intelligence and a man. (Social 64-65)

The penalty of living in such a society is the development of law, which arises as a means of protecting property. Both the sovereign and his law are invested with power by man's susceptibility to believe custom, which in terms of the generally believed public interest of citizens finally translates into what Rousseau terms the general will. For Rousseau, the power

of the Sovereign derives from man's habitual misapprehension to over-value opinion, and it is through such folly that religious institutions support the state by educating the people with a (false) code of contractual morals which validate the law:

To these three sorts of law must be added a fourth, the most important of all, which is inscribed neither on marble nor brass, but in the hearts of the citizens, a law which forms the constitution of the state, a law which gathers new strength every day and which, when other laws age or wither away, reanimates or replaces them; a law which sustains a nation in the spirit of its institution and imperceptibly substitutes the force of habit for the force of authority. I refer to morals, customs and, above all, belief: this feature, unknown to our political theorists, is the one on which the success of all the other laws depends; it is the feature on which the great lawgiver bestows his secret care, for though he seems to confine himself to detailed legal enactments, which are really only the arching of the vault, he knows that morals, which develop more slowly, ultimately become its immovable keystone. (Social 99-100) (My emphasis)

In understanding the high value with which morals invest the laws of society we may begin to understand the steadying, perhaps essential role established religious institutions have provided throughout history to prevent anarchy. Unfortunately, the church has employed oppressive measures itself in its designs to uphold public morals, sanctioning coercion in the guise of universal love.

In his "Essay on Christianity" Shelley, too, argues that wealth and concomitantly power derive their authority from belief and opinion:⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Shelley's understanding that society is governed by opinion is primarily inherited from his reading of Political Justice: "Society is nothing more than an aggregation of individuals. Its claims and its duties must be the

Diogenes devised a nobler and more worthy system of opposition to the system of slave and tyrant. He said, it is in the power of each individual to level the inequality which is the topic of the complaint of mankind. Let him be aware of his own worth and the station which he really occupies in the scale of moral beings. Diamonds and gold, palaces and sceptres derive their value from the opinion of mankind. (M 263)

Once man is fully aware of his true value in the hierarchy of society, once he can strip moral value of the enormous wealth with which (false) opinion invests it, then he can begin to understand and enjoy freedom, and relinquish dependence on created or manmade institutions. Rousseau's solution to the social inequalities prevalent in modern society depends on the creation of a communal identity in which co-operative plurality eradicates individual supremacy:

The only hope for man lies in the reconstruction of society on the principle of nature, in the very recovery of the oneness of nature. Each must come to recognise the other as an end for him, but must do so without recognizing him as a particular individual differentiated from himself. He must always be able to treat the other as a mere duplication of himself, so that in acting for the other, he is not acting for a different individual with different ends, whom he wishes to please, but only for the exact replica of himself and his own ends. The solution involves systematically conceiving of the individual's relations to others as relations to himself. It requires within the social framework the systematic abolition of the other. (Charvet 145)

aggregate of their claims and duties, the one no more precarious and arbitrary than the other" (54). "All Government is founded in opinion" (63).

Of course, such a position is highly theoretical and tends to assume the best in mankind, whilst pronouncing a huge emphasis on re-educating and perfecting the human character. Unfortunately, men will always strive after riches, possessions and power, (for either personal or sexual motives) and Rousseau had recognised as much in his Discourse on Inequality.⁵⁷ If, however, an individual can remove himself from such man-made temptation--which in the case of much of the acquisitive society may be deemed as false riches--by revolutionising his acquired opinions and beliefs about society's rewards, this is the first step into diffusing a new agenda back into society which may gradually restore equality.

Both Shelley and Rousseau accept that the renunciation of customary beliefs in morals and opinions is the redemptive force in reforming and restructuring our conceptions of freedom and independence from received institutions. In History of a Six Weeks' Tour Shelley considers how rulers have used belief to uphold order in society. In his 1816 Hymn, Shelley fabricates a hypothetical deity, his spirit of beauty, in order to posit the emptiness of blindly accepting unsubstantiated doctrines of belief. The spirit in the poem is largely synonymous with the spirit of God; and it functions in a similar fashion to God, whose governance of the universe is unexplained:

The awful shadow of some unseen Power
 Floats though unseen amongst us,--visiting
 This various world with as inconstant wing . . .
 Dear, and yet dearer for its mystery. (1, 1-12)

This power is both awful, in the sense that it fills the mind with awe, and dear, which suggests that in the beginning of man's religious thinking there is the presence, or at least the

⁵⁷ See Rousseau, Discourse 10.

idea of a benign God floating randomly through the universe. The concept of a mysterious power which inhabits the invisible world and causes feelings of awe and veneration in man is examined by Shelley in his "Essay on Christianity": "The thoughts which the word, God, suggests to the human mind are susceptible of as many variations as human minds themselves They agree only in considering it the most awful and venerable of names, as a common term devised to express all of mystery or majesty or power which the invisible world contains" (M 249). The idea of God is, for many men, a means of explaining the unexplained and as such God is devised as a higher power to be acknowledged by man as superior. The worship of such a hierarchical God, therefore, induces a state of inequality in man's relationship to the divine. Shelley's spirit of beauty, however, dispenses with the need to fear God and encourages man to have a greater responsibility in the world, and fully acknowledge his own faults and "fear himself", rather than blaming unearthly powers for the ills of the world which cause "fear", "death", "gloom", "hate", and "despondency" (2, 21-24). In his hymn, Shelley debates the need for man to discover a more equal relationship in his affiliation with the godhead, a relationship which must involve examining the aetiological questions which have puzzled mankind since the beginnings of time:

Ask why the sunlight not for ever
 Weaves rainbows o'er yon mountain-river . . .
 Why fear and dream and death and birth
 Cast on the daylight of this earth
 Such gloom. . . . (2, 18-23)

By urging man to question the very foundations on which God makes his divine presence felt through nature, Shelley encourages him to develop an egalitarian alliance with his deity.

Whoever our deity is, we must establish our own creed of existence, which allows all the mysterious workings of divinity to be analysed and judged by each individual.

For Shelley, however, his personal synod to uncover the impulses behind the superstructures of the universe, heaven and earth remains inconclusive and wholly unresolved: "Therefore the names of Demon, Ghost, and Heaven, / Remain the records of their vain endeavour" (3, 27-28). The strongly religious feel to the hymn resounds in a disappointing emptiness. The spirit of beauty, for Shelley, fails to substantiate any positive belief in the existence of God. Here, Shelley differs in his thinking to Rousseau.

Whilst Shelley's vision of the universe criticises the power of religion to dispel human self-determination and avows a life of the mind independent of God, Rousseau, advocates a theology based on the true worship of God from the heart which has no recourse to ritual and ceremony. Rousseau's devout belief in the goodness of man is a professed desire to be aimed at in his education of *Émile*.

In "The Creed of a Savoyard Priest", Rousseau argues that God is the animating principle behind the order and harmony in the universe. In his first article of faith he proposes that "there is a will which sets the universe in motion and gives life to nature" (*Émile* 235).⁵⁸ In his second article of faith Rousseau proposes that the will which gives motion to the universe must be *sine qua non* an intelligent will: "If matter in motion points me to a will; matter in motion according to fixed laws points me to an intelligence" (237).⁵⁹ Rousseau believes that God is the power behind this intelligence: "I believe, therefore, that the world is governed by a wise and powerful will; I see it or rather I feel it, and it is a great thing to know this" (239). In Rousseau's ideal state, however, the institutions which govern Christianity are absent and the true worship of God comes from the heart. As Dent remarks "the sum of [his]

⁵⁸ Compare Shelley in "The Necessity of Atheism" (1811): "... belief is an act of volition, in consequence of which it may be regulated by the mind" (M 3).

⁵⁹ Compare Shelley in "Fragment of 'A Refutation of Deism'" (1817): "The word God signifies an intelligent creator" (M 241).

law . . . is to love God above everything and one's neighbour as oneself" (80). Communal sentiment might de-stratify human relationships and reduce inequality, if the general demeanour of the populace could be reformed into accepting simple pleasures rather than a materialist disposition. This spirit of love is to be found in the peace of nature rather than in the affected connurbations of mankind.⁶⁰

Rousseau's Creed is therefore dependent on the notion of a first cause and a divinely ordered universe created from design by God. Shelley, however, is rather sceptical of the design argument and, in this respect, he may have followed the philosophies of David Hume. He was, though, intrigued in the debates concerning the origins of the universe and the first cause. According to the "Note on Queen Mab, By Mrs Shelley" Shelley was, in his early period, fascinated by the scientific ideas of causation.⁶¹

He was, at the period of writing Queen Mab, a great traveller within the limits of England, Scotland, and Ireland. His time was spent among the loveliest scenes of these countries. Mountain and lake and forest were his home; the phenomena of Nature were his favourite study. He loved to enquire into their causes, and was addicted to pursuits of natural philosophy⁶² and chemistry as far as they could be carried on as an amusement. (H 837)

⁶⁰ As Shelley points out in his "Essay on Christianity" Rousseau did not intend man to give up his abode and abandon the cities but live the pure and simple life exhibited in the harmonies of nature. (See M 266).

⁶¹ Shelley's interest in the first cause is evident as early as his pamphlet on "The Necessity of Atheism" (1811): "It is urged that man knows that whatever is, must either have had a beginning or existed from all eternity; he also knows that whatever is not eternal must have had a cause.--Where this is applied to the existence of the universe, it is necessary to prove that it was created; until that is clearly demonstrated, we may reasonably suppose that it has endured from all eternity.--In a case where two propositions are diametrically opposite, the mind believes that which is less incomprehensible; it is easier to suppose that the universe has existed from all eternity, than to conceive a being capable of creating it" (M 4).

⁶² In the early nineteenth century the description of natural philosophy referred to several branches of science including physics, astronomy, biology, botany, geology and chemistry. Earlier, in the Renaissance and Reformation, philosophy and metaphysics too were classified as science, because they attempted to explore the unknown.

“Mont Blanc” and its “everlasting universe of things” (1, 1) indirectly raises the controversies surrounding first cause arguments, for example, Paley’s catastrophe theory, which finds certainty for the existence of God in the intricate mechanisms of nature such as the shifting sands of a glacier: “a sea / Of fire envelop[ed] once this silent snow” (3, 73-74). Shelley, however, posits a vacancy behind these historical movements of ice: “In the lone glare of day, the snows descend / Upon that Mountain; none beholds them there” (3, 131-32). This cold reality would seem to suggest that the possibility of a divine design is apocryphal. The move towards atheism is, however, left open-ended in the conclusion, and Shelley leaves it entirely up to the individual to ascertain his own thinking on God as designer of the universe: “And what were thou, and earth, and stars, and sea, / If to the human mind’s imaginings / Silence and solitude were vacancy?” (5, 142-44).

In his “Notes to Queen Mab”, Shelley adopts the Humean position of man pursuing the idea of God as a means of explaining order in the universe: “It is probable that the word God was originally only an expression denoting the unknown cause of the unknown events which men perceived in the universe” (H 812). It is, Shelley suggests, from the existence of “primaeval mountains” like Mont Blanc that man determines the origins of a first cause. As he states in the “Notes to Queen Mab”: “From the phenomena, which are the objects of our senses, we attempt to infer a cause, which we call God, and gratuitously endow it with all negative and contradictory qualities” (814). Whilst Rousseau sees a heavenly, astronomic intelligence behind the cause argument, Shelley, in his 1816 poems insinuates that divinity is an aspect of the human imagination and is part of the expanding universe of man’s intellect, wholly dependant on his progressive education. The catastrophic histories of “Mont Blanc” and the inconstancy of the spirit in “Hymn to Intellectual Beauty” reflect a pagan ordering of the universe; man cannot rely on faith alone but must pursue secular patterns of reasoning

when investigating the secrets of nature.

Shelley's hymn suggests that the spirit which is responsible for creating the beauty and order in the world is inconstant and liable to vanish:

Spirit of BEAUTY, that dost consecrate
 With thine own hues all thou dost shine upon
 Of human thought or form,--where art thou gone?
 Why dost thou pass away and leave our state,
 This dim vast vale of tears, vacant and desolate? (2, 13-17)

This spirit has no claim to be divine if it disregards the problem of evil; if it contractually requires man to believe in God in order to receive benediction from the rigours of an unkind world. If nature is rather a dubious source for consolation in Shelley's poetry it does, however, influence visitations of inspiration. Shelley would rather account for the beauties of the natural world as providing an inspirational deity to poets, than affirming the existence of God.

In his "Essay on Christianity" Shelley also recognises that man is surrounded by some sort of insubstantiality and that this obscure (unseen) presence may be attributable to a divinity of inspiration that animates man's intellect:

We live and move and think, but we are not the creators of our own origin and existence, we are not the arbiters of every motion of our own complicated nature, we are not the masters of our own imaginations and moods of mental being . . . There is a power by which we are surrounded, like the atmosphere in which some motionless lyre is suspended, which visits with its breath our silent chords, at will. (251)

To Shelley a mysterious power inhabits the atmosphere and inspires poets with imagination and the “mental being” which influences the music of composition:

The light alone--like mist o'er mountains driven,
Or music by the night-wind sent
Through strings of some still instrument,
Or moonlight on a midnight stream,
Gives grace and truth to life's unquiet dream. (3, 32-36)

The forces of nature freed from the religious contract confer a sense of harmony, inspiration and healing to the seer. If the artist is not wholly responsible for his own composition, and the idea of an institutionalised God is also absent from Shelley's formulae of existence, then the peculiar force which surrounds us at will must by reason be an unexplained force or a pagan deity. Such a deity, it may be inferred, is none other than the insubstantiality which generates the impulse by which the “night-wind” sends music through the “strings of some still instrument” (3, 33-34), that is a divinity of inspiration.

In De Staël's ideas on religious enthusiasm she suggests that temperament is related to national identity. In certain individuals this has had a devastating effect on Christendom, especially religious reformers who evangelise through entering the spirit of a people. Conversion is a matter of sympathetic unity and communal understanding. It was Luther's firmness of mind, his immovable disposition, and above all the courage of his spirit which upheld his conviction that the doctrines of Catholicism must be destroyed and replaced with the new religion of Protestantism:

Luther est de tout les grand hommes que L'Allemagne a produire, celui dont le caractère étoit le plus allemand. Sa fermeé, avoit quelque chose de rude; sa conviction alloit jusqu'a l'entêtement; le courage de l'esprit étoit en lui le principe du courage de l'action: ce qu'il avoit de passioné dans l'âme ne le détournoit point des études abstraites; et quoiqu'il attaquât de certains abus et de certains dogmas comme des préjugés ce n'étoit point l'incrédulité philosophique, nais un fanatisme à lui qui l'inspiroit. (5: 29-30)

Luther's steadfastness of soul, his devout enthusiasm, heralded the Reformation throughout Northern Europe, which some theologians suggest has had devastating consequences for humanity in terms of the numerous religious wars between Catholics and Protestants. Luther's doctrine focused on the destruction of the image (or idols) and promulgated a new emphasis on the word (or Bible).⁶³ Shelley's doctrines, too, in his 1816 hymns urge the destruction of the conventional images which constitute traditional opinion, and liberation of the soul through a belief in human divinity. Like Luther, the spirit of beauty has the power to "free / This world from its dark slavery" (6, 69-70), but as the hymn suggests in stanza five, this takes place through the kind of secular theosophies⁶⁴ which an individual may experience under the inspirational tutelage of a zealous deity, who visits man in his youth (or in youthful states of enthusiasm which have no age-limits).

⁶³ See Peter Partner, Two Thousand Years. The Second Millenium: From Medieval Christendom to Global Christianity (London: Granada Media, 1999) 91-107.

⁶⁴ Shelley was aware of Zoroastrian mythology through the influence of his friend, Thomas Love Peacock, who had studied this ancient Persian religion. In his second Genevan letter to Peacock, Shelley refers to Peacock's Zoroastrian poem "Ahrimanes": "Do you, who assert the supremacy of Ahriman, imagine him throned among these desolating snows, among thesés palaces of death and frost, so sculptured in this their terrible magnificence by the adamantine hand of necessity, and that he casts around him, as the first essays of his final usurpation, avalanches, torrents, rocks and thunders, and above all these deadly glaciers, at once the proof and symbols of his reign" (M 226). One cannot help but think of the ice palaces and Far-Eastern mythologies in Coleridge's "Kubhla Kahn" which was published that summer at Byron's instigation. The kind of youthful ecstatic visitation of secular deities, which provide the activating impulse for change or impulse to overcome a mode of existence, were disseminated by Nietzsche in Also Sprach Zarathustra later in the nineteenth century.

Such secular revelations force man to attend to a philosophy of being which promotes the highest ideals for the life of humanity:

The image of this invisible, mysterious being is more or less excellent and perfect, resembles more or less its original and object in proportion to the perfectness of the mind on which it is impressed. . . . The perfection of the human and the divine character is thus asserted to be the same: man by resembling God fulfils most accurately the tendencies of his nature, and God comprehends within itself all that constitutes human perfection. Thus God is a model thro' which the excellence of man is to be measured, whilst the abstract perfection of the human character is the type of the actual perfection of the divine. It is not to <be> believed that a person of such comprehensive views as Jesus Christ could have fallen into so manifest a contradiction as to assert that men would be tortured after death by that being whose character is held up as a model to human kind because he is incapable of malevolence or revenge. (M 258-59)

Shelley's "Essay on Christianity" composed in the year following his Swiss pilgrimage conveys the religious humanism of Rousseau and De Staël in its vision to attain the perfection of the human character through the replication of a divine disposition. Shelley predicts that mankind can perfect his mutual interaction in society to such an extent that all--not just the elect--may enjoy a freedom of mind spectacular enough to banish inequality and suffering. Such a society would have no room for a "malevolent" God and would wholly depend on the Shelleyan concept of love and the brotherhood of man "and love all human kind" (7, 84). Shelley's works composed in the summer of 1816 conceive of a society which may be perfected through reforming the human character.

God is the focus of a sacred pilgrimage, whilst a knowledge of the self (which may for instance include the intellectual introspection of “Hymn to Intellectual Beauty”) is the object of a secular pilgrimage. The reward of a sacred pilgrimage is fulfilment--inner peace, a return to the regenerating fold of spiritual enlightenment and communion with God, whilst the goal of secular pilgrimage is an inner revelation of mind in which a quest for knowledge is fulfilled. The interrogative debate of such existential philosophies is the underlying rhetoric of uncertainty manifest in “Hymn to Intellectual Beauty” and “Mont Blanc.”

During his temporary exile on the enchanting shores of Lake Geneva, Shelley became imaginatively caught up in his sight-seeing in a manner quite beyond usual touristic experience. In his Essay on the Theory of Painting (1725) Jonathan Richardson argues that the Italians have raised their art by departing from a strict adherence to copying “common nature.” He says the painter must “form a model of perfection in his own mind which is not to be found in reality” (Monk 175). It was such a beautiful model of perfection which Shelley attempted to create in his mind, whilst touring sites relating to the drama of La Nouvelle Héloïse. In his Confessions Rousseau remarks that : “I would say to all those possessed of taste and feeling: ‘Go to Vevay, explore the countryside, examine the scenery, walk beside the lake, and say whether Nature did not make this lovely land for a Julie, a Claire, and a Saint-Preux. But do not look for them there?’ I return to my history” (149). Rousseau fully acknowledges that his divine creations do not inhabit the actual landscape around the shores of Lake Geneva. To fully appreciate the theatre of Julie and St. Preux, one must sympathetically enter into the land of chimeras which inhabited Rousseau’s own imagination. One must create a Shelleyan ideal mimesis which sees through the physical landscape, past the scenes of the novel beyond into the magical luminosities of Rousseau’s imagination, “a mind so powerfully bright as to cast a shade of falsehood on the records that

are called reality” (M 217). If, Shelley suggests, one can shatter reality and create such a bejewelled landscape of imagination by simply applying fictional scenes to the other side of reality, then the potentiality for universal political reform may emerge from the darkness and become a reality. For Shelley in his temporary exile, the figure of Jean Jacques Rousseau became an icon for such a perfect society, a secular God whose philosophies might be celebrated through the medium of Shelley’s secular hymnody.

In History of a Six Weeks’ Tour Shelley adopts the uses of history to critique established systems of government and religion and suggests that if we follow his iconoclastic thinking and render the received images or practices of society into abstraction, then a new idealism might arise from behind the shadows of misunderstanding. It was such a contemporary reformation of thought which illuminated Shelley’s intellectual tourism throughout his secular pilgrimage to his beloved Rousseau in the Summer of 1816.

Dickens in America: The Acquisition of a New Social Philosophy of Home

Dickens travelled to America at a difficult time in his career and hoped to gain some sense of personal renewal and literary inspiration, as well as financial advantage, from his pilgrimage. Faced with incomprehensible differences in cultural habitus¹ and an uncomfortable transport system Dickens became rather disillusioned with the version of America he encountered on his travels. The representation of America in American Notes is not entirely favourable nor enthusiastic towards the American system. Dickens feared that the commercialised America he had discovered could all too soon become a reality in an England where business practices were increasingly dominating a society governed by finance.

Dickens did not go to America in order to adopt their experimental practices of democracy. In a letter to Macvey Napier of 21st October 1841 he says, "I don't go with any idea of pressing the Americans into my service. In my next fiction, and in all others I hope, I shall stand staunchly by John" (D 2: 405). Dickens visited America only with the express aim of writing a short account of his tour to be published in a cheap edition. Yet American Notes is infused with Dickens's own idiosyncratic representation of America, quite different from accounts of previous travellers. Dickens's travelogue portrays America as an industrialised and money-driven country whose experimental social institutions partially alleviate the social problems which are an inherent part of industrial societies. However, Dickens's America is not an ideal country because democracy and its innovatory social measures have produced a neo-conformity which allows public consensus to act against the private interests of the individual.

On his tour Dickens received unauthorised attention from the public because of his status as a celebrity writer. The American public's curiosity about his appearance amounted to an invasion of privacy so unsettling to Dickens it disaffirmed any idea that the American republic was a liberal democracy, and urged him to re-appraise the quality of his own

¹ Bordieu uses the term 'habitus' in his Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste to refer to mental and social conditioning.

Englishness. As Jerome Meckier comments:

After visiting America, Dickens was never again as enthusiastic an egalitarian. His conviction that Britain's institutions were antiquated and her reforms too slow in coming remained unshaken, but he realised he was more English in thought and deed than he was American, French, or European; more Victorian; a man of his time and place, than Romantic or Utopian. In American Notes, and insistently in Martin Chuzzlewit, Dickens tightened his hold on his hard-won identity as a member of England's upper middle class when he judged frontier society by drawing room standards. (272)

A large part of American Notes considers the merits and shortcomings of new model social institutions, and the attempt by post-revolutionary Americans to create a society in which all men could enjoy personal freedom and a fair measure of political and social equality. In America, Dickens began to hate the personal intrusions deriving from his newly found celebrity, and returned to England with modified ideas about the benefits of model republican societies and a renewed sense of his own English identity. His argument against America in both his forthcoming novel and travelogue was political. His writing on America challenges the cherished English belief that America is an egalitarian society which allows its citizens an unlimited degree of personal freedom. Dickens's unease in American Notes was firmly rooted in his belief that America was not a liberal society, despite her attempts to provide an enlightened system of social institutions and a free economic trading climate.

If true equality is impossible because of differences in ability, the desire to create utopias on earth must be founded on more practical principles such as effective social institutions or harmonious community. America had since the Renaissance been viewed in

Western civilisation as a mythic land of plenty, an Eldorado whose fabulous image could not possibly live up to the wishful expectations of travellers intent on discovering a society which would miraculously be better than the mundane reality of home.² America had too much to live up to and Dickens was no exception in being disappointed with what he found. It was inevitable the real America would not match up to the America of his imagination, and this discovery later urged him to reconsider the advantages of English society and what could be done to improve the welfare of the nation at home. Despite this, in American Notes, Dickens evaluates the attempts American society had made to create the ideal political system, the best state social systems and an environment governed by an economic impulse which assured the rise of the first meritocratic society in civilisation. Despite his reservations, Dickens suggests that the Americans were trying to create as perfect a society as possible, although he recognises that this was not a Utopian society.

The personal invasions of privacy which Dickens suffered in America forced him, in his later novels, to consider the high value which English society placed on the privacy of hearth and home. His subsequent style displays a characteristic synthesis which glorifies the contentment to be found in some domestic spaces whilst exposing the miseries suffered by those who worship mammon. The relative unhappiness of the Victorian home is often related to an excessive love of wealth, an impulse which had infiltrated society to such a high extent in America by 1842, that Dickens returned to England with modified perceptions of the value of American democracy.

Economic Notes and Social Utopias: America, a Model Republic?

Whilst historians generally connect the commencement of America's Industrial

² See Malcolm Bradbury, Dangerous Pilgrimages: Trans-Atlantic Mythologies and the Novel, (London: Secker and Warburg, 1995) 89, for a discussion of the myth of the American dream.

Revolution with the completion of the railroad, it may be argued that the north-eastern states which Dickens toured, had already reached the condition of economic growth usually associated with the development of an industrial nation. In both American Notes and Martin Chuzzlewit Dickens's hostility towards the commercially oriented proclivity of the American psyche recurs with cynical regularity. American society seems to be split between the drive to generate wealth at whatever cost, and the ideal to create a society fit for all humanity to exist in comfortably. America in the 1840s was a commercially driven society which allowed most of its citizens a chance to advance through business. It was the first classless society, the sort of egalitarian utopia which radical thinkers wished might exist in England, yet Dickens did not like it. He hated the similarities which inevitably result in a class levelled society. In Martin Chuzzlewit most of the Americans exhibit the same forward, impertinent characteristics, and in American Notes this uniformity even transfers itself to the layout of the streets, which are so alike in Philadelphia that it is impossible to recognise one from another. In both his travel narrative and novel with scenes of America, Dickens attempts to delineate the disadvantages which have resulted in a commercially orientated post-revolutionary society, which gives citizens more freedom and equality but at the cost of a dull neo-conformity of manner.

Before Dickens, Scott had examined the increasing tendency with which the commercial impulse was driving society. As Kathryn Sutherland remarks, "What is clear from the historical range of the novels is that Scott, in line with the Scottish speculative or philosophical historians of the later eighteenth century--Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson and the younger Dugald Stewart, for example--regarded commercial man, for good or evil, as the type to which all societies, however rude, inevitably tend" (97). After his exposure to the dollar-driven American imagination, Dickens created in his novels of the eighteen forties and fifties a world increasingly dominated by the family business and the commercial ethic. In his

novels written immediately after 1842 Dickens is suggesting that English society is heading towards the American example, and that a society which is wholly governed by commerce, is bound to result in the decline of family values and the end of idyllic village green England.

In America Dickens found exaggerated and immoderate attitudes to wealth; indeed the whole of society seemed to be obsessed by money. In a letter to John Forster of 24th to 26th April 1842 he notes that, in conversation, “dollars and politics [are] the only two subjects they ever converse about, or can converse upon” (3: 206). This was not a new phenomenon. In 1830 Tocqueville had equally found a society dominated by the love of wealth and materialism. In Democracy in America he notes that, “The love of wealth is therefore to be traced, as either a principal or an accessory motive, at the bottom of all that Americans do; this gives to all their passions a sort of family likeness and soon renders the survey of them exceedingly wearisome” (2:240). Tocqueville implies that the greater social equality generated through more egalitarian access to wealth, largely destroys individuality and everyone takes on a characterless existence. Dickens describes this uniformity in the hotel scenes in Martin Chuzzlewit where workaholics do not even have time to dine in a socially dignified manner. The Americans’ will to create as much money as possible is rooted in the political desire for equality. Tocqueville suggests that the rise of the lower orders largely derives from their successful involvement in the commercial marketplace:

While the kings were ruining themselves by their great enterprises, and the nobles exhausting their resources by private wars, the lower orders were enriching themselves by commerce. The influence of money began to be perceptible in state affairs. The transactions of business opened a new road to power, and the financier rose to a station of political influence in which he was at once flattered and despised.

(Democracy 1: 4)

Once political influence could be achieved by the increasing numbers of self-made men in public life rather than handed down in posterity through aristocratic privilege, the whole foundation of society shifted or revolutionised onto a different plane. With the rise of an industrial economy which encouraged small businessmen and manufacturers to flood the market with commodities and hence stimulate demand, the consumer-fed market economy of the modern age was effectively born. This demand-driven economy which relies on mankind's love of material goods seemed to Dickens, in America, even more prevalent than in England whose market economy was more advanced than America's. American society was dominated by the dollar, commerce and business, because democratic social mobility enabled men to strive for power through selling their marketable skills in the businessplace. In England the class system still ensured that the owners of the means of production still largely remained upper class. In free America, any man could chance his hand in the marketplace. On his visit to America, Dickens was faced with a seemingly commercially oriented urban society. In the novel he produced following his return from the States, he chose to represent the idea of America negatively, as a failed business enterprise, and the people as generally ill-mannered and vulgar. It is difficult to believe a man of such stature still felt annoyed at the intrusion into his personal life; his evident admiration for "educated" Americans, not to mention the wide circle of friends he made on his tour, suggests that his negative portrayal of America in Martin Chuzzlewit must have had deeper or alternative motives. Possibly he wished his English audience to realise that England, in comparison with a nation which was doing its utmost to create a perfect society, still had a lot to offer after all. Dickens's findings in American Notes and his implied revaluations of English society in Martin Chuzzlewit--the villainy of Jonas, the selfishness of Pecksniff and the financial horror of Eden--may all be construed as vices towards which an unruly England is moving.

As John Lucas has observed, the world of Chuzzlewit is still old world England dominated by the golden days of the stage-coach.³ Despite passenger railways now in 1842 being an increasing feature of English society, most travel in England still takes place on foot, horse or stagecoach, whilst in America Martin and Mark use the new railroad. In his later novel, Dombey and Son (1846-48), the railway is an accepted burr on the landscape. Dickens fully accedes that England is now an industrial nation and that the days of Dingley Dell are past.

(i) Industry

The poor reception of American Notes amongst the Americans followed a similar trend in recent British writing on America⁴ by writers such as Fanny Trollope and Harriet Martineau whose works were equally disliked by the American public. As Fanny Trollope concludes, an undue or overt sensitivity about their native country seemed to be an inherent part of the American psyche: “Having now arrived at the end of our travels, I am induced, ere I conclude, again to mention what I consider as one of the most remarkable traits in the national character of the Americans; namely their exquisite sensitiveness, and soreness respecting everything said or written concerning them” (275).

Fanny Trollope’s Domestic Manners of the Americans (1832) recounts her impressions of America and Americans made on a tour in 1828. In comparison to some of Dickens’s satirical invectives and the deep, hidden, cynical undertone which structures his text, Fanny Trollope’s aesthetic geographies are really a much kinder and romanticised treatment of the American landscape and people. Granted, she presents a totally honest representation of the wilds of the Mississippi--for example, “I never beheld a scene so utterly

³ See John Lucas. “Dickens and America” in Romantic to Modern Literature: Essays and Ideas of Culture 1750-1900 (Sussex: Harvester P, 1982).

⁴ See Washington Irving’s essay “English Writers on America,” vol. 2 of The Works of Washington Irving. The Sketch Book (New York, 1853) 63-75.

desolate as this entrance of the Mississippi” (9)--but her prose is restrained in comparison to Dickens’s description of the “hateful Mississippi . . . this foul stream” (A N 216).

Indeed, Fanny Trollope’s romanticised descriptions of New York suggests that she was attempting a very different kind of travelogue than Dickens’s later critical assessment. Fanny Trollope presents the landscape of New York in a wholly romantic, almost fairy tale tradition:

I have never seen the bay of Naples, I can therefore make no comparison, but my imagination is incapable of conceiving anything of the kind more beautiful than the harbour of New York. . . . I must still declare that I think New York one of the finest cities I ever saw, and as much superior to every other in the Union, (Philadelphia not excepted,) as London to Liverpool, or Paris to Rouen. Its advantages of position are, perhaps, unequalled anywhere. Situated on an island, which I think it will one day cover, it rises, like Venice, from the sea, and like that fairest of cities in the days of her glory, receives into its lap tribute of all the riches of the earth. (260-61)

Dickens is not interested in calm pictorial impressionism; his arrival in the harbour of New York is dominated by the hurly burly noise and animation of metropolis life: “The city’s hum and buzz, the clinking of capstans, the ringing of bells, the barking of dogs, the clattering of wheels, tingled in the listening ear” (A N 127).

Equally, in the city itself, Fanny Trollope presents Broadway as a glamorous mall in which the splendours of man’s architectural achievements co-exist within a natural setting of parkland. Broadway is for Fanny Trollope a shopper’s paradise:

From hence commences the splendid Broadway, as the fine avenue is called, which

runs through the whole city. This noble street may vie with any I ever saw, for its length and breadth, its handsome shops, neat awnings, excellent trottoir, and well dressed pedestrians. It has not the crowded glitter of Bond-Street equipages, nor the gorgeous fronted palaces of Regent street; but it is magnificent in its extent, and ornamented by several handsome buildings, some of them surrounded by grass and trees. (261)

In his description, Dickens dispenses with elegance and architectural grandeur--he is only concerned with the heaving throng of people. Broadway, now in 1842, is "a wide and bustling street, which, from the Battery Gardens to its opposite termination in a country road, may be four miles long" (128). In place of Fanny Trollope's "well-dressed pedestrians" the road is dominated by the clamour of high speed traffic: "No stint of omnibuses here! Half-a-dozen had gone by within as many minutes. Plenty of hackney cabs and coaches too; gigs, phaetons, long-wheeled tilburies, and private carriages" (128). Dickens's Broadway is a working city, full of coachmen in countless different uniforms:

In straw hats, black hats, white hats, glazed caps, fur caps; in coats of drab, black, brown, green, blue, nankeen, striped jean and linen; and there, in that one instance . . . in suits of livery . . . Byrons of the desk and counter, pass on, and let us see what kind of men those are behind ye: those two labourers in holiday clothes . . . Irishmen both! (128-29)

Dickens's social interest in Broadway as a centre of labour and work demarcates his text about America as a travelogue of industry. Fanny Trollope's aesthetic geographies of America tend to present impressions of beauty or horror and are largely concerned with

descriptions of landscape or manners. Despite the furore caused by the publication of her travel book, Fanny Trollope's text is a work of measured and elegant prose which describes the regions of nineteenth-century America with enthusiasm, flourish and yet slight reservation. Trollope, too, recounts the unmannerly national habit of chewing and spitting tobacco but this unpleasant characteristic does not recur with the sickening intensity it does in American Notes; her intention is to report rather than to satirise. Dickens's descriptions of tobacco spitting occur with a regularity which suggests that his language carries an underlying symbolic economy. The object of tobacco signifies the injustice of slavery which heavily supports the economy of the United States. In America, economic and industrial development is dependent on the exploitation of one race in society. In comparison, in England, the industrial revolution was founded on the manual labour of working-class men, women and children.

Dickens's analysis of American society differs from Fanny Trollope's aesthetic pictures and Harriet Martineau's political writing in that the social effects of the industrial development of the American nation are more evident. Ostensibly, Dickens's travelogue is a socio-industrial geography. The landscape of his tour is a journey over a country which is beginning to expand economically (and make full use of its plentiful natural resources of iron and steel) in response to major changes in industrial engineering methods and means of transportation.

Dickens's six-month tour was of much shorter duration than the longer visits of Trollope and Martineau partly because he curtailed his visit to Charleston and the South, but mainly because revolutions in the transport industry had allowed faster travelling times. The early 1830s saw the development of the first railroads in America. By the 1840s "the United States possessed about 3000 miles of track, nearly twice the total of all Europe" (Stover 8). Whilst the rapid and expansive period of railway building, from the east to west coasts of

America, took place between the 1860s and 1890 with a huge increase in output taking place in the 1890s, the initial impetus of the railway age began in the North-East between 1830 and 1840. John Stover notes that "Railways expanded quite rapidly in the decade of the 1830s, and by 1840 some sixty different lines operated a total of over 2,800 miles. Of the twenty-six states in 1840 only four (Arkansas, Missouri, Tennessee and Vermont) lacked their first mile of track" (14). Harriet Martineau's Society in America is an excellent contemporary source which provides precise evidence of the nature of railway development in the North-East up to the mid 1830s. She notes that: "there are many rail-roads in Virginia, and a line to New York, through Maryland and Delaware. There is in Kentucky a line from Louisville to Lexington. But it is in Pennsylvania, New York, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts, that they abound" (2: 185). The early development of railways concentrated on the north-eastern area of the United States to facilitate the movement of goods to the coast, ready for export. In Dickens's acquaintance with a Boston railroad he is particularly interested that men, women and Black Americans are all accommodated in different carriages, but most striking of all is his description of the railway as a monster which preshadows his description of Carker's death on the railway track in Dombey and Son: "On, on, on--tears the mad dragon of an engine with its train of cars; scattering in all directions a shower of burning sparks from its wood fire; screeching, hissing, yelling, panting; until at last the thirsty monster stops beneath a covered way to drink, the people cluster round, and you have time to breathe again" (A N 113). Since the railway had not at this time stretched to the Midwest of America, the majority of Dickens's tour took place by steamboat.

The first steamboat had been launched in 1811 and many early steamboats were used to carry cotton up and down the Mississippi (Brogan 235). Between 1812 and 1825 the De Witt Clinton government invested eight million dollars to build the Erie canal from Albany to Buffalo, a measure designed to improve trading links to New York City (Stover 10).

Conditions aboard these boats were rather cramped and uncomfortable and the steam engines were liable to explode, although it may be that local newspapers exaggerated reports of such accidents.⁵ Even so, the discomforts Dickens describes in American Notes are understandable considering he steamboated over two thousand miles on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers.⁶ What is strange, however, is that Dickens failed in American Notes to describe the distinctive and attractive vessels which carried him over the wide expanses of America. In Life on the Mississippi (1883), Mark Twain points out that steamboats, for the majority of Americans, had always been remarkable ships and were indeed symbols of the magnificence of the American nation:

Mr. Dickens declined to agree that the Mississippi steamboats were "magnificent", or that they were "floating palaces,"--terms which had always been applied to them; terms which did not over-express the admiration with which the people viewed them . . . The steamboats were finer than anything on shore. Compared with superior dwelling-houses and first class hotels in the Valley, they were indubitably magnificent . . . to the entire populations spread over both banks between Baton Rouge and St. Louis, they were palaces; they tallied with the citizen's dream of what magnificence was, and satisfied it. (275)

Twain's eulogistic representation of the Mississippi and its boats confirms how much travel writing, when attempting to portray reality, is dependant on personal evaluation and experience. The tourist, unlike the native, can afford to be more objective and critical since he has not had enough time to form a sympathetic connection with place.

⁵ See Dean Hughes, "Great Expectations: Dickens on America," The Dickensian 79.2 (1983) 66-76.

⁶ Estimated in: Sidney P. Moss and Carolyn J. Moss, Dickens, Trollope, Jefferson: Three Anglo-American Encounters (Albany, New York: Whitston Publishing, 2000).

Dickens travelled out to America on the S.S. Britannia steampacket and suffered such a rough passage that he returned home by sail. He disliked the confined living conditions and communal washrooms on state-of-the-art steamships, and was equally unimpressed with the unreliable funnels and boilers of steam-driven canal boats, yet nautical steam-power had opened up the territories of America for travellers and traders. Whilst Dickens's attitudes to advances in transport technology were rather retrogressive, his attitude to other advances in industrial engineering is generally positive, because mankind is seen to benefit directly from improvements in industrial production. America did not lag far behind Great Britain in advances in engineering. Whilst James Watt (1736-1819) had invented the steam-engine in 1764, the first experimental steam-engine in America was built in Philadelphia in 1773 by Christopher Colles.⁷ Philadelphia, whose skilful and inventive mechanics had produced carding machines, cotton-gins and spinning jennies, soon became a major centre of the textile industry. Indeed, many of the cities on the north-eastern coast were sites for the burgeoning cotton industry, because they took advantage of the rivers needed for production and distribution. Whilst Samuel Slater had erected cotton machinery as early as 1790 (Wright 127), the birth of the factory system en-masse did not take place until the early nineteenth century. British legislation fiercely guarded the patents on textile machinery which meant that no machines, plans or skilled operatives were allowed to be exported to the recently seceding American nation. However, following his return home from a tour of England in 1811 in which he inspected several cotton factories, a Francis C. Lowell of Boston built a loom from memory, which effectively marks the beginning of the factory system in the United States (Wright 127-131). Lowell's factory system was unique, however, in that all the processes involved in manufacture were carried on by a mathematical system under one roof (Wright 131). This revolution in manufacturing production enabled Lowell to become America's

⁷ See Carroll D. Wright, *The Industrial Evolution of the United States* (New York: Flood and Vincent, 1895) 95.

leading producer of cotton goods before the civil war.⁸

In American Notes, Dickens is especially interested in the apparently satisfactory working conditions enjoyed by the female operatives in their model community, which he regards, however, as being a de-personalising mode of human existence.⁹ There is no sense of family community in the girls' uniform and regimented life but, even so, Dickens suggests their institutionalisation is a better alternative than the industrial towns of England, those "great haunts of desperate misery" (A N 118). It is difficult to assess how true this really is. Even in the squalor evident in Stephen Blackpool's house in Hard Times he is at least his own man, dwelling in his 'own' home or castle. It may equally be argued that Bill Sykes and Fagin enjoy more freedom in deprived inner city London than the captive girls of Lowell. In other words, in Dickens's novels, minorities often enjoy a peculiar freedom in their captivity because they do not allow external forces to diminish their eccentric personalities.

(ii) Institutions and Social Minorities

On his American tour Dickens became extremely interested in the plight of, and injustices suffered by, minority groups in society: the Native American, the Black American, and the institutionalised; those restrained by disability or criminality. His early novels, Oliver Twist, Nicholas Nickleby and Barnaby Rudge consider the sufferings of the incarcerated: villains or society's marginalized. Oliver Twist examines the practices of the Poor Law system from the viewpoint of an orphan and suggests that there is an inherent connection between poverty and crime. The plight of the orphan child is again studied in Nicholas Nickleby, which charts the monstrous power that adults may exert over children within

⁸ See John F. Kasson, Civilising the Machine: Technology and Republican Values in America 1776-1900 (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976) 64. For a description of the building of the factory complex see p 72-74.

⁹ In contrast, the Irish day labourers who were responsible for constructing the mills and canals, were excluded from housing provision and had to build their own shanty towns. See Kasson 74.

educational institutions. Prison scenes abound in Pickwick Papers, Oliver Twist and Barnaby Rudge. Dickens is primarily interested in marginal figures; for example, those who inhabit the criminal underworld of London such as the Jew, Fagin, in Oliver Twist. In Barnaby Rudge, the imprisonment of the manqué and dissident aristocrat, Lord George Gordon, is contrasted with the freedom of the ‘idiot’ (Dickens’s label), Barnaby, whose innocent countryside ramblings are exchanged for knowing adulthood once he enters society and becomes ‘educated’ by the rioters.

In American Notes, the majority of the first volume examines and describes the living conditions of institutionalised minorities, whilst the second volume considers the lives of non-institutionalised minorities. The North-Eastern States of America had by the 1820s advanced a series of measures instigated to deal with the higher incidence of social deprivations which materialise with the growth of inner cities. Dickens’s visits to prisons, asylums, orphanages and institutes for the blind were in fact already part of a well-established tourist industry which displayed the admirable attempts reformers were experimenting with in order to effect a Utopian kind of society.¹⁰ It was not Dickens’s exact intention voluntarily to tour social institutions in America, as an article by his secretary George Putnam suggests: “He was constantly invited to visit the schools, the benevolent asylums, and the prisons in and around the metropolis” (480).¹¹

In Europe at this time we find the beginnings, according to Michel Foucault, of the modern state, which through methods of surveillance and intimidation reduces the ‘deviant’ individual to a subject as a means of validating the power of the ruling establishment. Protests

¹⁰ Dona Brown has charted the rise of the “fashionable tour” which was supposed to express the degree of civilisation to which the people of America had reached. Tourists visited houses of correction, prisons, hospitals, penitentiaries, schools and hospitals. See Dona Brown, Inventing New England: Regional Tourism in the Nineteenth Century (Washington: Smithsonian Institution P, 1995) 19.

¹¹ George Putnam, “Four Months with Charles Dickens During His First Visit To America (In 1842) By His Secretary,” Atlantic Monthly 26 (October 1870): 476-82.

from the enlightened thinkers of the eighteenth century forced the ruling administrations of Europe and America eventually to dispense with torture and execution as a means of disciplining subversive behaviour (Foucault 73). The intention was “not to punish less” but with “attenuated severity” (82). The Panoptican system, which Dickens observed in 1842, developed as a method of regulating the incarceration of prisoners with an efficient and minimum quota of manpower. Panopticism worked by oppressing the individual through the suggestion of continuous surveillance: “In discipline, it is the subjects who have to be seen. Their visibility assures the hold of the power that is exercised over them. It is the fact of being constantly seen, of being able always to be seen, that maintains the disciplined individual in his subjection” (187). Dickens’s travel narrative is the first travel book which examines the workings of a contemporary penal system. He found the system of solitary confinement in the Eastern Penitentiary in Philadelphia “cruel and wrong” (146) because it “wears the mind into a morbid state, which renders it unfit for the rough contact and busy action of the world” (156). A ‘solitary’ prisoner was on discharge, according to Dickens, a “helpless, crushed and broken man” (151). This was largely due to the absence of the beneficial contact of humanity, although it may have been instigated to protect prisoners from becoming hardened criminals. In Discipline and Punish Michel Foucault suggests that the purpose of incarceration in the solitary system was to effect a transformation of the individual’s behaviour by forcing him to consider his action and repent:

. . . solitude assures a sort of self-regulation of the penalty . . . the more lively his remorse, the more painful his solitude. . . .

In absolute isolation--as at Philadelphia--the rehabilitation of the criminal is expected not of the application of the common law, but of the relation of the individual to his own conscience and to what may enlighten him from within . . . It is

not, therefore, an external respect for the law or fear of punishment alone that will act upon the convict but the workings of the conscience itself. (237-38)

Dickens found however, that the system was not a reformatory one because the men returned to society in an unreformed state: "It is my fixed opinion that those who have undergone this punishment, must pass into society again morally unhealthy and diseased" (156). The sorry state of many of the prisoners seems to suggest that there is a disparity, in many cases, between their crime and punishment. The system is too severe and the prisoners are not reformed but mentally destroyed. Dickens deplors the American system of solitary confinement and suggests that England's system (for example, the Bridewell and Middlesex houses of correction) is "decidedly superior" (A. N. 101-02). The innovatory social institutions Dickens saw in the North-East, however, formed what may be seen as the rudimentary beginnings of a system of welfare in America.

The American system had begun to ameliorate specific kinds of social deprivation in its treatment of the infirm, deaf, dumb and insane. Medical pioneers such as Samuel Gridley Howe made remarkable advances in the education of disadvantaged children such as Laura Bridgeman, a thirteen-year-old blind, deaf and dumb girl whom he was able to teach to communicate in sign language and read in braille.¹² Laura's story is, at times, almost too much to bear in its intense sadness; it illustrates, though, the differences between America's social institutions and the workhouse schools and charity schools which Dickens satirised in Oliver Twist and Nicholas Nickleby.¹³ Dickens believed that the public institutions in

¹² See Elizabeth G. Gitter, "Charles Dickens and Samuel Gridley Howe," Dickens Quarterly 8.4 (1991) 162-168. Gitter argues that despite Dickens's recognition that Howe was exploiting his connection to the public prestige of a celebrity, it did not stop Dickens from donating braille editions of The Old Curiosity Shop to several blind schools.

¹³ Philip Collins notes that Dickens admired some charity schools, for example the Stepney Red Coat and Green Coat schools, but generally deplored them "for the humiliation they imposed upon their pupils." Equally he was dismayed at the "hopelessness of stern discipline [and] poor feeding" in workhouse schools. See Philip Collins, Dickens and Education (London: Macmillan, 1965) 79.

Massachusetts were “nearly perfect” (77). His narrative illustrates how state-financed social institutions which were generously funded could make progressive advances in relieving destitution. He strongly advocates that the English system which, despite poor law relief, almost entirely relied on the beneficence of private charities should invest extensively in a nationally funded system of public welfare.

(iii) Ethnic American Minorities

Dickens’s open description of repressed ethnic groups in American Notes partly explains the mixed reception in America of a narrative which explicitly opposes white majority interest groups in the South and West. America’s expanding economy was founded on the labour of Black Americans and the land of Native Americans. Whilst it may be incorrect to suggest that the territory of the Americas had belonged to anyone, especially considering the nomadic existence of many Amerindian tribes, it is certain that economic development caused widespread exploitation of the black population and the gradual destruction of the Native American population.

Harriet Martineau spent two years between 1834 and 1836 travelling in America, and presented her findings in Society in America (1837) which is largely a documentary account of the workings of the political institutions of the United States. Her work is especially valuable as an indicator of the state of slavery in America from the point of view of a British writer, considering that slavery had only been abolished in the British Empire as recently as 1833.

For Harriet Martineau the injustice of slavery is the most striking impression of her tour: “The personal oppression of the Negroes is the grossest vice which strikes a stranger in the country” (2: 320). In her assessment, the inequalities of brotherhood suffered by Black

Americans are deeply rooted in a psychology of hatred:

Yet "hatred" is not too strong a term for this sectional prejudice. Many a time in America have I been conscious of that pang and shudder which are felt only in the presence of hatred. I question whether the enmity between the British and the Americans, at the most exasperating crisis of the war, could ever have been more intense than some that I have seen flashing in the eyes, and heard from the lips, of Americans against fellow-citizens in distant sections of their country (1: 185).

The hatred of whites who hold the most responsible and powerful positions in society deprives Black Americans of the protection of the law:

They are citizens, yet their houses and schools are pulled down, and they can obtain no remedy at law. They are thrust out of offices, and excluded from the most honourable employments, and stripped of all the best benefits of society by fellow-citizens who, once a year, solemnly lay their hands on their hearts, and declare that all men are born free and equal, and that rulers derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. (1: 196)

Martineau points out that White Americans are directly responsible for Black political injustice, especially since rulers derive their supervisory power from the "consent of the governed", which isn't the case because the Black governed have little say. Consent may be read as fear of authority; it may, too, reflect the geographical distinction between slavery in the South, and in the North, where legislation and conditions were more favourable to Black Americans. In the Five Dials ghetto of New York, for instance, Dickens discovered a thriving

street-performance industry where 'mulattoes' could earn a living in performing highly skilled song and dance routines.¹⁴ Slaves who served in households in the northern cities of America, by the very nature of their indoor domestic occupations, were more likely to have a less punishing existence than labouring slaves who worked long hours on tobacco, sugar or cotton plantations in the South.¹⁵ Dickens found such regional variation in Maryland:

We stopped to dine at Baltimore, and being now in Maryland, were waited on, for the first time, by slaves. The sensation of exacting any service from human creatures who are bought and sold, and being, for the time, a party as it were to their condition, is not an enviable one. The institution exists, perhaps, in its least repulsive and most mitigated form in such a town as this; but it is slavery; and though I was, with respect to it, an innocent man, its presence filled me with a sense of shame and self-reproach.

(A N 161)

These slaves are not manacled and their occupations are less exacting, yet as Dickens points out, they are still slaves, and their subjection and commodification as property allows them no peace of mind. At any time, for example, they could be sold to a plantation owner in the South.¹⁶ Slavery was an essential factor in the developing economy of the United States. America, unlike Britain which had to import her cotton supplies from India, was fortunate enough to have a rich supply of indigenous cotton in the Southern States. The rise of slavery in the South, before the American Civil War and abolition in 1866 was largely determined as

¹⁴ In the 1840s, the Black minstrelsy of 'Jim Crow' enjoyed a popular craze in North America. The unnamed dancer in *Five Dials* is Juba, the first Black minstrel singer to enjoy popular acclaim. See Eric Lott, *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) 112-117.

¹⁵ See Richard C Wade, *Slavery in the Cities: The South 1820-1860* (New York: Oxford U P, 1964).

¹⁶ See Brogan 291.

a means to fuel the increasing demand for cotton goods required to clothe a rapidly expanding domestic population.

In the early decades of the nineteenth century, population demands in the North-East forced settlers to colonise the western territories of North America, gradually displacing and eradicating the aboriginal inhabitants of the land.¹⁷ The colonisation of the West, following America's economic expansion, led to the increasing marginalisation of North American Indians as they were forced to give up their land under dubious treaties which offered alternative settlements, or reservations, in which Indian communities might be able to survive. White settlers had so savagely depleted the stocks of game needed to promote the hunting ethos of Indian communities that many tribes were forced to submit their hunting grounds, and inhabit policed territory, in order to avoid starvation and the endemic diseases which the white pioneers had forced onto the native population.¹⁸

In the early part of American Notes, Dickens is especially interested to publish to the world the sorry state of the North American Indian. That he saw these groups as forming part of the dispossessed in his own world is evident in a letter to Forster of the 24th and 26th April 1842 in which he describes the Wyandot Indians of Lower Sandusky in terms of a race of gypsies: "If you should see any of their men and women on a race-course in England, you would not know them from gypsies" (D 3: 207). Dickens's social interest in the Indians is suggested by his order to Lea and Blanchard of 30th April 1842 (from Niagara Falls) for two copies of "History of the Indian Tribes of North America, with biographical Sketches and anecdotes of the Principal Chiefs & c 120 portraits. By Thomas L. McKenny and James Hall"

¹⁷ For a comprehensive introduction to the history of the United States see Mark C Carnes and John A Garraty with Patrick Williams, Mapping America's Past: A Historical Atlas (New York: Henry Holt, 1996).

¹⁸ Diseases such as smallpox and cholera are associated with the overcrowding and confined living conditions prevalent with the growth of inner city slums and were therefore originally restricted to white populations. The Indians open mode of existence on the plains meant they were free from such disease until the arrival of the Pioneers. See especially, Bernard W. Sheehan, Seeds of Extinction: Jeffersonian Philanthropy and the American Indian (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1973) 227-30.

(D 3: 222-23). This edition contains many of the paintings of George Catlin who travelled around the great Northern American plains in the 1830s painting character studies of different tribes of Indians in the environment of the wilderness.¹⁹ Dickens's descriptions of Native Americans urge his readers to question the immoral depravity of a government which practises policies of genocide and allows the exclusion and under-representation of minorities from public office. It seems to be an inherent quality of Dickens's work to exalt and champion the underdog, a technique which readily plays to the English national characteristic of supporting the loser and opposes the American cult of success. Dickens's recurring methodology, as an author, throughout his career is to detail closely the lives of his minor characters and cameo actors as a means of educating a middle and upper class audience, through emotion and sentiment, to the cause of society's dispossessed. His intention is to describe the problems of the poor and unwanted and engage public feeling in the hope that a raised majority consciousness may effect reform.

On a journey by steamboat from Cincinnati to Louisville on the Western stage of his American tour Dickens happened to meet a senior chief of the Choctaw tribe, Pitchlynn, who was returning from a diplomatic mission in Washington:

There chanced to be on board this boat, in addition to the usual dreary crowd of passengers, one Pitchlynn, a chief of the Choctaw tribe of Indians, who sent in his card to me, and with whom I had the pleasure of a long conversation.

He spoke English perfectly well, though he had not begun to learn the language, he told me, until he was a young man grown. He had read many books; and Scott's poetry appeared to have left a strong impression on his mind. . . . (A N 210)

¹⁹ See George Catlin, Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Conditions of the North American Indians Written during Eight Years Travel (1832-1839) amongst the Wildest Tribes of Indians in North America, 2 vols. (New York: Dover, 1973). Facing p 123 of vol. 2 is an illustration of Peter Pinchlin who Dickens re-named Pitchlynn for his travel book.

Dickens's encounter with Pitchlynn suggests that he is far from the stereotyped image of the bestial savage with which the 'Red Indian' is so often portrayed. Pitchlynn is presented as a highly idealised and aristocratic kind of person, fluent in a foreign language and versed in the poetry of Scott.²⁰ His eloquence was a feature of the upper echelons of tribal association as political and philosophical writers such as Raynal, and Lafitau discovered when they visited America.²¹ Yet, Native American practices in warfare were undeniably cruel and perhaps may not be defended, even considering they were fighting to maintain their preferred mode of existence.²² The Indians, though, have always attracted myths of violence and nobility. Fenimore Cooper's Last of the Mohicans (1826), and Chateaubriand's Atala (1801) and René (1805), all romanticize the Indian and illustrate the savagery and nobility of Indian Society. Indeed, Atala implies that savagery is an accepted part of Native American social systems.²³

When Dickens met Pitchlynn he had been attending diplomatic negotiations in Washington to settle the future of his tribe and their rights to the land. At this time the Choctaw tribe had begun to suffer the ravages of hunger and disease imposed on them through the territorialisation of the white man, and many were coerced into relinquishing their native land in order to avoid starvation:²⁴

There were but twenty thousand of the Choctaws left, he said, and their number was decreasing every day. A few of his brother chiefs had been obliged to become

²⁰ The Cherokee, Sequoyah, although he could neither read nor speak English codified the characters of the English Language and by 1821 written communication with the white man became possible. See Sheehan 113.

²¹ See Liebersohn 210-11 and 36.

²² See Sheehan 185-212.

²³ Chateaubriand, Atala. René, trans. Irving Putter (Berkeley: U of California P, 1952).

²⁴ In Democracy In America Tocqueville described, with enormous sympathy, the resettlement of one faction of Choctaw forced to leave their home on the banks of the Mississippi in 1831. See Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America, 1835, ed. Phillips Bradley, vol. 1 (New York: Vintage, 1945) 352-353.

civilised, and to make themselves acquainted with what the whites knew, for it was their only chance of existence. But they were not many; and the rest were as they had always been. He dwelt on this: and said several times that unless they tried to assimilate themselves to their conquerors, they might be swept away before the strides of civilised society.

He took his leave; as stately and complete a gentleman of Nature's making, as ever I beheld, and moved among the people in the boat, another kind of being. (A N 211)

There is no doubt that Dickens understood Indian society to have been corrupted by the dissimulation of white men who practised dishonest measures to deceive Indians out of their land. The situation became especially heightened once Thomas Jefferson's philanthropic attempts to civilise the Indians were replaced by the policies of President Andrew Jackson, who after his election in 1828 began to use force to deprive the Indians of their territory.²⁵ The sympathetic cameo of Pitchlynn returning home on the Cincinnati steamboat immortalises him, his tribe, and exposes the injustices of a white society ousting a segment of mankind which, Dickens suggests, belong to and should be allowed to exist in a pre-modern world. The mass exclusion of ethnic minorities from both political and social affairs, forced Dickens to reconsider his conviction that America was a republic of freedom and liberty.

The Republic of Freedom and Liberty?

Throughout his American journey, Dickens seemed intent on demythologising the belief that America was a just, free and liberated nation. In a letter to Macready of 22nd March 1842 he writes:

²⁵ See Angie Debo, *A History of the Indians of the United States* (Norman: U of Oklahoma P, 1970) 117.

Still it is of no use. I am disappointed. This is not the Republic I came to see. This is not the Republic of my imagination. I infinitely prefer a liberal monarchy--even with its sickening accompaniments of court circulars, and Kings of Prussia--to such a government as this. In every respect but that of National Education, the Country disappoints me. The more I think of its youth and strength, the poorer and more trifling in a thousand respects, it appears in my eyes. In everything of which it has made a boast--excepting its education of the people, and its care for poor children--it sinks immeasurably below the level I had placed it upon. And England, even England, bad and faulty as the old land is, and miserable as millions of her people are, rises in the comparison. (D 3: 156)

It is a truism of foreign travel that the tourist, especially if circumstances are difficult, unexpected, or disappointing, increases his love for his homeland. In a letter written from Baltimore on the 22nd March 1842, two months into his tour, Dickens vehemently concludes "for I love England better than I did when I left her" (D 3: 151). Dickens's increased enthusiasm for England and Englishness may be regarded as a reaction against the excesses of the American social and political system. America, for many travellers, could never live up to its idealised reputation.²⁶ Indeed, the Utopian vision of America as the home of liberty and freedom, so inwrought in European thought following the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776, was an image Dickens was forced to dispel with much chagrin, as his letters to Macready and Forster indicate. His disappointment is largely directed towards "such a government as this", that is, the American democratic system of a unified or centralised government which devolves a high degree of power to several regional states, which in turn

²⁶ As Paul Crook has noted. "the United States was the ideal commonwealth of early nineteenth-century radicals in Britain" (Davis 192).

rely to an ample degree on public opinion to ratify local and national legislation. Dickens's change of heart with the American system is related to what he interpreted as the unfortunately large degree of power the common populace exercised under the revolutionary Democratic system, which allowed the people free rein to enquire into all aspects of public life.

(i) Democracy and Public Opinion

The American public's right to appear to do what it likes, even if it involves trespassing on the private space of others, is a natural right of liberty. The Declaration of Independence which was drafted and published in a final version in 1776, but which was not adopted until 1789 (Wright 118), stresses the idea that the inalienable right of liberty (to do as one pleases) is a natural right of mankind within the confines of a governmental system which derives its power from the "consent of the governed":

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.
(Becker 186)

The whole declaration revolves around the right established by the government to do as it sees fit with the "consent of the governed", which in reality questions the exact degree of liberty the actual populace exercise. Despite this, Dickens found that the brash American personas he met with, appeared to have an air of freedom in their personal lives in the

exuberant way they approached everyday life with a partial disregard for the comfort and opinion of others. In Washington it was “a matter of custom” (A N 161) that Dickens fell under the scrutiny of the public gaze. The American people seemed “indifferent” (161) that Dickens may not have been comfortable with their mania to catch a glimpse of his appearance. This, however, was evidence of democracy in action.²⁷ In her earlier tour of America, Harriet Martineau shrewdly discovered that the concept of liberty and free speech within the Declaration of Independence, was indeed subject to wide interpretation especially with regard to slavery:

The Constitution of Louisiana declares that “the free communication of thoughts and opinions is one of the invaluable rights of man; and every citizen may freely speak, write, and print, on any subject, being responsible for the abuse of that liberty.” The Declaration of Rights of Mississippi declares that “no law shall ever be passed to curtail or restrain the liberty of speech, and the press.” The Constitution of all the Slave States contain declarations and provisions like these. How fearfully have the descendants of those who framed them degenerated in their comprehension and practice of liberty, violating both the spirit and the letter of the original Bill of Rights! (2: 351-52)

In the American system, therefore, the whole notion of freedom of speech and liberty was subject to the caprice and will of the people.

In comparison to most of the political systems in Europe at this time, the absence of a

²⁷ In his study of national manners and character, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character 1650-1850*, Paul Langford suggests that the Americans’ bluff and unreserved behaviour may be connected to the illusion of freedom enabled in living in a democracy: “It was an axiom of democratic politics that artificially deferential manners resulted from the constraints inevitable in despotic governments. Americans prided themselves in their unceremonious, blunt, and even offensive behaviour” (223). In comparison, the English cultivated superior manners in order to invoke position and status in a society heavily structured by class behaviour.

Monarch, or rule by hereditary aristocracy, made the American political system the most innovative in the world. It was theoretically possible for men from all stations of life to have a say in Government and this is the essential reason why Dickens initially regarded the new representative system so highly. In American Notes, Dickens describes in detail a typical session in the White House where the president invites ordinary members of the public, like a Kentucky farmer, into his office to discuss local problems (171-72). A political system which allows such a high degree of equality is one to be wholly admired.

In his political treatise on the Government and manners of the thirteen United States of America, James Fenimore Cooper explains the representative nature of the American system.²⁸

The governments of the several states of the Union, with some slight modifications, are representative democracies, and as the federal government receives its distinctive character from the states, themselves, the latter is necessarily a confederated representative democracy. Representation, therefore, lies at the root of the entire American system (160).

Cooper suggests, therefore, that the true power of American government lies in the states themselves rather than the Union, which acts on local opinion. This is not exactly so since Governments derive their power from only informing the public of some of their operations. Governments are forced to rule through contraries of secrecy and declaration to maintain a semblance of order and confidence in public opinion, which may not comprehend the vagaries and anomalies arising from the complexities of public office. In the American system this 'secret' or extraordinary power remains vested in the federated government in

²⁸ James Fenimore Cooper, The American Democrat, 1838, ed. George Dekker (London: Penguin, 1969).

Washington D.C., whilst the states enjoy some degree of ordinary or common power. This is the essence of devolved power in a system of federated states.²⁹ In American Notes, one of Dickens's principal concerns is that the local populace have too much power, too much freedom or licence to delve into matters which should not concern them.

The underlying benefit of a democracy, however, is that ordinary people should have power to run their country. Indeed, a major feature of American life, as Cooper notes, is that every man prepares himself for office as a matter of his everyday perception of self. The American has a huge sense of self-importance, and strongly believes that public opinion will play a dominant factor in public life.³⁰ In "a social sense", remarks Cooper, "'They say,' is the monarch of this country" (230). The people, therefore, tend to derive a fair degree of power from popular rule. There are, however, underlying disadvantages, indeed injustices related to governance through popular power. "The tendency of democracies", notes Cooper, "is, in all things, to mediocrity, since the tastes, knowledge and principles of the majority form the tribunal of appeal" (129). Mediocrity, in fact, may well be an outcome of the attempt to strive for an egalitarian society. In his essay on "Equality", Isaiah Berlin notes this very phenomenon: "In its extreme form egalitarianism requires the minimisation of all differences between men, the obliteration of the maximum number of distinctions, the greatest possible degree of assimilation and uniformity to a single pattern. For all differences are capable of leading to irregularities of treatment" (Concepts 102). Of course, as Berlin accedes, it is impossible completely to level the differences between men since all men are born with varying degrees of physical and mental endowments.

As long as men have varying abilities this will inevitably lead to differences in social organisation, hierarchies and inequality of position. A democracy, therefore, strives to level the political rights of mankind by allowing as much participation in public affairs as desired

²⁹ See Cooper 83.

³⁰ See Cooper 112.

by the individual. The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines democracy as “government by all the people, direct or representative; [a] form of society ignoring hereditary class distinctions and tolerating minority views” (“Democracy”). America lays claim to being the first truly egalitarian democracy because of the absence of aristocratic hierarchy in its political system. Cooper notes that, indeed, post-revolutionary American society is the first classless society:

In most countries, birth is a principal source of social distinction, society being divided into castes, the noble having an hereditary claim to be the superior of the plebeian. This is an unwise and an arbitrary distinction that has led to most of the social diseases of the old world, and from which America is happily exempt. But great care must be had in construing the principles which have led to this great change, for America is the first important country of modern times, in which such positive distinctions have been destroyed. (138)

In America, therefore, at about the time of Dickens’s first visit, political democracy had achieved a certain degree of egalitarianism in comparison with other political systems.³¹ The absence of rights for women, children and minority races was an accepted part of universal society for most thinkers who had achieved political office in the early nineteenth century. Whilst the American political system may have been more liberal, Dickens’s experience of American manners on his tour, suggests that socially, America was far from a free and liberal society. In a letter to John Forster of the 17th February 1842, he writes:

I still reserve my opinion of the national character--just whispering that I tremble for a

³¹ The Oxford English Dictionary states that in U.S. politics the Democrat party, originally called the Anti-Federal party, “favoured the least possible interference with local and individual liberty.” The Whig, or Federal party, founded in 1834, (not to be confused with the anti-Tory Whig party in England) favoured “a strong national or central government. It was succeeded in 1856 by the Republican party.” The Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd ed. (Oxford; Clarendon P, 1991).

radical coming here, unless he is a radical on principle, by reason and reflection, and from the sense of right. I fear that if he were anything else, he might return home a tory I say no more on that head for two months from this time, save that I do fear that the heaviest blow ever dealt at liberty will be dealt by this country, in the failure of its example to the earth. (D 3: 90)

Cooper, too, accepts that whilst the American people probably enjoy a higher degree of political liberty than any other nation state this is not so with regard to personal liberty. “Men”, he writes, “are thought to be more under the control of extra-legal authority,³² and to defer more to those around them, in pursuing even their lawful and innocent occupations, than in almost any other country” (199).

In the nineteenth century large sections of American society were wholly under the control of the questionable authority of public consensus, especially the black population distributed largely in the Southern States of America. Whilst Native Americans were fighting to maintain their diminishing populations, Black Americans were suffering the abuses of slavery. In American Notes there is a comprehensive section which lists atrocities carried out against black slaves by their owners. In a transcription of several local newspaper reports, Dickens angrily castigates those responsible for the perpetuation of this peculiar institution. His emotional and daring appeal to the reader for justice, and a plea to Americans to follow Britain’s example and liberate her slaves, distinguishes his travel writing from the less acerbic and more restrained commentaries of earlier writers such as Fanny Trollope and Harriet Martineau. Dickens remarks that public opinion is wholly to blame for slavery, discrimination and inequality. For instance, speeding black cab drivers may be abused by corporal punishment rather than a fine--the penalty meted out to a white man: “Crossing this

³² “Extra-legal authority” is authority not sanctioned by legality and is the code of unwritten legislation practised by the general public.

bridge, on my way back, I saw a notice painted on the gate cautioning all persons to drive slowly: under a penalty, if the offender were a white man, of five dollars, if a negro, fifteen stripes" (A N 183). This example of prejudiced county law was equally practised at national level in the capital city of Washington, where any suspicious person could be apprehended by a police officer without a warrant. In nineteenth-century America any Justice of the Peace could detain a Black American and imprison him without trial: "Public opinion has made this law. It has declared that in Washington, in that city which takes its name from the father of American liberty, any justice of the peace may bind with fetters any negro passing down the street and thrust him into jail: no offence on the black man's part is necessary" (272). What seems to be especially horrendous, Dickens implies, is that public or majority opinion in America allows this inequitable state of affairs to exist. Dickens makes it quite clear that there is a direct connection between white public opinion and prejudice against blacks.

Why, public opinion in the Slave States is slavery, is it not? Public opinion, in the slave states, has delivered the slaves over, to the gentle mercies of their masters. Public opinion has made the laws, and denied them legislative protection. Public opinion has knotted the lash, heated the branding iron, loaded the rifle, and shielded the murderer. Public opinion threatens the abolitionist, if he venture to the South.

(271)

No wonder Dickens curtailed his visit to Charleston and the Southern States and chose instead to ascertain the type of new American society growing up in the "Far West" (174).³³

³³ In historical-geographical terms Dickens's denotation of the western region of his tour as the "Far West" is particularly significant because since the nineteenth century the western territories of the states have been categorised by several differential departments. Modern usage usually regards the Far West as encompassing the Pacific regions, for example, the states of California and Oregon. The Middle States usually refer to the departments of those states north of, and situated around Oklahoma. To Dickens's visualisation of the western expanses of America the state of Missouri seemed of so huge a distance into the outback that he referred to it as

The overt implication is, that the American public have too much power, that the American practice of democracy through majority rule allows terrible injustices to be openly accepted by society.

(ii) Democracy and Privacy: "As if I were a Marble Image"

Dickens own experience of living in America differed immensely from the kind of free society portrayed by Cooper in The American Democrat. On the 1st of April 1842, he wrote to Macready, "I am a lover of freedom, disappointed--That's all" (D 3: 175). Dickens's argument against America was largely concerned with the infringement of personal liberty or lack of privacy suffered on his tour. That this state of affairs was allowed is partly admissible since no one can legislate against the public's insatiable appetite for fame. Following the French Revolution with its deposition of many well known public figures, as Leo Braudy has argued, the general public shifted their curiosity and adulation of monarchs and princes to the growing ranks of great men or creative artists publishing works in an expanding middle-class marketplace: "In America and France especially, the lack or the overthrow of monarchy thus engenders a gap of public gaze that will be filled in different ways by figures such as Washington, Napoleon and Byron" (Frenzy 398). This may be so, moreover, the history of iconography suggests that the worship of the image of an individual is not a modern but a post-medieval phenomenon.

In the Middle Ages and throughout the Renaissance, the single most powerful image available to mankind in art was that of Jesus. In the eighteenth century as advances in science offered men alternative explanations to the creation of mankind, and with the decline of religion as men's attentions became more commercially minded, a whole series of alternative

the "Far West." After the gold rush when a pioneer trail to Oregon became established a distinction between a Middle West and Far West evolved. See J. Wreford Watson, "Geography and the Development of the U S A" in: Dennis Welland, The United States: A Companion to American Studies (London: Methuen, 1974)13-58.

cosmologies became available. In the early nineteenth century with the development of cheaper methods of printing and distribution, the author began to be worshipped as the saviour of the people. On his tour of the United States the American public feted Dickens as a celebrity, effectively sealing his reputation as an illustrious public figure. As soon as he embarked from the S. S. *Britannia* in Boston crowds of fans lined the quayside desperate to learn the outcome of the, as yet unpublished, final instalment of The Old Curiosity Shop. Dickens was not altogether happy with his newly won status as an eminent author. He had effectively become public property, an image to be idolised or rebuffed: in a New York shop one disgruntled fan, on taking exception to Dickens's appearance, pinched his nose in an act of fury. Whilst such offensive behaviour was the exception it nevertheless compelled Dickens to reconsider the price of acclaim. At one levee in his honour, he was forced to shake hands with five hundred people. This excessive public dimension and attention was quite different from the fame he had received earlier in England with the publication of his early novels. Dickens's reputation as a popular writer had been secured, but he had not, as yet, become an object of public worship. Shortly before going to America, Dickens had been honoured by the literary establishment at a banquet in Edinburgh, but his fame was not conferred by the mass-public until his appearance before an audience at the mechanics' institute in Leeds in 1848.³⁴

Dickens, after the publication of his novels in America, was an international celebrity and, unused to the glare of publicity, he found the clamouring intrusion into his personal life an unsettling experience. The American people idealised Dickens but unfortunately their fascination with his public figure, as far as Dickens was concerned, went too far because it eroded his own sense of personal liberty. In Baltimore on the 22nd March 1842, he wrote to Daniel Maclise, "Whenever we come to a town station, the crowd surround it, let down all the windows, thrust in their heads, stare at me, and compare notes respecting my appearance,

³⁴ See Ackroyd 539-40.

with as much coolness as if I were a Marble image” (D 3: 154-55). Dickens began to find this sort of behaviour intolerable after two months on the road. He felt it was an unwarranted intrusion into his private life and it characterised the entire trip. At Cleveland, on Lake Erie, a party of men stood outside his cabin and “stared in at the door and windows while I was washing, and Kate lay in bed” (D 219).³⁵ In early Victorian England the fame machine was a comparatively new phenomenon; indeed, it is possible the first writer who achieved notoriety and an international reputation had been Lord Byron after the publication of Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage in 1812. Byron in some respects courted publicity and enjoyed the glamorous and decadent lifestyle that public adulation brought. Dickens, however, was an immensely private man despite his flamboyance and love of amateur theatricals. He regarded public curiosity negatively and believed he should be allowed to pursue his tour without interruptions from crowds curious for a sight of their hero.³⁶

I can do nothing that I want to do, go nowhere where I want to go, and see nothing that I want to see. If I turn into the street, I am followed by a multitude. If I stay at home, the house becomes, with callers, like a fair. . . . I go to a party in the evening, and am so inclosed and hemmed about by people, stand where I will, that I am exhausted for want of air. I dine out, and have to talk about everything, to everybody. . . . I take my seat in a railroad car, and the very conductor won’t leave me alone. I get out at a station, and can’t drink a glass of water, without having a hundred people looking down my throat when I open my mouth to swallow. . . . I have no rest or

³⁵ Letter to David Colden of 29th April 1842.

³⁶ Dickens’s hate and Byron’s love of fame may be compared to the debate between Diderot and the sculptor, Étienne Falconet, in which they discussed the relative merits of fame during one’s lifetime or after death. Diderot, like Dickens, preferred fame in posterity whilst Falconet, like Byron, wished for the glamour of publicity in his own lifetime. See Leo Braudy 14, 379.

peace, and am in a perpetual worry. (D 3: 87)³⁷

Cooper had recognized in The American Democrat that public curiosity, the democratic right to inquire into all aspects of public life, was beginning to contradict perfect notions of democracy, if that right bounded too far into the confines of private life: "Another form of oppression practised by the publick, is arrogating to itself a right to inquire into, and decide on the private acts of individuals, beyond the cognizance of the laws" (198). Since the public in America have so much say in determining law, since majority opinion administers the living flame of American democracy, it is inevitable that the foundation of private life will be more open to scrutiny than in other societies. Leo Braudy suggests that this tension between private life and public curiosity is an inevitable feature of democratic society: "In democracies, which put a premium on individual will, the relation between what is public business and what is private in an individual's nature is a constant argument" (Frenzy 415). In 1838, Cooper recognised that intrusion into personal liberty was in fact the great weakness in this supposedly liberated version of modern democratic society: "The habit of seeing the publick rule is gradually accustoming the American mind to an interference with private rights that is slowly undermining the individuality of the national character. There is getting to be so much publick right, that private right is overshadowed and lost" (229). There was, therefore, in the American democratic system a contradiction between the right of the public to enquire into private life, and the right of the individual to enjoy his privacy.

Dickens needed his own personal space of privacy for the inspiration which fired his creative imagination.³⁸ For some psyches, conditions of isolation are a necessary requirement in order to produce works of literature.³⁹ On his tour of America constant interruptions from

³⁷ From a Letter written in New York to John Forster on the 17th February 1842.

³⁸ Wittgenstein, refuting Descartes' philosophy, argues that there can be no real privacy since language-- in which we consider our most private thoughts-- is a public medium.

the public invaded the periods of space he needed to nourish his personal creativity. It may also be argued that he sought privacy, a retreat from the public gaze, as a means of finding his own sense of self and identity. In his essay, "Privacy Philosophical dimensions of the literature", Ferdinand Schoeman utilises Robert Gerstein's⁴⁰ argument that:

Having a private life is central to the development of individuality, for it provides people with the conditions under which they can differentiate from others. Most importantly, a private sphere provides individuals with the resources and the perspective to form independent judgements about the social norms that dominate social life. (23)

In modern times, privacy is seen as an essential pre-condition for psychological well-being. Celebrities, especially, find their lives controlled by two separate spheres. In the public sphere under the scrutiny of the public gaze, they must conform to their public persona, whilst in the private sphere they may enjoy the absence of the public gaze and relief from acting out their pre-determined role expected by a public audience.

The idea of two separate spheres of community derives from platonic conceptions of thought, as Hannah Arendt argues in her essay "The public and private realm":⁴¹

Even Plato, whose political plans foresaw the abolition of private property and an extension of the public sphere to the point of annihilating private life altogether, still speaks with great reverence of Zeus Herkeios, the protector of border lines, and calls

³⁹ See Alan Westin. "The Origins of Modern Claims to Privacy," Philosophical Dimensions of Privacy. An Anthology, ed. Ferdinand David Schoeman (Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1984) 56-74.

⁴⁰ Robert Gerstein, "California's constitutional right to privacy: the development of the protection of private life," Hastings Constitutional Law Quarterly 9: 385-427.

⁴¹ Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition, 2nd ed. (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1958, 1998) 22-78.

the horoi, the boundaries between one estate and another, divine, without seeing any contradiction. (30)

The Romans, too, demarcated separate spheres and celebrated the idea of a private realm by worshipping particular household deities. In both Greek and Roman thought, however, it is in the public sphere that men are able to prove themselves, and become great men. As Hannah Arendt comments, “Excellence itself, *aretē* as the Greeks, *virtus* as the Romans would have called it, has always been assigned to the public realm where one could excel, could distinguish oneself from all others” (48). In a letter to William Hall of 14th September 1841, Dickens anticipates a desire for public recognition in America, a wish to receive adulation from a public who have enjoyed reading his novels: “Washington Irving writes me that if I went, it would be such a triumph from one end of the states to the other, as was never known in any Nation” (D 2: 383). Dickens was fascinated by the idea of celebrity and recognition for his literary endeavour, but when faced with the reality of fame he had not expected to become a figure of public curiosity. Schoeman argues that there are certain values connected to the condition of privacy namely “an individual’s right to be left alone, and the respect due to an individual’s inviolate personality. These principles . . . relate to a person’s estimate of himself. . .”(14). In America, Dickens felt that his personal space had been invaded too much, and that in a truly democratic society the public would have respected his right to be left alone. In the event, he either feigned sickness or genuinely had a psychological reaction against the unwarranted wave of public interest shown in his persona, and had to spend increasing amounts of time secluded in the privacy of his hotel room in order to recover a sense of self. The intrusive behaviour of the American people urged Dickens to revalue his own Englishness as being of higher value, since English social standards allowed luminaries a higher decorum of privacy. In the series of Christmas Books which Dickens began soon

after his American trip, the privacy and comfort of the English domestic hearth is idealised, and the separate space of the home is celebrated as the definitive right of the Englishman.

Public adulation, for Dickens, also allowed him to a degree, to exorcize the ghosts of the blacking factory. In America, Dickens realized that he had at last become successful, that the possibility of returning to the drudgery of a repetitive and miserable institutionalised existence were remote, that public acknowledgement had balanced the scales of his private psychological turmoil. He was also able finally to admit publicly his experiences, albeit indirectly, in The Personal History of David Copperfield, although he did not confide to his own children that “the secret agony of my soul” (D C 150) was his own agony, until much later in his life.

An egalitarian society is less discriminating about what may be perceived by others as demeaning occupations. A classless society allows its citizens to enjoy a certain social equality of status across the occupational divide, and persons are only differentiated by economic difference. Shame of one's occupation, therefore, ceases to determine class difference and people only differ through their economic power, which still allows incentives to pursue more demanding occupations. In America in the early decades of the nineteenth century, equalities of occupational status based purely on economic terms, at least suggested that the derisory attitudes of class consciousness which Dickens had experienced as a boy could be modified. In the new town of Cincinnati, unbound by the social manacle of ancestry, every man had an opportunity to prove his own worth. Position was determined by hard work and success rather than established status:

With a few notable exceptions, men won prestige by having money. How they acquired the money mattered little. The butcher turned large scale pork-butcher took equal place with the banker, the leading lawyer, or the steamboat merchant owner.

Wealth became the measure of a man's importance and social standing, and for most of his fellow citizens the gauge of his wealth was his manner of living. Where Charleston, Philadelphia and Boston deferred to men related by birth or marriage to old, established families, in this new western city pride of ancestry could play little part. (Green 50)

Whilst Dickens reacted against the commercial obsession of the American psyche, the Americans' liberated attitudes to occupational status forced him, in conjunction with his own newly acquired fame, to re-assess his own perception of self. Since white men from all classes of society were allowed a certain degree of political and social equality, Dickens's own personal history became less important, his insecure agonies of class consciousness became diminished after the prestige and acknowledgement he received at the hands of the American public. Since his own troubled childhood had always stung him into creativity his discovery that in another part of the world his past could be considered indifferently may have contributed to his inactivity in the 1840s. This hiatus in his creativity was filled by travelling abroad.

Previous scholarship on Dickens and America has largely concentrated on his argument with the publishing industry and the absence of international copyright laws which condoned the pirating of the works of British and American authors. As a country with many different regions the problem was exceptionally difficult to resolve because the law varied from state to state. An international copyright agreement was not finally ratified until 1892, fifty years after Dickens's first visit. In his desire not to offend his American audience Dickens erased all mention of the copyright question in American Notes. His letters, however, are full of examples of his anger with the American booktrade at what he felt was an unjust and exploitative practice. The emotional and rousing speeches delivered on several

public occasions at dinners in his honour, lamenting for example the bankruptcy of Scott,⁴² suggest he was using his newly acquired status as a public figure for thoroughly political purposes. He saw himself as the representative of the downtrodden British author and was fighting admirably for the rights which he believed the relatively new profession of popular author deserved.

Martha Woodmansee cites the emergence of the figure of the professional author writing his way into a public marketplace as commencing in the eighteenth century, at a time when there was a rising demand for literature from an expanding reading public.⁴³ The eighteenth century was especially significant to ideas of authorship because the public conception of the figure of the author became quite different. Although the act of writing was still the prerogative of the few, more people began to be familiar with the names of writers. Pope's youthful embrace with the muses in Windsor forest, in which his vocation as a respected but mysterious poet was sealed,⁴⁴ is transformed soon after as writers such as Daniel Defoe address themselves to a larger audience, and aim to sell as many copies of their works as possible. Pope is the first writer who was largely able to enjoy a literary career without the support of patronage. His translation of *The Iliad* (1715-19) enabled him to earn enough money to produce his own satiric poetry without the supervision of a patron.⁴⁵ Writers began to write to sell books and earn their living in a literary market. In the

⁴² Ian Duncan argues that this was due to Scott's concealment of his name in the publishing market. Dickens understood that a writer must identify himself to his audience. See Ian Duncan, *Modern Romance and Transformations of the Novel: The Gothic, Scott, Dickens* (Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1992) 192.

⁴³ See Martha Woodmansee, "The Genius and the Copyright: Economic and Legal Conditions and the Emergence of the Author," *Eighteenth Century Studies* 17.4 (1984): 425-48.

⁴⁴ See "A Hymn Written in Windsor Forest" (1717). *The Poems of Alexander Pope*, ed. John Butt (London: Routledge, 1996).

⁴⁵ See Dustin Griffin, *Literary Patronage in England, 1650-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1996). Griffin argues that the patronage system, which continued to support many prominent writers long after Johnson's infamous letter to Chesterfield in 1755 and indeed up until the end of the eighteenth century, was a necessary and accepted part of the literary culture of the time rather than a demeaning practice. Writers like Johnson and Swift, who were able to publish without patronage were, Griffin argues, the exception, and Pope had in his early career relied on patronage to a small extent.

nineteenth century as this marketplace expanded even further to include a middle class readership writers began to accommodate their works to meet the request of a public demanding sensation, intrigue and drama. Whilst Dickens wrote to educate his audience he also wrote in a dramatic and sentimental style purposely designed to sell the next edition of his serial. The idea of the writer as an individual genius whose powers of inspiration were self-instigated is, as Woodmansee argues, the defining aspect of authorly technique in the eighteenth century:

[Eighteenth century theorists] minimised the element of craftsmanship . . . in favour of the element of inspiration, and they externalised the source of that inspiration. That is, inspiration came to be regarded as emanating not from outside or above, but from the writer himself. "Inspiration" came to be explicated in terms of original genius, with the consequence that the inspired work was made peculiarly and distinctively the product and property of the writer. (427)

Inspiration becomes, therefore, a human rather than a godly endeavour. As religion began to decline in the early eighteenth century the concept of an unexplained deistic force manifesting itself through the will of a writer was replaced with the idea that the mind of man alone was responsible for individual creative genius. What is especially distinctive about nineteenth-century literary practice is that authors increasingly produced works which would appeal to a particular kind of readership. The financially successful author had to moderate his own excessive individuality and address issues, situations and style to meet the personal taste of certain groups in society. Frank Donoghue has noted how earlier in the eighteenth century the decline of aristocratic patronage forced writers to sacrifice their ideals to a number of unidentified people rather than a sole patron: "Even if one acknowledges the

continued though much less important presence of aristocratic patronage, as time passed, the book trade increasingly transformed readers into the social group capable of conferring fame on authors" (1). A writer's celebrity began to be determined by popular taste rather than literary or philosophical accomplishment. The aesthetically beautiful political masterpieces of the late Romantics confer on the figure of the writer a divine grandeur which palls into the practical social and economic humanism of the Victorian age. This is not to say that Dickens was an artisan. His novels are sufficiently embroidered in a complex style which reaches the inner emotions, sentiments and feelings of his audience in a rational and realist display that juxtaposes the theatre of everyday domestic life with his phantasmic creations of fancy, fantasy and images of the grotesque. His style of fact and fancy intensified in the 1840s in the series of novels he composed after his return from America.

Alexander Welsh has argued that Dickens experienced an impasse in his career after his American trip in which an identity crisis affected his subsequent style and was "amplified and worked out through the writing of Martin Chuzzlewit, Dombey and Son and the Christmas Books" (Copyright 158). Arguably the finest 'trilogy' of Dickens's oeuvre, Dombey and Son, David Copperfield and Bleak House were written over a protracted period of time from 1844 to 1852 following Dickens's extended periods abroad in America, France, Italy and Switzerland. As Welsh has noted Dickens suffered from several bouts of writer's block within this period. There is much evidence to support the thesis that Dickens was inspired by his periods abroad and his psychological emptiness lifted once he returned home. Whilst the London streets are undoubtedly Dickens's inspirational geography the spaces of abroad released him from the spell of creative inactivity which so plagued him in the middle eighteen forties. In the preface to the 1867 edition of Dombey and Son Dickens reveals that he was inspired to write some of the most poignant scenes of the novel abroad, even though the drama takes place in England:

I began this book by the Lake of Geneva, and went on with it for some months in France, before pursuing it in England. The association between the writing and the place of writing is so curiously strong in my mind, that at this day, although I know, in my fancy, every stair in the little midshipman's house . . . I yet confusedly imagine Captain Cuttle as secluding himself from Mrs Macstinger among the mountains of Switzerland. Similarly, when I am reminded by any chance of what it was that the waves were always saying, my remembrance wanders for a whole winter night about the streets of Paris--as I restlessly did with a heavy heart, on the night when I had written the chapter in which my little friend and I parted company. (43)

On this occasion the streets of Paris offered Dickens a source of inspiration which he retranslated into the imaginary seabound vision of Paul's early demise. America, too, or rather the American peoples, as Alexander Welsh has argued, became "the true inspiration for Martin Chuzzlewit" (30). Equally American Notes is full of personalities with distinctive, peculiar and extravagant identities, and in his later fictions Dickens harnesses the social attitudes he felt characterised the American people and displays them as a warning that a society governed by mammon might lead to a decline in social values. In the novels written on his return from America, Dickens uses a series of character studies to dramatise models of selfish and unworthy behaviour and exaggerates the reformed attitudes of his prodigal sons, Pecksniff, Scrooge and Dombey, questioning the very nature and basis of personalities which are defined through the practise of business. Dombey is disconcertingly no longer Dombey once the firm has collapsed; his reform is tinged with the unspoken horror of psychological disintegration. Indeed, the worship of money ends in psychological torment and despair for Pecksniff, Scrooge and Dombey. More prosaically, in Martin Chuzzlewit, the character

studies of showy Americans who live to make money, compare rather disfavouredly with cameos of minority figures in American Notes whose dramas convey injustices of exile and slavery. Dickens became especially taken with the theatrical diversity of character he encountered on his American pilgrimage, perhaps because many of the white businessmen he observed in hotels and steamboats enjoyed a uniform consensus of identity. In his Life of Dickens (1872-74) John Forster suggests that notions of character were instrumental to the creation of the world of Martin Chuzzlewit: "And let me at once remark that the notion of taking Pecksniff for a type of character was really the origin of the book; the design being to show, more or less by every person introduced, the number and variety of humours and vices that have their root in selfishness" (1: 274). Dickens's American experience urged him to readdress in his fictions of the eighteen forties and fifties the gravity and reverence with which Victorians exalted the Protestant work ethic. Business, commerce and the worship of mammon is a destructive vice in his later novels which Dickens counters by eulogising family values and the cosy virtues of domestic interiors.

In terms of his subsequent writing in the 1840s, therefore, Dickens's American tour effectively fashioned his success as an author. His exposure to the follies of an American society governed by economic incentive urged him to create a series of character studies depicting the immoralities of selfishness, vanity and pride which are countered by the kindness, love and devotional female goddesses who preside over the private sanctuaries of his Victorian domestic homes. The creation of a literature centred around the drama of home and work ensured the phenomenal success, which Dickens as a writer, began to enjoy in England after his stateside tour.

Travel for Dickens urged him to embrace his own English identity, and see how life back home could be improved. The American social system had shown Dickens how collective public investment could begin to alleviate the most pressing social problems within

society. In England's laissez-faire society a fiscal policy which directly addressed higher levels of social investment was needed to cope with the dire consequences of industrialisation. Whilst the Americans had instigated measures to relieve social deprivation, the loss of private rights which befell Dickens on his tour demonstrated to him that American democracy could not answer his idea of a perfect society. In a society governed largely by public consensus there is a danger that political and cultural mediocrity will stratify the fabric of societal thought. After his American journey Dickens became increasingly disillusioned with the way that sharp practice in commerce and business was widening inequality between rich and poor. Dickens did not like the inconsequential uniformity of American style and manners, and feared that the rapidly industrialising British nation was heading in the same direction. In America, Dickens understood that economic rather than political considerations were the real causes of poverty, and in his novels after 1842 he examines how individuals whose life is governed strongly by the business impulse fall through selfishness or pride, whilst those who celebrate family virtues find contentment around the domestic hearth.

Conclusion

The early decades of the nineteenth century may be regarded as ushering in a new era, an age of modernity. Whilst some thinkers maintain that the seventeenth century, with its advancements and discoveries in science, marks a boundary between the medieval and modern world,¹ it may equally be argued that the number and diversity of rapid changes within society in the period 1760-1850 marks a definitive watershed in the civilisations of Europe and the Americas. The historical changes demarcated by the American and French revolutions, the long supremacy of Napoleon and the several revolutions in South America and many European countries between 1810 and 1848, suggests that mass politics had come to play a more dominant role in society owing to the declining power of feudal aristocracies.

With the vast demographic changes taking place in Europe, a shift in the balance of power was bound sooner or later to occur. The possibilities of revolution found momentum because political philosophers could publish their ideas to a wider, and more receptive, audience. The period 1760-1850 is equally remarkable as a period of social and economic as well as political revolution. Advances in industrial science, engineering and manufacturing techniques allowed new processes of production in, for example, the coal and iron industries, in turn enabling a transport network to develop which could meet a new demand for consumer goods to be satisfied. The decline of agrarian society and the growth of conurbations had profound effects on all aspects of humanity, and writers, philosophers and artists responded to these changes with an unprecedented wealth of material. The early decades of the nineteenth century see a new angst in literary, philosophic and aesthetic production which delineates the alienation of the individual faced with the perplexities of the new phenomenon of a society governed by larger groups of people.

In the early part of the nineteenth century the empire of France under Napoleon dominated the power structures of Europe. Consequently any decision to travel abroad was a

¹ For example, the discoveries of Sir Isaac Newton in optics and gravity effectively saw the birth of the science of Physics, as opposed to the general discipline of natural philosophy classified as such by ancient and medieval thinkers.

serious undertaking. All journeys begin with the decision to travel. The inclination to undertake a journey is a considerable aspect of philosophic thought. In the early nineteenth century the transport network was beginning to make travel easier but tourism was still, until the development of the aeroplane, high-speed train and motor-car, a venture governed by the consumption of a large amount of time. The unsettled state of Europe, and the relatively uncharted territories of abroad enlarged the uncertainty of travel, whilst the idea of destination, before the invention of photography, was largely governed by the written word. Travellers' accounts had begun to appear with greater regularity in the seventeenth century with the appearance of nautical narratives and sea journals, and by the nineteenth century descriptions of foreign geographies were more accessible to travellers. A voyage abroad therefore was a huge undertaking and quite a different concept than our understanding of the term holiday or vacation. From the evidence of the letters of Lord Byron, Shelley and Dickens it is clear that the moment of their decision to go abroad was of substantial conceptual intent. For example, Dickens announces his decision to go abroad, in large capital letters in a letter to Forster.² Shelley says he might never return to England.³ Byron's plans to tour the East carry a desire to emulate aesthetically the military campaigns of Alexander the Great.⁴ Can we really though say the decision to go abroad is of more existential value than the panoply of cultural experience mediated throughout the journey? We cannot, of course, equally compare the brief process of the will to travel with the longer duration of the journey itself, yet the moment of decision is truly a supreme act of volition, and if acted upon leads to experiences of wide consequence. There are simply, therefore, two philosophies of tourism, the a priori initiating impulse to depart and the empirical or a posteriori response to the

² See Dickens's letter to John Forster of 19th September 1841 (Pilgrim 2: 386).

³ See Shelley's letter to William Godwin from London May 3rd 1816 (J 1: 472).

⁴ See Byron's letter to James de Bathe (the Earl of Clare) February 2nd 1808 (BLJ 1: 151); to Mrs Catherine Gordon Byron, October 7th 1808 (BLJ 1: 172); and to John Hanson, November 18th 1802 (BLJ 1: 175).

journey itself. Whilst the experience of abroad may lead to major reformations of thought within the subject, equally the desire, or what Byron labels the “stimulus of travel” (B 21) is a fundamental leap in the dark for all prospective travellers, but especially in an age when the idea of the foreign was governed largely by a blank canvas of the unknown and unfamiliar, fear or pleasure depending on one’s desire for adventure.

These factors determine a philosophy of tourism to varying degrees, depending largely on the subject, historical time and any literary endeavour arising after the subject’s return home or alternatively once he has sufficiently absorbed his experience of travel. In the case of writers the consequence of travel is usually composition: of a poem, novel or narrative recounting the impression of abroad. Reformations of thought accrue from the decision to travel, throughout the journey and in the artistic legacies which writers reap from their exposure to foreign geographies. Shelley, Byron and Dickens are political travellers who experience personal epiphanies which transform their sense of identity and reform their ideas on liberty. Shelley and Byron renounce their Englishness, and assume in their later writing the cultures and political ideas of European systems, whilst Dickens intensifies his sense of Englishness and in his subsequent writing rediscovers the convivialities of the provincial domestic fireside. The experience of travel for many writers formulates their sense of self and identity through absorption and epiphany, an instantaneous although a posteriori revelation. Travel effects a state of higher consciousness: the experience of travel, and the will to travel, reform the mind.

The distinction also between narratives of tourism which often take the form of letters in the eighteenth century begins in the nineteenth century to break down. Nineteenth-century prose writing about tourism poses inexactitudes of genre and it is often unclear whether a text is precisely a novel, a travel book or an autobiography.

From the nineteenth century to the present day, writers have used their experiences of

tourism in fictions which have gradually splintered further and further away from the tourism genre into parallel disciplines of adventure, science fiction, fantasy and especially comedy. The period, broadly 1760-1917 and especially 1800-50, largely owing to the revolutionary state of Europe, saw a golden age of narratives of political tourism. In their narratives of tourism, Byron, Shelley and Dickens offer the possibility that mankind can still reform systems of oppression and inequality. This idealistic voice is a feature of nineteenth-century travel writing.

Prior to the nineteenth century, narratives of tourism were frequently published as collections of letters, often assuming the form of a memoir. In the nineteenth century, travel writing began to assume a plurality of styles and genre, as writers incorporated narratives of tourism within novels, and used the medium of tourism to represent psychological humours and impressions of existential enquiry. The case studies examined in this investigation contest representational travel writing, which presents a high degree of realism and is largely mimetic; through their instability of genre and heterogeneous styles of writing, which present reality in multidimensional perspectives, images of non-conformism compel the reader to question ordinary ways of seeing the world. In commonplace accounts of the world this is quite impossible; the travel writer aims only to describe the world as it appears: "An image-maker, a presenter, understands only appearance, while reality is beyond him" (Plato 352).

A great deal of this study has concentrated on the empirical experience writers encounter in their journeys into the world. The evidence of writing on tourism may only ever be a partial representation and indication of a writer's absorption of a 'foreign' destination. Often after publication writers change their opinions, either regretting or wishing they had dealt with their subject differently. In Dickens's case, as an older and more world-weary traveller, he recognised on his later tour of America in 1868 that he had been rather unjust in some of his more abrasive remarks on Americans' manners and style. Shelley's later poetic

account of his travels in Venice, Julian and Maddalo, suggests that his travels in the world have given him the assurance and poetic confidence to create a masterpiece which allows him at last to accept his own poetic achievement on the same terms as Byron, when in 1816 he could not believe he had equalled his fellow-poet. Byron, on his later resumption of Harold's pilgrimage, achieves in Italy a unity with his alter-ego that suggests experience of the world, the great public arena of life, tempers the character into a more studied understanding of the terrible, perplexing and beautiful aspects of humanity.

For writers especially, the stimulation afforded by foreign travel allows untold riches of perception which stimulate authorial creativity. In the nineteenth century, as discontent throughout Europe forced many political thinkers to incite revolution, writers used scenes of tourism to represent societies downcast by discontent, injustice and slavery, in the hope that public opinion might be moved enough to effect political reform. In the three case studies examined, each writer experienced an invasion of consciousness abroad which subsequently altered their ideas on issues of political, religious or domestic freedom. Byron's observations of war, Shelley's interest in Rousseau and Dickens's crisis of privacy all became turning points in each writer's career which they articulated through a distinctive literary voice. In the world of late Romantic and early Victorian writers, British society is educated through iconoclastic representations of the exemplary or horrific systems of abroad. In the nineteenth century, tourist fiction is the medium to revolution: "The most unfailing herald, companion, and follower of the awakening of a great people to work a beneficial change in opinion or institution, is poetry" (Shelley, Poetry 508).

Writers, through their distinctive language and wayward ideas, may establish a voice of their own quite unique from ordinary vision. 'The writer is the man who says no' (Camus 19) and invariably gets away with it, publishing and damning to the world his tragedies of the modern age. As Schlegel remarks "In like manner the battles of the human mind, if I may use

the expression; have been won by a few intellectual heroes. The history of the development of art and its various forms may be therefore exhibited in the characters of a number, by no means considerable, of elevated and creative minds" (Simpson 262).⁵ As Schopenhauer intuited, the writer understands reality with a more heightened perception than ordinary mortals:

Now this relative predominance, as it occurs in man, of the knowing consciousness over the desiring, and thus of the secondary part over the primary, may, in particular, exceptionally favoured individuals, go so far that at its most intense moments the secondary or knowing part of consciousness detaches itself altogether from the willing part, and on its own passes into free activity; that is, not activated by the will, and consequently no longer serving it. By this means it becomes purely objective, and the clear mirror of the world, and from it the conceptions of genius then arise. . . . (90)

All the writers considered in this study, but most especially Shelley, understood that society has always been founded on custom, belief and opinion. Whilst everyone must have their own opinion, too many people defer to consensus and precedent. Much of the injustice documented in the travel writing in this study has been ascribed to established systems of thinking which could be modified if people spent more time thinking and examining how co-operative rather than authoritative kinds of relationships would better govern society. This is not to say we can have a completely equal society. This point has been undoubtedly refuted by countless political philosophers. Aristotle, for example, plainly saw that "one should command and another obey is both necessary and expedient" (Politics, 67). A higher body of expertise is required to supervise the injustice and misguided actions of the baying

⁵ From "Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature" (1808).

multitudes. Society may be reformed through the continuing education of the human character; a task most effectively accomplished through the accessible works of writers.

The freedom and liberty of the individual advocated in the travel writing of Shelley, Byron and Dickens has not come to fruition. Yet, the experience of tourism itself is the one opportunity to find release from the power and injustice of the modern world. In tourism the imposition of external impediments and authority is a less overweening part of existence. Unless he encounters peril, the individual is likely to experience a greater freedom of mind abroad. The pleasure afforded by the imagined liberation of tourism is the easiest method of creating a perfect, but temporary utopia. The first Grand Tourist, Thomas Coryat, discovered this: "Yea such is the exuberance and superfluity of these exoticke pleasures, that for my owne part I will most truly affirme, I reaped more entire and sweet comfort in five moneths travels of those seven countries mentioned in the front of my booke, then I did all the days of my life before in England, which contained two and thirty yeares" (9).

This thesis proposes that tourism activates a higher state of consciousness which allows the subject actively to assume his desired alter ego, an alterior state of being which temporarily pleas the right to exist as one pleases and to banish temporarily the inequalities and injustices which inevitably govern life. For the writer, this utopian playground is a space in which foreign practices may be observed, and ideas may be tested and refined. In reperceiving his position in the world as an object rather than a subject bound by his own personal history and experience, travelling abroad freely gives the writer the will to acquire insightful cultural experience and reproduce it in art.

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