

From Walter Scott to Cormac McCarthy: Scottish Romanticism and the Novel from the American South

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BA (Hons.), MA

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Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy

This thesis is the work of the author and has not been submitted in
substantially the same form for the award of a higher degree elsewhere.

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This thesis argues for the previously underemphasized influence of Scottish Romantic-era writing on the novel from the US South, demonstrating the formative impact of writers such as Walter Scott and James Hogg on the development of Southern writing, but also the ways in which Southern writers critique and revise this heritage. The thesis illustrates the significance of transatlantic connections between regional sections of nation-states, links which complicate conventional centre-periphery models of cultural exchange. My theoretical approach draws on contemporary theories of materiality in the work of Manuel Delanda and Tim Ingold, which I use to emphasize the significance of objects and material processes in the representation of temporality in the literature of the Scottish Romantic and Southern US

traditions. I analyse Scottish Romanticism's emphasis on uneven historical transitions as a method of revising Scottish Enlightenment Conjectural history. This mode of critiquing progressive narratives of historical development is also a structuring principle in the Southern novel, where it is used to articulate a disjunctive regional temporality in opposition to teleological narratives of nation-state history.

Chapter one analyses the work of Walter Scott and examines key Waverley novels in terms of those aspects which would be most significant for Southern US writing: the motif of the border and depictions of primitivism. My second chapter considers James Hogg and Edgar Allan Poe as related writers of Gothic short fiction in a transatlantic literary scene dominated by Scott's legacy and the Scottish periodicals. The third chapter analyses Mark Twain's travel writing and three of his novels to explore his response to Scottish Romanticism in his depictions of Southern domestic objects. Chapter four examines the writing of William Faulkner and his portrayals of Scottish planter dynasties in his fictional Mississippi. My final chapter analyses Cormac McCarthy's fiction and his violent revisions of Scott's border narratives.

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Introduction

In elucidating the influence of Scottish Enlightenment thought on the development of American ideas of nationhood, Susan Manning has argued that the two poles of American modernity – the concepts of independence and cohesion – which are expressed in the drive to unite disparate and fragmented regions into a diverse national whole, are also characteristic of the project of Scottish Enlightenment thought. In the Scottish context, this emphasis on unity versus independence stemmed from a need to understand and theorize a new United Kingdom, one which could integrate Scottish historical and cultural distinctiveness, ‘Scotland underwent – debated, theorized, experienced, resisted, *imagined* – union before the American colonies; the literature that emerged from this experience inevitably proved potent when the colonists began to formulate their own responses to a crisis in their relationship with England.’¹ This focus on the nature of national ‘union’ was certainly crucial for emergent American identity and for Scotland’s cultural and political negotiation of ‘Britishness’ in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Yet when we narrow our focus to the American South we find the legacy of secession and Civil War also driving cultural debates about ‘Union’ and drawing on Scottish cultural models in a similar way to that of the United States when it first emerged from British rule. This critical stance toward the

¹ Susan Manning, *Fragments of Union: Making Connections in Scottish and American Writing* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p.4.

formation and cohesion of the nation-state is a fundamental part of my analysis of the Scottish Romantic influences in Southern writing – in which I will demonstrate that Scottish literature from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was pivotal in the way in which certain Southern authors narrated their region's history, often in contrast to the history of the nation-state itself.

Through a careful examination of their literary traditions and interactions, Scotland and the American South can offer models of literature untethered to a dominant nation-state narrative, and which may in fact offer a more critical perspective on the construction of such narratives. The method of cross comparison, while bringing into focus the colonial legacies in both regions, also allows for an understanding of changing Scottish and Southern cultures outside of South/North or Scottish/Anglo-British binaries.² While in the nineteenth century Scotland underwent rapid modernization, the American South remained largely agrarian, and despite the upheavals of Civil War and reconstruction it still maintained more rigid divisions of race, gender and class in contrast to the industrializing North. Just as scholarship on Southern literature is currently being reoriented toward its climatic, cultural and economic links with the Caribbean and Latin America, so criticism of Scottish literature can equally benefit from studying its transatlantic or hemispheric connections, thus bypassing an excessive focus on the influence

² For a deeper discussion of what methods of transatlantic comparative literary studies can offer, see Susan Manning and Andrew Taylor, eds., *Transatlantic Literary Studies: A Reader* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007).

of Britishness on the development of Scottish culture.³ It is within this international focus in Scottish and Southern studies that my project is founded.

The central aims of this thesis are two-fold; firstly, to map and analyse the substantial influence of Scottish Romantic-era writing on the novel in the Southern United States and, secondly, to mine these historical and literary relationships for a greater understanding of how sub-national, noncosmopolitan geographies relate to each other and to a shared experience of an uneven 'modernity'. By 'modernity' in the context of this study I mean to designate the rational, metropolitan, liberalizing and 'improving' projects characteristic of, but by no means limited to, the theorizations of the Scottish Enlightenment, with its focus on the modern civic state.⁴ My study treats the literary traditions of Scotland and the South on their own terms and through their relationship with each other, rather than assessing them with respect to their more culturally dominant neighbours. Inevitably this shift in analytical perspective requires a degree of discussion of how this project relates to established anglophone literary fields. My thesis is engaged both in Romantic-era scholarship and transatlantic studies but within a comparative methodology more familiar in world literary studies, and by its nature a project of this kind must also consider several literary periodizations, such as

³ For this hemispheric and global emphasis within recent Southern Studies, see Richard H. King, 'Allegories of Imperialism: Globalizing Southern Studies', *American Literary History*, 23 (2011), 148-158. Also, Harilaos Stecopoulos, *Reconstructing the World: Southern Fictions and U.S. Imperialisms, 1898-1976* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008) and Annette Trefzer and Ann J. Abadie, eds., *Global Faulkner* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2009).

⁴ On the complexity of the links between the Scottish Enlightenment and 'modernity', see Norman Geras and Robert Wokler, eds., *Enlightenment and Modernity* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000).

the Romantic period, late nineteenth-century American Realism, Modernism and contemporary literature. I will demonstrate the necessity of this approach for rethinking categories of Anglophone literature in terms of the international networks in which they were historically enmeshed, so that new, comparative perspectives can be generated.

In recent years Romantic-era scholarship has been subject to contextual shifts designed to broaden the discipline and to question the way in which certain Romantic authors were canonized in the Victorian period and beyond.⁵ This critical drive seeks to create a more heterogenous conception of Romanticism which recognizes its internal diversity. From a period largely defined by the work of a circle of male English poets, Romantic scholarship has more recently broadened to take greater account of the centrality of popular Gothic fiction and the work of women writers in the period. To a degree there has also been a shift to a ‘four nations’ or archipelagic model of Romanticism, where Romantic-era work from Scotland, Wales and Ireland finds renewed significance. This more elastic project of ‘Romanticisms’ has inevitably caused a shift in our thinking about genre, with the popularity of the Irish ‘national tale’ and the Scottish historical novel revealing the central importance of prose in the early nineteenth century, as argued by Katie Trumpener in her influential study *Bardic Nationalism* (1997).⁶ My project

⁵ ‘The writers since canonized as the “Romantics” are those who self-consciously claimed to produce “literature”, that is, to write independently of and in defiance of the demands of the marketplace. It follows that “Romantic Literature” was from the first defined by its exclusion of other kinds of writing, and hence is best understood in terms of the particular kinds of writing that it excluded.’ Robert Miles, *Romantic Misfits* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p.5.

⁶ Katie Trumpener, *Bardic Nationalism: The Romantic Novel and the British Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997). For key readings on the Romanticism of the British peripheries see also Murray Pittock, *Scottish And Irish Romanticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), and Murray Pittock, ed., *The Edinburgh Companion to Scottish Romanticism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011).

follows Trumpener's in its comparative approach and its drive to resituate what have been previously perceived as more peripheral literatures within an international historical framework.

While *Bardic Nationalism* maps the relationships between these peripheral Romanticisms and English culture within the wider context of British imperial expansion, my aim is more specific: to take Scottish Romantic writing and chart its presence and impact in a limited regional space – the American South. Trumpener argues that it is the attempts of Romantic-era work from Scotland and Ireland to counter the cultural centralization of Britain in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries which set the tone for the literary culture of the day:

The period's major new genres (ballad collection, sentimental and Gothic fiction, national tale, and historical novel), its central models of historical scholarship and literary production, and even its notions of collective and individual memory have their origins in the cultural nationalism of the peripheries.⁷

She takes this issue of peripheral influence further in arguing for a new conception of literary exchange and circulation within the British Empire in the Romantic period. Yet if Scottish and Irish cultural production was indeed so instrumental in forming a distinctive literary culture in this period, we might ask why the critical picture of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries still appears dominated by English poetry.

⁷ Trumpener, p.xi.

Jerome McGann in his classic analysis *The Romantic Ideology* (1983) separates Romantic work proper (English Romantic poetry) from other kinds of writing in the period (such as the novels of Walter Scott and Jane Austen). In his treatment, 'Romanticism' is reserved for a movement within English poetry rather than designating a periodization. His project is to define what makes such poetry 'Romantic' in quality, and he necessarily opposes it to other non-Romantic work in the period. In comparing Keats's use of the ballad form in 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci' (1819) to Scott's rewriting of traditional ballads in *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802), McGann reaches for a fundamental difference between the two:

Scott's presentation lacks altogether the agonized intensity of Keats's ballad because Scott interposes between himself and his materials the objective eye of the editor and philologist. These roles, assumed by Scott, permit him to experience and understand his materials without an extreme sense of displacement and estrangement. His view is ideologically Enlightened. Keats's poem, on the other hand, will not rest satisfied with Scott's historicism. Every part of Keats's ballad exhibits the restlessness and probing interrogations which Swingle has observed in typical Romantic poems.⁸

This passage expresses in microcosm almost every assumption which has left Scottish Romantic work relegated to either a secondary Romanticism or, indeed, to something other than Romanticism altogether. Scott is

⁸ Jerome McGann, *The Romantic Ideology: A Critical Investigation* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), p.80. McGann is here responding to L. J. Swingle, 'On reading Romantic Poetry', *PMLA*, 86 (1971), 974-981. McGann has more recently put forward an argument for Scott's 'Romanticism' in his book chapter, 'Walter Scott's Romantic Postmodernity', in Leith Davis, Ian Duncan and Janet Sorenson, eds., *Scotland and the Borders of Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp.113-129.

representative of the ideology of the Enlightenment, Keats that of Romanticism; Scott stands as the ‘objective’ literary antiquarian untroubled by ‘Romantic agony’, while Keats wrestles with a sense of profound loss and division. The assumption that the revival of traditional folk forms such as the ballad was unattended with ‘estrangement’ in Scottish culture is misleading, as the restoration and rewriting of aspects of traditional Scottish culture had been highly politicized and divisive since the Ossian controversy. Nevertheless, this kind of cultural alienation was undeniably public, while for McGann Keats’s agony is that of the isolated individual. Another central objection to Scottish Romantic work is at stake here – its social and public aspect.

To paint Scott as ideologically Enlightened in comparison to Keats may seem uncontroversial, but it would then involve discounting Scott’s profound influence on European Romanticism, an influence which calls into question the critical binaries of Enlightened/Romantic. For my purposes, I am defining ‘Romanticism’ as a cultural movement within Europe in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries which is internally diverse enough to permit of separate categories such as Scottish, Irish and American Romanticism, traditions which may require separate periodizations and yet are simultaneously deeply entangled with each other.⁹

The emphasis on poetry in mainstream scholarship of the Romantic era has placed a further obstacle before any analysis of Scottish writing in the period. What we might term the previous critical neglect of the Romantic

⁹ For an examination of the influence of Scottish, Irish and Welsh Romantic writing in England and further afield, as well as of constructions of ‘Celticism’ in English Romantic-era literature, see Gerard Carruthers and Alan Rawes, eds., *English Romanticism and the Celtic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

novel accrues from this traditional emphasis on poetry in conceptualizations of the Romantic period, leaving the novel to be associated more fully with either the eighteenth century or the Victorian period. As Robert Miles writes of this generic oversight:

Much of the disciplinary energy driving the preceding period – the eighteenth century – centred on the rise of the novel, where it was understood, in large part, as the genre that was produced by, and which registered, the making of the modern world. Second, as bibliographers now unequivocally confirm, the period in which the novel takes off, deflecting upwards, as regards production and readership – was the Romantic one. The novel was most ignored just as it consolidated itself in the mainstream of our literary culture. ¹⁰

The work of Maria Edgeworth, Ann Radcliffe, Jane Austen, Scott, and others, for Miles represents the extraordinary achievements in the novel in this period. However, while the novel may have been neglected in conventional Romantic scholarship, a new wave of contemporary interest in the Gothic has led to writers such as Radcliffe attaining a central position in the Romantic canon. Yet the task of critically reintegrating the specifically Scottish Romantic novel into our conception of the Romantic period in Britain is still underway.

The collection *Scotland and the Borders of Romanticism* (2004) returns to the apparent binary which has prevented Scottish Romantic-era work from being fully recognized as Romantic – the assumption that Scotland in the period represents a conservative, Enlightenment neoclassicism versus

¹⁰ Miles, p.133.

the radical Romanticism of England. The editors raise the paradoxical issue of the enormous popular success of Scottish writing in the period – its triumph in terms of the Romantic literary marketplace but its failure to become part of the canon of Romanticism. This shortcoming has been attributed to the fact that the work of Scott, Hogg, and others was thematically preoccupied with the historical and the primitive, and in terms of literary form with employing satirical framing devices and metafictional strategies which stressed the contrived and inauthentic nature of their texts. As Ian Duncan, Leith Davis and Janet Sorenson argue, these tropes were fatal in terms of Scottish Romanticism's later reception in which 'Scotland, neither English or foreign, stands for an *inauthentic* Romanticism, defined by a mystified – purely ideological – commitment to history and folklore.'¹¹ While it is crucial to regain a sense of the significance of Scotland's contribution to Romantic-era culture, the relegation of popular Scottish Romantic writing sheds light on the nature of British canon formation and the institutionalization of Romanticism, where Scottish work can now help to generate new perspectives.

The relative fixity of canonized British Romantic writing is not merely a problem of genre but a related one of literary periodization, revolving around the question of when Enlightenment neoclassicism ceased to be an underlying principle in literary-cultural work and when Romanticism emerged as a reaction to it. However, the conventional narrative implied in this question is entirely disrupted when we make any serious attempt to integrate Scottish writing into traditional British literary periodizations of the eighteenth and

¹¹ Duncan, Davis and Sorenson, eds., *Scotland and the Borders of Romanticism*, p.1. Another essay in this collection relevant to my thesis is Susan Manning, 'Antiquarianism, The Scottish Science of Man, and the Emergence of Modern Disciplinarity', pp.57-76.

nineteenth centuries. The century between 1750 and 1850 saw an unprecedented cultural and intellectual yield from Scotland: from the global impact of the Scottish Enlighteners across several newly emerging disciplinary fields, the international impact of James Macpherson's Ossian poems on the development of European Romanticism, the innovations of Robert Burns in forging a vernacular poetry and the centrality of Walter Scott to the Romantic enterprise – a figure whose truly international reputation exceeded that of any other writer of the period.¹² This is not to forget the international readership of James Hogg, which has only recently begun to receive critical attention, or the success of Jane Porter and the legacy of John Galt for the social historical novel, or that of Joanna Baillie in Romantic drama and poetry. Add to this the influence of the Edinburgh periodicals including *The Edinburgh Review* and *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, and Scotland provides a model involving many kinds of writing, in a cultural moment which combined Enlightened and Romantic modes. The Enlightenment emphasis is visible on a literary level in both the discursive attributes of the Scottish Romantic novel (the inclusion of footnotes, historicizing frames) and the disciplinary modes in which these are often embedded (antiquarianism, ballad revival, linguistics, social history).

From Macpherson onward, the influence of Enlightenment historicism is absorbed and critiqued in Scottish Romantic writing, rather than rejected outright. As Murray Pittock argues on the relationship between the Scottish Enlightenment and Scottish Romanticism, 'the latter drew on some of the

¹² Jerome McGann asserts that, 'in a European perspective he [Scott] and Byron were predominant cultural presences for almost two generations.' Jerome McGann, 'Walter Scott's Romantic Postmodernity', in *Scotland and the Borders of Romanticism*, p.116. For Scott's ascendancy in anglophone literature between 1802-1832 see Ian Duncan, *Scott's Shadow: The Novel in Romantic Edinburgh* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

former's values to critique others, and created its own national historicism in dialogue with the Enlightenment whose right to construct such a concept it refuted.¹³ One central aspect of my argument in this thesis is that certain writers from the American South in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries appropriated Scottish Romantic writing in order to draw on an ambivalence toward the transition from feudalism to a bourgeois modernity which is evident in that body of work, particularly in Scott.

Ian Duncan argues that this emerging critical picture of Scottish Romanticism differs markedly from the conventional English model of Romantic literary development. This is clear for Duncan in the fact that a seminal Romantic work such as Macpherson's *Fingal* is a 'characteristic product' of Enlightenment scientific discourses, and that in Scotland a distinct 'Romanticism' only began with the founding of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* in 1817.¹⁴ The unique eclecticism of the Scottish Enlightenment – the lack of clear divisions between practices of anthologizing, antiquarianism and literary ethnography, is also central in Robert Crawford's analysis in *Devolving English Literature*, where Scottish Romanticism is characterized by indissoluble links between Enlightenment thought and creative endeavour. For Crawford, the cultural pressure placed on Scotland after the 1707 Union provides the impetus behind the mania for collection and comparison in the

¹³ Murray Pittock, ed., *The Edinburgh Companion to Scottish Romanticism*, p.9.

¹⁴ Ian Duncan, 'On the Study of Scottish Literature', *ScotLit*, 28 (2003), http://asls.arts.gla.ac.uk/Studying_Scottish_Literature.html [accessed 3/11/17].

traditions of antiquarianism and ballad revival, so that Scottish culture could remain distinctive both internationally and within a new Britishness.¹⁵

This new contextual picture of Scotland's national Romanticism is critical for my project, as it stages Scotland's fascinating and unexpected position in the international culture of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. While the contribution of Scots to the British Empire and to settler cultures has long been recognized, this mapping of Scottish cultural work in the Romantic period demonstrates the formative influence of Scotland's philosophical and literary writing in Europe and across the Atlantic.¹⁶ Ian Duncan stresses the global contributions of Scottish writing in this period, both generically and in subject matter:

What kind of a 'world' was it that Scottish Romanticism helped shape? A continental-European, North Atlantic, settler-colonial world, with Scotland at its center: you could map this world – one where the 'tidal wave of modernization' forced a look back at the premodern past, materialized in 'primitive' regional societies in the process of being overwhelmed.¹⁷

This backward glance at the premodernity exemplified in regional geographies translates readily into the context of the Southern United States where understandings of temporal transition are equally urgent in the framework of

¹⁵ Robert Crawford, *Devolving English Literature*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991, repr; Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), p.113. See also his edited collection, *The Scottish Invention of English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

¹⁶ For a comprehensive recent study of the settler aspect, see James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World, 1783-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

¹⁷ Ian Duncan, 'Scottish Romanticism, World Literature: Some Reflections', *The Bottle Imp*, 2 (2007), <https://www.thebottleimp.org.uk/2007/11/scottish-romanticism-world-literature-some-reflections/> [accessed: 3/11/17].

North-South relations. Thus, the central argument of my thesis is that in responding to Scottish Romantic writing the Southern authors I analyse are also engaging with Enlightenment theories of development, which in turn influenced the way in which they represent their local geographies in terms of historical progress or regression. I will demonstrate that an emphasis on disjunctive histories is pivotal to the ways in which both Scottish and Southern authors represent their regions in terms of their wider nation-states, Great Britain and the United States.

The historical reference points of Scottish Romantic work emerged from a response to Scottish Enlightenment historicism, particularly its concepts of Conjectural or Speculative history, which originate from thinkers such as William Robertson, Adam Ferguson, Adam Smith, Lord Kames, and John Millar. In this model, human progress is divided into successive stages, beginning with hunting societies where property is held largely in common and which was also understood as the 'savage' stage. This phase is succeeded by pastoralism or barbarism, with some minimal property, followed by an agricultural stage with the beginnings of recognizable civilization and landed property. The final stage is that of modern commercial society. This stadial schema, although employed in different forms among the writings of the Enlightenment literati, provided a logical explanation for the fact of the uneven development of human societies across the world. An understanding of the earliest forms of society, economy and government was pivotal in Enlightenment thought for understanding how these institutions had developed and why they had taken certain forms in modernity. As Christopher Berry has recently argued regarding the stages of the Conjectural history

model, 'This account of social development follows a natural history track from concrete to abstract, from simple to complex, from rude to cultivated or civilised.'¹⁸

Due to this stress on historical and social progression in Scottish Enlightenment Historiography, this model is in many ways a teleological narrative of improvement which intersects with the project of modernity itself.¹⁹ Berry makes this emphasis explicit in his argument that it was in fact the most recent transition from feudal to commercial society, that stage in which the Enlighteners themselves lived, which was their central preoccupation. The Scottish Enlightenment notion of social structures as universal and teleological developmental stages was used both to dissect modern institutions and to categorize divergent cultures encountered in Empire. Duncan has argued that Scottish Romantic work takes Conjectural history as a structuring principle, while simultaneously offering a critique of its directionality and its rhetoric of improvement through the employment and development of the genres of Romance and Gothic. Where I depart from Duncan's critical narrative is by grounding these discourses of cultural difference as temporal distinction in the experience of environments, objects and materials.

With Macpherson's warring, primitive Celts, Scott's hunting scenes, the importance of the pastoral and agricultural aesthetic in Hogg and Burns, and depictions of the development of provincial and commercial societies in Scott

¹⁸ Christopher Berry, *The Idea of Commercial Society in the Scottish Enlightenment* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), p.42.

¹⁹ See Murray Pittock, 'Historiography', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Scottish Enlightenment*, ed. by Alexander Broadie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 258-279.

and Galt, historical phases and transitions are a clear organizing principle in Scottish Romantic writing. I argue that this emphasis is carried over into similar tropes and depictions in the work of Edgar Allan Poe, Mark Twain, William Faulkner and Cormac McCarthy. The continued concern with similar stadial understandings of history also relates to the weight given to historicizing practices across many of my chosen texts, in the form of archaeology, antiquarianism, excavation and anthropological description. These ‘material’ aspects of the presentation of stadial history are expressed in specific ways in Scottish Romantic-era writing, with its antiquarian focus on objects and artefacts, travel and movement, and its depictions of bodies in primitive stages. The central theoretical focus in my thesis is how these interrelations between temporality and materiality are used to express an uneven historicism, which translates over into the writing of the American South as a similar focus on material processes and object life, which in turn relates to the presentation of regional histories within the nation-state.

Literary acts of referencing and critiquing developmental models of history are not only found in Scott, but can be understood as characteristic of the project of Scottish Romanticism, from the implied critique of Hogg’s uncertain epistemologies and focus on supernatural legend to what John Galt termed his ‘theoretical history’ as embodied in his novelistic depictions of Scottish small-town life in *Annals of the Parish* (1821) and *The Ayrshire Legatees* (1821).²⁰ As with the Ossian poems, the drive to evoke an earlier stage of society was a powerful current in late eighteenth and early nineteenth-

²⁰ See Regina Hewitt, ed., *John Galt: Observations and Conjectures on Literature, History and Society* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2012).

century Scottish culture. Historical discourse is also central to the tradition of the Southern novel, and this is a topic of specific concern to more noncosmopolitan or peripheral sections of nation-states. In the work of Poe, Faulkner and McCarthy, I identify an emphasis on social and ecological decline and attenuation in their depictions of historical transition, which imply that the Southern path to modernity is one of loss and destruction rather than improvement. While Mark Twain is urgently optimistic about the march of Southern development and national integration, his enthusiasm is often undercut by his ambivalent representations of non-linear social and cultural temporalities in the South, embodied in his image of the typical Southerner as ‘modern and Medieval mixed’.²¹

My thesis will also draw on Ian Duncan’s model of Scottish Gothic, highlighting certain strands of connection between Scottish and Southern forms of the Gothic as founded in an ambivalent engagement with ideas of historical change and modernization. In Duncan’s terms, Scottish Gothic is characterized by ‘greater historical and anthropological specificity’ than is typical of the English Gothic tradition:

While the historical referent of English gothic tends to be a superseded imperial, aristocratic regime – Catholic, feudal or absolutist – the Scottish equivalent usually designates some version of a broader national culture, shared by a community or people historically separated from the emergent modernity (urban, mercantile and professional, rational and empiricist) of the Lowland Enlightenment. This designation accompanies the Enlightenment theorisation of

²¹ Mark Twain, *Life on the Mississippi* (1883; London: Oxford University Press, 1962), p.304.

history as a process of economic and cultural modernisation –
 ‘improvement’ – entailing a developmental break with prior stages.²²

Those portions of the Scottish nation left behind in the march of the Lowlands toward modernity – the Highlands and Borders – embody this image of uneven development within the nation which is also relevant to the American model of North/South relations. I stage a detailed discussion of the development and significance of Scottish and Southern Gothic in my chapter discussing James Hogg and Edgar Allan Poe, where I demonstrate that the influence of Scott’s writing and of Gothic short fiction in the Scottish periodicals can afford a new perspective on the genealogy of Southern Gothic.

Towards a Global Romanticism

The increasing critical interest in Romantic writing previously left at the fringes of literary definitions and periodizations has also allowed for a new emphasis on concepts of the global in this period. While the ideas of the ‘global’ and consequently ‘globalization’, are challenging to define and contextualize, by ‘global’ in this context I mean to designate the international flows of influence and cultural circulation which impact even the most ‘local’ constructions of the national and regional.²³ Concepts of globalization often stand as a critique of the national, yet they can also provide the background against which the national can be defined, thereby producing and intensifying

²² Ian Duncan, ‘Walter Scott, James Hogg and Scottish Gothic’, in *A Companion to the Gothic*, ed. by David Punter (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), pp.70-80 (p.71).

²³ On the complexity of defining and analysing ‘globalization’, see Malcolm Waters, *Globalization*, 2nd edn (1995; repr; London: Routledge, 2001).

national consciousness. Postcolonial studies have offered a fresh perspective in this regard, providing new angles on canonical Romantic authors and problematizing the narrative of a monolithic British imperialism.²⁴ Such scholarship has paved the way for my project by breaking up the agglomeration of Anglo-British identity and tracing its historical hybridity. Perhaps one of the gifts which Scottish Studies makes available to scholars of world literature is the tendency of its contexts to complicate and frustrate nation-state based literary models and periodizations, as well as muddying any monolithic picture of British cultural history or of a homogenous anglophone tradition of writing. Scottish literature's use of dialect, and the experimental and hybrid forms which it has produced, have been fruitfully aligned with the dialect and pidgin Englishes of post-colonial writing.²⁵

The complex uses of Scottish Romantic literature in the American South brings new challenges for understanding the interactions between the local, the national and the global. Saskia Sassen has recently argued that much of the literature on globalization fails to note that many globalizing processes take place within the realm of the national, so that any dichotomy between national and global becomes problematic. Sassen identifies the enormous effort of constructing the national, the emergence of which she describes as neither 'natural, easy or pre-destined'.²⁶ The global and the national are thus

²⁴ See Elizabeth A. Bohls, *Romantic Literature and Postcolonial Studies* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013).

²⁵ See Michael Gardiner, Graeme Macdonald and Niall O'Gallagher, *Scottish Literature and Postcolonial Literature: Comparative Texts and Critical Perspectives* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011).

²⁶ Saskia Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), p.18.

not mutually exclusive, and global networks in fact emerge from the capabilities of the nation-state:

Scholarship tends to conflate what happens inside the national state with ‘the national’ – in the historically constructed sense of the last centuries. From here it is easy to fall into the dualisms of the global and national as mutually exclusive, or a reifying of the global as external and the national as internal.²⁷

This image of a paradoxically external national and internalized global offers new opportunities for understanding the complexity of the nation-state model in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the early nineteenth century Britain had one of the most international economies and the most advanced form of industrial capitalism, a level of development which belied internal economic variation within its borders. The more decentralized United States of the period was characterized by a loose federation of states which underwent strong centralization after the Civil War. It is these internal divisions and a focus on peripheral regions operating in a way that is perceived as counter to the progressive teleology of the nation-state which provides the focus of much of this study, as I compare Scottish Romantic-era work and the Southern novel. In this way I am offering a ‘networked’ picture of the nation-state rather than one with established centres and peripheries.

I have avoided the term ‘transnational’ in this project as although it could be argued that the international engagements of many of the writers I include mark them as transnational figures, my contention is that these

²⁷ Ibid, p.228.

writers do not transcend or go beyond the nation-state in making more global engagements; rather, it is within an international context of cultural exchange that they debate the production of the local and of the nation-state and their often conflicting histories. As Arjun Appadurai has argued, 'The new global economy has to be seen as a complex, overlapping, disjunctive order that cannot any longer be understood in terms of existing center-periphery models (even those that might account for multiple centers and peripheries)'.²⁸ Read in this way, literary traditions and lines of influence begin to appear far more dispersed and mobile than ever before. I will also demonstrate the importance of Scottish Romantic aesthetics, historicism and Gothic for the Southern writers, tasked as they are with narrating the experience of a diverse geography often perceived as living its own disjunctive, problematic historical time. The ways in which the Scottish historical novel works to map transitions between historical orders also re-emerges in the Southern writers I am discussing, whether through the cataclysm of Civil War, shifting race relations, environmental destruction or rapid technological change.

In much scholarship on globalization runs the notion that as global space was mapped in the age of Empire it caused a contracting of our awareness of space, a disbanding of local consciousness and the creation of a smooth, representable totality of the 'globe' as a central part of the project of modernity. This homogenous globe, however, is not visible in the texts I will be discussing. Instead, sensory and bodily experience, objects, materials, and environmental change, are more often used to figure the presence of wider

²⁸ Arjun Appadurai, 'Disjuncture and Difference', in *Literature and Globalization: A Reader*, ed. by Liam Connell and Nicky Marsh (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), pp.28-36, (p.29).

forces and influences in the Scottish and Southern traditions. In this emphasis, I am following a line initiated by theorists such as Bruno Latour, who seek to problematize notions of global experience. As Latour argues, methodologically we ‘must not confuse a *well-connected* locality’ with ‘the utopia of the Globe’, where associations can be grasped in their entirety from a distant, non-local viewpoint.²⁹ When I employ the term ‘global’ I am gesturing toward non-local linkages that occur within and outside local geographies, but that must by necessity be experienced locally. In terms of the connection between these two geographies it is the reinscription of the local, the specific, and the noncosmopolitan which is of central importance.

The new scholarly emphasis on the global in Romantic Studies has infiltrated all areas of scholarship. David Higgins’ *Romantic Englishness* (2014) argues that understandings of Englishness in Romantic writing, while often connected with specific locales, are also constructed in relation to wider national and international spheres of influence. He therefore pursues ‘a more complex, heterogenous and porous notion of Romantic literature, but also a way of thinking about English literature that is separate from [...] an imperialistic and statist discipline of ‘English Literature’ that emerged over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.’³⁰ Evan Gottlieb’s *Romantic Globalism* (2014) and his edited collection *Global Romanticism* (2015) argue for the recognition of the formative international linkages and engagements that helped produce British Romantic-era writing and culture. Gottlieb

²⁹ Bruno Latour, *Facing Gaia: Eight Lectures on the New Climatic Regime* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2017), p.136. See also, Peter Sloterdijk, *In the World of Interior Capital: Towards a Philosophical Theory of Globalization* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013).

³⁰ David Higgins, *Romantic Englishness: Local, Global and National Selves, 1780-1850* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp.10-11.

suggests that Romantic authors were acutely aware of ‘the global processes and dynamics that were increasingly reshaping their lives, their nation, and their world.’³¹ The Scottish aspect is particularly important for Gottlieb in this picture of a global Romantic-era literature, not simply due to the phenomenal international reach of Scottish writers such as Macpherson and Scott, but through the Scottish Enlighteners’ theorizations about the nature of modernity, ‘This fundamental alteration in the way history can be conceived makes it possible to think of various societies as occupying different historical stages simultaneously within a unified temporal framework [...] recalibrating time and space as secular, modern and homogenous.’³² Gottlieb paints the picture of a more progressive Walter Scott, whose later European novels indicate his cosmopolitan sensibilities and relate to an emerging global Romantic depiction of nation-state sovereignty as ‘strengthened, not diminished, by its inherent fictionality.’³³

Anthony Jarrells, in examining Scott’s work and the notion of the global, critiques the idea of the novel form as tied to the concept of a national literature, arguing that it is in fact ‘a form whose attention to the details of locale is precisely what registers – and makes it available to – a wider world of distant, different locales.’³⁴ This emphasis is critical for my own project, as it begins to illustrate why Southern authors were so often fascinated by, and continually reacting to, Scottish Romantic work and its themes of historical

³¹ Evan Gottlieb, *Romantic Globalism: British Literature and Modern World Order, 1750-1830* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2014), p.2.

³² Ibid, p.11.

³³ Ibid, p.145.

³⁴ Anthony Jarrells, ‘We Have Never Been National: Regionalism, Romance, and the Global in Walter Scott’s Waverley Novels’, in *Global Romanticism: Origins, Orientations and Engagements, 1760-1820*, ed. by Evan Gottlieb (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2014), pp.101-114 (p.102).

transition and political struggle among sections of the nation-state. Thus, in linking Scotland and the Southern United States I am interested in the ways in which the literatures of these two geographies, while deeply invested in a local picture, conceive of that locality as enmeshed in wider networks which influence the way in which those localities are structured and perceived. This conception of regional space intersects with the increasing hemispheric emphasis in Southern studies, as Edward Sugden writes, ‘on the level of geography we can see the “South” as a network of colonial inheritances as well as continuing transnational overlaps.’³⁵

Scottish writing was of course influenced by European Romanticism as well as responding to the literary and cultural developments south of the border. In terms of the Scottish influence within Europe, this is well exemplified by Macpherson’s Ossian corpus which was a favourite of Napoleon and Thomas Jefferson, and inspired Poe to defend its pure aesthetics against Wordsworth’s accusations of poetic sterility.³⁶ Duncan cites Macpherson’s influence on European texts such as Aleksei Musin-Pushkin’s *Lay of Igor’s Campaign* (1795), Charlotte Guest’s English-language version of the *Mabinogion* (1838-49), and even Richard Wagner’s appropriation and restaging of Northern heroic materials and sagas in his ‘Ring Cycle’ of operas (1869-74).³⁷ Macpherson’s reputed borrowings and echoes, from sources as various as Classical literature, the Old Testament, Milton, Shakespeare, and

³⁵ Edward Sugden, ‘The Globalisation of the Gothic South’, in *The Palgrave Handbook of the Southern Gothic*, ed. by Susan Castillo Street (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), pp.69-79 (p.73).

³⁶ Edgar Allan Poe ‘Letter to B—, July 1836’, *Edgar Allan Poe: Essays and Reviews*, ed. by G. R. Thompson (Cambridge: The Library of America, 1984), pp.6-7. For a further discussion of this see chapter two below.

³⁷ Ian Duncan, ‘Spawn of Ossian’, in Evan Gottlieb, ed., *Global Romanticism: Origins, Orientations and Engagements, 1760-1820*, pp.20-32 (p.21).

the traditional ballads and songs of Scotland and Ireland, make the Ossian poems remarkable works of European literary exchange. Scott's pervasive influence on the genesis of the popular form of the historical novel across Europe has been well documented in classic studies such as Georg Lukács's *The Historical Novel* (1955) and more recently Ian Duncan's *Scott's Shadow: The Novel in Romantic Edinburgh* (2007).

This pattern of the unprecedented influence of Scottish Romanticism in Europe continues across the Atlantic. For Andrew Hook in his classic study of Scotland's relationship with the United States, Scott's success was not a bolt from the blue across the Atlantic but a continuation of the enormous presence of Scottish writing and ideas on the continent, making the Waverley novels 'the crown of a Scottish literary tradition whose line of descent had long been known and admired in America.'³⁸ Robert Crawford has built on Hook's account of these transatlantic connections but has focused on the notion of a shared 'provincial' aesthetic binding Scottish and American traditions, in reaction to the prevalence of English cultural hegemony.³⁹ Taking up this concept of the 'provincial' is Joseph Rezek's recent study *London and the Making of Provincial Literature* (2015) which situates the provincial literary aesthetics of writers from Scotland, Ireland and the United States in the early nineteenth century within publishing networks centred in London as the Atlantic cultural capital. Central to Rezek's argument is that the 'cross-cultural address' in the form of footnotes, historical asides and explanations of local culture, which is characteristic of works by authors such as Scott, Edgeworth

³⁸ Andrew Hook, *Scotland and America: A Study of Cultural Relations, 1750-1835*, 2nd edn (Glasgow: Blackie, 1975; repr. Glasgow: Humming Earth, 2008), p.151.

³⁹ Crawford, *Devolving English Literature*, pp.216-70.

and Cooper, signal an aesthetics of the provincial, one profoundly conscious of its London audience. Chief among the strategies of which Rezek argues authors from peripheral nations took advantage were ‘appeals to reader’s sympathy, aestheticized displays of national character’ and ‘figurations of cross-cultural communion’, modes designed to create works of art which would foster cultural understanding and overcome national difference.⁴⁰ He understands provincial nationalism to be shaped by transnational forces, in particular by a London readership eager to consume aestheticized versions of Scottish national difference.

While the notion of a provincial aesthetic is critical in analysing the attraction of Scottish Romantic-era work for Southern audiences in my thesis, both Crawford’s and Rezek’s books emphasize Scottish and American writing as *national* literatures, which is more difficult to stage with my particular focus on the South. Conversely, designating Scotland and the South as regional literatures tends to downplay the political complexities of these two entities and their relationship with the nation states of which they have come to form a part. The violent history of secession and independence lend these two geographies a particularly problematic relation to their wider nation states, and their very existence questions the assumption of the unitary nature of the state and its cultural identity. As Anthony Jarrells writes of Scott’s novels, ‘The novel was from the start a national form, no doubt. But it was a form, too, that was still deeply engaged with and imbricated in the romance world of the local, the non-national and the noncosmopolitan.’⁴¹ This tension

⁴⁰ Joseph Rezek, *London and the Making of Provincial Literature: Aesthetics and the Transatlantic Book Trade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), p.18.

⁴¹ Jarrells, p.114.

between the national form and the local materials is precisely where the importance of Scottish and Southern literatures comes into play, as traditions which emphasize, within an acute awareness of the wider body of the nation-state, the non-national, the local and the historical. While scholars such as Susan Manning and Robert Crawford have traced Scotland's influence across the Atlantic, the broader significance of Scottish and Southern literary connections remains unexplored. One of the driving forces behind my thesis is therefore to illustrate the formative presence of Scottish Romantic-era writing in the novel of the American South, discovering how these two diverse sections of wider and increasingly powerful nation states articulated their cultural positions through that genre in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Tracing Scottish Romantic Relics in the American South

The Poems of Ossian's established presence in the South is evident in Mark Twain's description of a volume of Macpherson's collection gracing every affluent parlour table along the Mississippi river.⁴² Twain cites Scott as the greatest and single most destructive influence on Southern culture, a position which should be treated critically, especially given that Scott was read more in the Northern States than in the South and, as Susan Manning has highlighted, 'Scott's romances have been shown to be far from uniquely influential on

⁴² Twain, *Life*, p.259.

Southern taste.’⁴³ Yet the notion of a Southern culture saturated by the world of Scott’s writing is clearly plausible for a writer such as William Faulkner, and Poe’s admiration for Scott and Macpherson is abundantly evident in his criticism. By analysing the work of Poe, Twain, Faulkner and McCarthy, I will examine the rhetorical use of Scottish Romantic themes, aesthetics, and references, and demonstrate in detail why this literary heritage was so critical for Southern authors.

To further investigate the theme of historical and environmental transition I am using recent theories of process and materiality to draw out these salient elements. I focus particularly on theories of material dynamism versus inertia and on the significance of these models for ideas of space and temporality, and I draw on the work of several broadly defined materialist thinkers, particularly Manuel Delanda and Tim Ingold. These two thinkers seek to establish a version of the historical that is not organized around an anthropomorphized human history, a shift in emphasis which is relevant to many of the texts I will be discussing, writing which dramatizes the intersections of historicizing practices with a more grounded, ‘material’ reality. It is the post-Deleuzian philosopher and theorist Manuel Delanda who has most explicitly sought to suture the gap between human history and material or evolutionary change. To achieve this, he argues, we must follow developmental processes, mapping the emergence of things but also their moments of stability. In *A Thousand Years of Nonlinear History* (1997) Delanda advances a conception of historical and evolutionary development

⁴³ Susan Manning, ‘Did Mark Twain bring down the temple on Scott’s Shoulders?’, in *Special Relationships: Anglo-American Affinities and Antagonisms 1854-1936*, ed. by Janet Beer and Bridget Bennett (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), pp.8-27, (p.13).

which draws on thermodynamics to theorize processes of change and transitions between different states of matter. First, he begins with a critique of linearity:

Isn't the very idea of following a *line of development*, century by century, inherently linear? My answer is that a non-linear conception of history has nothing to do with a style of presentation, as if one could truly capture the non-equilibrium dynamics of human historical processes by jumping back and forth among the centuries. On the contrary, what is needed here is not a textual but a physical operation: much as history has infiltrated physics, we must now allow physics to infiltrate human history.⁴⁴

In terms of my project, this rethinking of history involves emphasizing the imagery of materials and material processes in my chosen texts, to see how they function to establish certain kinds of temporal states and contribute to novel understandings of historical transitions.

In the classic texts of Scottish Romanticism, materials are often depicted as wayward and as stubbornly resisting clear historicization, such as the rustic structure that Jonathan Oldbuck mistakes for a Roman Fort in *The Antiquary* (1816) or the evidence of the 'Scots Mummy' in *The Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824). The indeterminacy of historical materials in Scott's and Hogg's writing is compounded by issues surrounding historical authenticity in the period, originating most definitively in the form of the

⁴⁴ Manuel Delanda, *A Thousand Years of Nonlinear History* (New York: Zone Books, 1997), p.15. For an account of key debates in Speculative Materialism and Delanda's place within this movement, see Levi Bryant, Nick Srnicek and Graham Harman, eds., *The Speculative Turn: Continental Materialism and Realism* (Melbourne: re.press, 2011).

Ossian controversy. The use of historical footnotes, antiquarian figures, historical asides and found manuscripts in Scottish Romantic writing produces texts which both feature historicizing discourses and appear themselves as ambiguous, quasi-historical objects.

Delanda's conception of history as nonlinear is a fruitful way of approaching the appearance of historical disjunction and regression in the Scottish and Southern literary traditions, what I have identified above as their critique of concepts of teleological development: for, 'Humanity has never been moving "vertically" up a ladder of progress, but simply exploring "horizontally" a space of possibilities prestructured by stable states.'⁴⁵ In this suggestive image, the linear developmental model is turned on its side, allowing for different developmental trajectories to exist simultaneously, rather than superseding each other. This historical model recalls Scott's Rob Roy, a figure who I shall show embodies a savage stage of historical development but nonetheless finds ways to thrive in a rapidly industrializing, imperialist British milieu, 'a character like his, blending the wild virtues, the subtle policy and unrestrained license of an American Indian, was flourishing in Scotland during the Augustan age of Queen Anne and George I.'⁴⁶ Many critics have identified a tendency toward historical stability and resolution in the narrative structure of some of Scott's major novels, following the typical structure of *Waverley* (1814), though this is by no means characteristic of all his work. This stability conflicts with what Ian Duncan has identified in *Rob Roy* (1817) as a British imperial order characterized by uneven time zones, and

⁴⁵ Ibid, p.254.

⁴⁶ Walter Scott, 'Introduction', *Rob Roy*, ed. by Ian Duncan (1817; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.5.

therefore revealing a more complex and critical engagement with Scottish Enlightenment historicism. A search for historical equilibrium and integration is often countered in Scott's latter Jacobite novel by the sense that any such stability is impossible, and that the space of the nation is in fact characterized by intersecting, uneven temporalities. There is also the issue of historical attenuation, the loss of heredity and continuity represented by the crumbling dynasties of the eponymous *Redgauntlet* (1824) and Edgar Ravenswood in *The Bride of Lammermoor* (1819). Scott characteristically maps transitions between social and historical states – primitivism or feudalism and the commercial, Whig and Catholic, British and Jacobite – but most often these forms exist simultaneously, and those assumed to belong to a bygone age persist unsettlingly into the present.

The images of the history of geological processes in Delanda also accord with anthropologist Tim Ingold's writing on how we experience the surfaces of our environments. For Ingold also, the earth's crust is not a hard, inert floor, but a porous 'zone of interpenetration' teeming with lifeforms above and below, 'Today's deposit becomes tomorrow's substrate, buried under later sediment [...] the earth is perpetually growing over, which is why archaeologists have to dig to discover evidence of past lives.'⁴⁷ The act of digging as a historicizing practice is repeated in some form in many of my texts, from the antiquarianism and grave excavations of Scott and Hogg, through treasure hunting in Poe's 'The Gold-Bug' (1843), to Lucas Beauchamp accidentally excavating an Indian burial mound in Faulkner's *Go Down*,

⁴⁷ Tim Ingold, *Making: Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture* (London: Routledge, 2013), p.77.

Moses (1942). Images of caves, rocks, and geological formations are also repeated across many of these texts and are most powerfully depicted in Cormac McCarthy's 'Western' novels, where the cliffs and mountains stand as ambivalent emblems of non-human time scales. I will demonstrate that the depiction of the surfaces and recesses of the earth are significant for the representation of time in regional writing from both Scotland and the American South.

A tension between static or dynamic natural processes is highly significant for my thesis. I will therefore examine the way in which non-human phenomena are used to figure different temporal modes, ranging from the static, anachronistic objects in Twain's depiction of Southern material culture to the rapidly deteriorating edifices of the Antebellum South in Faulkner's fiction. Instead of analyzing objects and natural phenomena in terms of 'materiality', a difficult concept even to define, Ingold advocates a move to thinking through lively *materials*. In *Being Alive: Essays on Movement, Knowledge and Description* (2011), he takes stock of the plethora of works in social anthropology concerned with materiality and material culture but contends that such work is unhelpful if it fails to concern itself with our participation in a world of *materials*. He argues that a problematic dichotomy between things cultural and material is present in material culture studies in disciplines such as Anthropology and Archaeology, where 'students of material culture have contrived to dematerialize or to sublimate into thought, the very

medium in which the things in question once took shape and are now immersed.'⁴⁸

This new focus on materials is significant in terms of reading the movements and qualities of objects in literary work, in particular the uncanny, often rapidly transforming material objects which appear in my chosen texts, and which are common in Romantic and gothic aesthetics.⁴⁹ Rather than reading these crumbling plantation mansions, deteriorating gothic bodies and historical artefacts as possessing an uncanny 'agency', following Ingold I will focus instead on their qualities as materials and the ways in which they affect the depiction of time in the texts I am discussing. Ingold's argument that 'materiality' is too general and slippery a term is a compelling one in terms of my project, and reading the movements of materials across my thesis allows me to pay more attention to the temporal dimensions in images of 'material culture' or environmental processes.

Where many of these strands of thought on temporality and materiality seem to converge is within the concept of the Anthropocene. My thesis looks ahead to where the Scottish Romantic emphasis on transitions in environmental practices takes us in the writings of William Faulkner and Cormac McCarthy, whose elegiac treatments of the loss of environmental connection through modernization connects with recent scholarship on the Anthropocene.⁵⁰ The concept of this proposed geological period has become

⁴⁸ Ingold, *Being Alive: Essays on movement, Knowledge and Description* (London: Routledge, 2011), p.23.

⁴⁹ For a study of the role of objects in American literature see Bill Brown, *A Sense of Things: The Object Matter of American Literature* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004).

⁵⁰ See for example David Higgins, *British Romanticism, Climate Change and the Anthropocene* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), and Katrin Klingan, Ashkan Sefhvand, Christoph Rosol and Bernd M. Scherer, eds., *Textures of the Anthropocene: Grain, Vapor, Ray* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2015).

an increasingly popular model for thinking the relationship between time, materiality and our impact on a globally defined climate and environment. The proposal to add a new geological periodization known as the ‘Anthropocene’ emerged in response to a growing sense of humanity’s unprecedented impact on the natural environment, the most potent example being the phenomenon of global warming. Wide differences of opinion on where to place the initiation of the Anthropocene abound, with some suggesting the early 1800s as the start of the European Industrial Revolution, while some placing it much earlier or significantly later at the dawn of the Nuclear age in the twentieth century. The notion of an Anthropocene occurring within the heart of the Romantic movement within Europe is the most intriguing in terms of my project.

The concept of the Anthropocene is clearly not without its problems, for example, the way in which it might seem to imply a homogenous model of ‘humanity’ impacting an inert substrate of ‘nature’. However, at the same time it provides a fascinating new tool for rethinking the historical transition which we usually designate as ‘modernity’, as Bruno Latour argues:

What makes the Anthropocene an excellent marker [...] clearly detectable beyond the frontier of stratigraphy, is that the name of this geo-historical period may become the most pertinent philosophical, religious, anthropological, and [...] political concept for beginning to turn away for good from the notions of ‘Modern’ and ‘Modernity’.⁵¹

⁵¹ Latour, *Facing Gaia*, p.116.

The Anthropocene provides a way to read the parallels between historical and material transition in my chosen texts in ways that more conventional conceptions of the transition to ‘modernity’ are less able to provide, for example, the impacts of logging and the rolling back of the Mississippi wilderness in Faulkner’s ‘The Bear’ (1942) and ‘Delta Autumn’ (1942). This ecological loss is then taken up by McCarthy in his nostalgic depiction of the end of the cowboy way of life in *The Border Trilogy* (1992-98).

This thesis begins with Walter Scott as its most significant figure and examines a selection of key Waverley novels. I focus on those themes and motifs which translate most prominently into the writing of the American South and I close the chapter with a brief discussion of James Fenimore Cooper’s appropriations of Scott in his *Leatherstocking Tales* (1827-41), the aim here being to create a bridge between Scott and the American tradition more generally, before introducing Scott’s reputation in the South with a look ahead to Mark Twain. The second chapter introduces James Hogg more fully in the context of my project and compares his major novels with the short fiction of Edgar Allan Poe. This chapter elucidates the understudied connections between these two writers and situates them both within a context of transatlantic literary exchange dominated by the Edinburgh periodicals.

Mark Twain’s novels and travel-writing form the focus of the third chapter, which explores in detail his hyperbolic rejection of Scott and the Scottish Romantic tradition and argues that his vitriol has much to do with a battle over the representation of Southern temporality. The fourth chapter takes this project into the twentieth century with the writing of William Faulkner, whose depiction of destructive Scottish legacies in his fictional

Mississippi drew deeply on the themes of Scott's writing; I also highlight the Postbellum politics of race and the gothic tropes of a tainted familial heritage in his Scottish dynasties, the Compsons and the McCaslins. My final chapter is devoted to Cormac McCarthy, a writer whose appropriation of Scott and the Scottish Romantic revisions of Enlightenment historicism informs his historical fiction. In McCarthy's writing, the Scottish Romantic legacies which Faulkner alludes to receive a more extreme Gothic treatment, and his narratives of the border draw on this central motif in Scott's writing in such a way as to challenge the teleological narrative of the frontier and its formative influence on American nationalism. My brief analysis of the fiction of James Kelman in the Conclusion suggests the ways in which, in contemporary Scottish writing, the traffic can at times run the other way, from the American South to Scottish literature itself.

Chapter 1, Part 1: Walter Scott, Scottish Romanticism and American Receptions

Scottish Romanticism was a distinct literary enterprise in early nineteenth-century literature and therefore had a specific, though complex, afterlife in the United States, where its central preoccupations – comparative history and practices of collection, reconstruction and anthology – continue to surface in a range of writing marked by its legacy. Mark Twain's famous critique of Scott in *Life on the Mississippi* (1883) is suggestively preoccupied with the Scottish novelist's effects on American temporality and history, and on issues of political progression or regression. While qualifying his comments by an admission of the crimes committed within the French Revolution, Twain focuses on the gifts given to Europe by France's political upheaval:

The Revolution broke the chains of the *ancien régime* and of the Church, and made of a nation of abject slaves a nation of freemen [...] Then comes Sir Walter Scott with his enchantments, and by his single might checks this wave of progress, and even turns it back; sets the world in love with dreams and phantoms; with decayed and swinish forms of religion; with decayed and degraded systems of government; with the sillinesses and emptinesses [...] of a brainless, worthless, long-vanished society.¹

¹ Twain, *Life*, pp.303-4.

The popularity of Scott's literary historicism has in Twain's account precipitated a backward movement in Southern culture, a regression which stymied its progress towards realism, scepticism and technological improvement, the 'wholesome and practical nineteenth-century smell of cotton-factories and locomotives' which he endorses.² According to Twain, the South can thank Scott for its underdevelopment and immaturity relative to the North, as the region's projected historical progression has been aborted.

In Twain's critique, Scott becomes a formative influence on the way in which the South and its history are constructed both culturally and politically. We can understand his exaggerated comments not as a rubric for the American reception of Scott and Scottish Romanticism, but as an example of a continuing emphasis on disjunctive, problematic histories, a theme which has its antecedents in the legacy of Scottish Romantic writing, and which become particularly resonant in Southern conceptualizations of regional history in the aftermath of the Civil War. In this chapter I will outline the central motifs from Scott's work which persist into the writing of the Southern United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Although Scott and Scottish Romanticism achieved a complex and varied reception across the Atlantic, I argue that this focus on a comparative historicism remained central in the ways in which notable Southern writers narrated the history of their region and was pivotal in their representation of Southern regional difference.

² Ibid, p.270.

Comparative Histories

Walter Scott's work was in many ways a continuation of an internationally influential tradition of Scottish writing and scholarship from the eighteenth century. Conjectural versions of social history structure the work of many Scottish Enlightenment authors, from Adam Smith's discourse on economic capital progressing from agriculture to manufacture and ultimately foreign commerce in *The Wealth of Nations* (1776), to Lord Kames's writings on the development of the arts and language in *Sketches of the History of Man* (1774).³ This emphasis on progress and improvement, though teleological, does not seek to obscure uneven and even retrograde social and historical developments, for example in the case of the collapse of the Roman Empire, but this social disintegration also follows a universal model; in John Millar's words, 'The growth and decay of society have in some respects a resemblance to each other, which, independent of imitation, is naturally productive of similar manners and customs.'⁴ For Millar, Rome's fall back into barbarism is characterized by increasing decentralization, where its society began more to resemble a loose tribal structure rather than an integrated polity. This intellectual heritage of mapping and comparing historical stages, I argue, provides much of the structure of Scott's early Waverley novels, which draw on

³ For the significance of early Anthropology in the Scottish Enlightenment, see Aaron Garrett, 'Anthropology: The "Original" of Human Nature', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Scottish Enlightenment*, ed. by Alexander Broadie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp.79-93.

⁴ John Millar, *Observations Concerning the Distinction of Ranks in Society* (London: John Murray, 1771), in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, <https://www.gale.com/uk/c/eighteenth-century-collections-online-part-i>, [accessed: 20/9/18], p.178.

Enlightenment historicism while seeking to dramatize the implications of irregular and disjunctive historical development.

Both before and after the heyday of Walter Scott, Macpherson's Ossian poems were widely celebrated in the late eighteenth and nineteenth-century United States. The separate works which would later be collected as the *Poems of Ossian – Temora, Fingal, and others* – were first published by James Macpherson in the 1760s and presented as translations from fragments of Gaelic traditional poetry. Hugh Blair, Chair of Rhetoric and Belle Lettres at Edinburgh University, defended Macpherson in his critical dissertation on the poems published in 1763, using Enlightenment Conjectural history as a model to analyse and ultimately verify their historical authenticity. Despite widespread scepticism as to their legitimacy, Macpherson's 'translations' were enormously popular with the reading public. For Robert Crawford, these poems were 'a skilled effort at cultural translation, turning Scottish material of an unacceptable kind into a form acceptable to a new British audience.'⁵ In Crawford's analysis in *Devolving English Literature*, Macpherson's poems are by no means the aggrandizing act of an individual charlatan but rather part of a tradition of creative reconstruction which culminates in Scottish Romantic literature, one which signals the drive to collect and preserve aspects of traditional Scottish culture exemplified by Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802). Literary translation and 'forgery' are vitally part of this tradition, as Crawford writes, 'the mixed urge to preserve and, at the same

⁵ Crawford, *Devolving English Literature*, p.36.

time, to build or develop a tradition is shared by Macpherson and Scott, along with other major Scottish eclectic writers, most notably Burns.’⁶

By the time of Scott’s writing, Macpherson’s work had so saturated Scottish literary culture that it had become the stuff of parody, as Scott’s eponymous Antiquary tries to inveigle the novel’s young hero Lovel to write an epic poem based on more sound antiquarian evidence than Macpherson’s, ‘A poem on such a subject – with notes illustrative of all that is clear, and all that is dark; and all that is neither dark nor clear, but hovers in dusky twilight in the region of Caledonian antiquities.’⁷ Walter Scott formulated his own response to the Ossian controversy in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1805, where he responded to the report from the Highland Society on the authenticity of the poems. His response is characteristically moderate and employs a gentle humour to satirize both Macpherson’s work and the extreme cultural and political tensions surrounding the Highland Society’s investigation. He was also responding to a new edition of Macpherson’s poems edited by the historian and critic Malcolm Laing. This edition was unusually structured around the acceptance of the forged and appropriated nature of the poems and offered further context to the work through the addition of Macpherson’s juvenilia, accompanied by notes and illustrations. Unlike the notes which Scott used to add historical depth and substance to his fiction, Laing’s notes ‘are intended, contrary to general usage, to destroy the authority of the text.’⁸ Scott describes those aspects which mark out Macpherson’s work as a product of the

⁶ Ibid, pp.113-4.

⁷ Walter Scott, *The Antiquary*, ed. by David Hewlitt (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), p.180.

⁸ Walter Scott, ‘Review of the Report on the Committee of the Highland Society of Scotland on the Nature and Authenticity of the Poems of Ossian’, *Edinburgh Review*, 6 (1805), 429-463, (p.433).

late eighteenth century, remarking that the latter's characterization of Fingal possesses 'all the strength and bravery of Achilles, with the sentiment, and high-breeding of Sir Charles Grandison', the eponymous hero of Samuel Richardson's 1753 novel.⁹ This integration of different temporal characteristics in the figure of Fingal points to the creative reconstruction of the past in Macpherson's writing, the way in which he draws on Enlightenment historical stages to assemble an updated primitive suitable for late eighteenth-century taste.

Both Scott in his summation of Ossian, and Hugh Blair in his defence of it, draw on Enlightenment theories of historical stages to analyse the aspects of Macpherson's work which appear appropriate to a bard in an early hunter stage of society, so that for Blair it is 'characteristical of an age rather than a country, and belongs, in some measure, to all nations at a certain period. Of this the works of Ossian seem to furnish a remarkable proof.'¹⁰ Blair compares *Ossian's* sublime and uneven style to the intensity and pageantry of a Native American chief addressing his tribe, who necessarily lacks the subtle and elevated manners of the commercial age. Therefore, in many contemporary readings of Macpherson's work such as Blair's, its authenticity is related to the representational accuracy of its historicism and to the distinct categories of early hunter and commercial man. However, Scott's reading raises an issue which he would debate in many of the metafictional structures surrounding his fiction, the prefaces and introductions of amateur historians and

⁹ Ibid, p.446

¹⁰ Hugh Blair, 'Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian', *The Poems of Ossian Translated by James MacPherson Esq.* (Leipzig: Bernhard Tauchnitz, 1847), pp.43-125, (p.46).

antiquarians, in which the tensions between historical purity and creative reconstruction are often emphasized.

Macpherson's creation prefigured many of the preoccupations of the British Romantic movement, and more particularly certain definitive tropes in the representation of Scottish landscape and traditional culture. The poems are infused with a complex longing for a past condition, as the ageing bard Ossian looks back on the heroism of Fingal and Cuthullin, and nostalgically evokes their legendary battles, 'Blind, and tearful, and forlorn, I walk with little men! O Fingal, with thy race of war I now behold thee not. The wild roes feed on the green tomb of the mighty king of Morven!'.¹¹ Macpherson's fantasy of a lost ancestral nation proved itself a work of global relevance and influence, as its many European translations attest, and one which translates into the context of the Southern United States in suggestive ways. Crawford argues for *Ossian's* importance in terms of its influence in American literature, on writers such as Walt Whitman and James Fenimore Cooper, where the conscious drive to build a tradition finds a new parallel. He argues that 'it was indirectly Ossian, and the immense interest in primitivism sparked off by the Ossianic poems, which led to the creation of the first *major* American epic, the *Leatherstocking Tales*'.¹² Valentina Bold makes the case for Ossian's American influence along similar lines, stating that Macpherson's poems had an 'inclusive appeal' for American audiences, 'Ossian functions overseas, as at home, as the mouthpiece of a people, potentially useful for diverse imaginative

¹¹ James Macpherson, 'Fingal', *Poems of Ossian Translated by James Macpherson Esq.* (Leipzig: Bernhard Tauchnitz: 1847), p.244.

¹² Crawford, *Devolving English Literature*, p.183.

reconstructions.¹³ Bold also comments on the particular appetite for Macpherson's writing in the South, as embodied in Thomas Jefferson's well-known preference for the Ossian poems, 'there seems to be something about the alluring Ossian, denied the culture of his youth and living in melancholy, which appealed to the Southern psyche.'¹⁴ The inchoate and nonlinear qualities of the Ossian poems also conjure a disquieting vision of history, where the vitality of the great leaders and warriors of the past is available only in memory, leaving the present empty of their energy and purpose. While attending to the importance of Macpherson's poetry in this narrative of Scottish Romanticism's influence, I will be focusing primarily on the form of the novel, as its length and discursive and social attributes allow more space for my particular focus on regional self-representation in both geographies. While I will be referring to critically influential works by Macpherson, and the poetic output of writers such as Scott, Hogg and Poe, it is historical fiction that will be the main focus of this analysis.

Scott's work picks up on Macpherson's aesthetics and structural historicism, yet in his vision of eighteenth-century Britain as depicted in the early Waverley novels Macpherson's primitives clash with civilizations occupying differing temporal stages. Critics of Scott have understood his historicism in various and often conflicting ways. The Marxist Georg Lukács attempted to salvage Scott's reputation from Twain's image of the reactionary Sir Walter in *The Historical Novel* (1955), where he cites the time of Scott's

¹³ Valentina Bold, 'Rude Bard of the North: James Macpherson and the Folklore of Democracy', *Journal of American Folklore*, 114 (2001), 464-477, (p.469).

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p.470.

writing as that of the birth of national sensibility in Europe, signalling a new interest in the writing of national histories.¹⁵ This moment of political upheaval was the first time that national identity was experienced across society, resulting in a greater sense of national independence, which, for Lukács, was productive of both progressive and reactionary ideologies. Scott's moderate attitude to historical change is read by Lukács as a disavowal of the reaction of the Romantic movement. It is Scott's 'prosaic' heroes on whom Lukács builds the next section of his argument. Exhibiting a marked difference from the Byronic anti-heroes of Romantic literature, Scott's protagonists, generally English, sheltered, impressionable and Romantic in outlook, are well-placed to become caught up in the historical events which provide the over-arching narrative. Lukács argues that this dynamic is typical of the epic form of Scott's novels, where the central figure is merely the epicentre of the events which unfold around him.

Scott's protagonists therefore represent a neutral ground, a site where contesting social and historical forces can be integrated. The hero must be of such a neutral background and identity as to be acceptable to both camps, to visit and to witness two contrasting historical forces. In this way, Lukács argues, Scott's characters are not so much individuals but figures embodying social and historical types, 'Scott's greatness lies in his capacity to give living human embodiment to historical-social types. The typically human terms in which great historical trends become tangible had never before been so superbly, straightforwardly and pregnantly portrayed.'¹⁶ To an extent, Lukács

¹⁵ Georg, Lukács, *The Historical Novel* (London: Merlin Press, 1962), p.25.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p.35.

rescues Scott from Twain's accusations by pointing to the radical difference between his progressive treatment of history, illustrating the slow ascension and arrival of the present moment, and the idealized Medievalism of the Romantic movement as a whole, 'the extravagant apologetics with which the reactionary Romantics transported the principles of Legitimism into the Middle Ages, turning them into a social idyll for decadent déclassé heroes.'¹⁷ This emphasis potentially offers a different reading of a text such as *Ivanhoe*, which here appears as a critique of medieval chivalric codes and the masculinities and social values which they inculcate.

Mikhael Bakhtin's understanding of Scott's contribution to the emergence of the historical novel echoes many of Lukács' themes. Bakhtin speaks broadly of the central characteristics of the novel, rather than merely of the historical novel, and yet its historicity and its representation of time are central concerns. His notion of the chronotope – the experience of time represented spatially – is of particular relevance to his analysis of Scott. This condensing of time into spatial form is crucial for the historical novel, giving it substance and cohesion.¹⁸ Bakhtin argues that Scott possessed a chronotopic perspective on his native landscape and the history it embodied:

For him each clump of land was saturated with certain events from local legends, was profoundly intensified with legend time [...] on the

¹⁷ Ibid, p.62.

¹⁸ Mikhail Bakhtin, 'Forms of Time and Chronotope in the Novel', *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. by Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994), pp.84-5. For a general exposition of Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope, see Kristoffel Demoen and others, eds., *Bakhtin's Theory of the Literary Chronotope: Reflections, Applications, Perspectives* (Academia Press Scientific Publishers, 2010). For an analysis of the chronotope with reference to Southern Literature, see Sandra Lee Kleppe, 'The Chronotope and the South', *Nordlit: Tidsskrift i litteratur og kultur*, 8 (2000), <https://septentrio.uit.no/index.php/nordlit/article/view/2104> [accessed:18/9/18], 33-46.

other hand, each event was strictly localized, condensed in spatial markers. His eye could see time in space.¹⁹

These qualities of Scott's work are for Bakhtin critical in the development of the historical novel. As the chronotope has an essential role to play in constructing generic boundaries, many of Scott's chronotopic motifs would become central to the historical novel genre; his frequent use of ruins, borders, roads and paths, construct a characteristic literary space which embodies the passing of historical time. It is often the breakdown of these markers in the landscape which leads to temporal ambiguity, as I will demonstrate later with a discussion of Scott's *Antiquary*, whose search for 'the infallible touchstone of supposed antiquity' is so often derailed.²⁰ I will modify Bakhtin's understanding of Scott in my own analysis, which will investigate the chronotopic nature of the latter's historicism with recent theories of materiality.

In the dedicatory epistle to *Ivanhoe* (1819), the text's fictional author Laurence Templeton addresses the novel to Dryasdust (Scott's metafictional literary authority) with apologies for its historical liberties and a justification for the break from his usual setting of eighteenth-century Scotland to that of twelfth-century England. Templeton considers the differences between the historical materials of the two nations and their utility for literary conception. Scotland is far more potently historicized than its Southern neighbour, emerging from a century of violence and unrest, whereas the English writer of historical fictions must look considerably further back in time for native

¹⁹ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, trans. by Vern W. McGee (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994), p.53.

²⁰ Scott, *The Antiquary*, p.29.

inspiration. In the Scottish context, national history appears as ‘a body whose limbs had recently quivered with existence, and whose throat had but just uttered the last note of agony’, in comparison to an English model with nothing but ‘the dust of antiquity, where nothing was to be found but dry, sapless, mouldering, and disjointed bones.’²¹ The experience of history in the Scottish context is violently, uncomfortably present, while English national history has atrophied and is now reduced to the status of an artefact. Scott cites both the materials of crumbling artefacts and those of the decomposing body as historical and generic markers, though both are problematic as physical traces of historical transition. Scotland has more recently arrived at the door of civilization and can still recall a history of violence and unrest in living memory, ‘It was not above sixty or seventy years [...] since the whole north of Scotland was under a state of government nearly as simple and as patriarchal as those of our good allies the Mohawks and Iroquois.’²² This comparison uses the emblem of the Native American to historicize Scottish cultural difference which, as we will see, is a common thread in Scott’s historical fiction, and the motif of the Indian as historical marker provides a suggestive case study of Scott’s comparative historicism, which would in turn become particularly influential in American writing.

The appearance of Native Americans in early American literature draws on the anthropological material in texts such as William Robertson’s *History of America* (1777), Adam Ferguson’s *Essay on the History of Civil Society*

²¹ Scott, *Ivanhoe*, ed. by Ian Duncan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) p.15.

²² *Ibid*, p.14.

(1767), and their literary successor, Walter Scott.²³ James Fenimore Cooper popularized the Scott-originated literary Indian as a vibrant emblem of a vanishing culture. In texts like *Redgauntlet* and *Rob Roy*, Scott's work shows an awareness of both Highlanders and Native Americans as tribal cultures, representing ideas about community, land and environmental practices which were becoming peripheral and remote within an increasingly imperial and industrial modernity. The motif of the Native American spans the work of Scottish Romanticism and nineteenth-century American literature, but often in the form of recycled nostalgic and ethnographic images and ideas.

Rob Roy provides a typical example of Scott's rhetorical comparisons of Highlanders and Native Americans. The novel is narrated by the Englishman Francis Osbaldistone, son of a London merchant who, on his refusal to enter his father's company, is sent to stay with relatives in the North of England. Osbaldistone travels to Scotland in the latter part of the narrative to retrieve funds stolen from his father's company. He encounters the outlaw Rob Roy MacGregor several times throughout the text, yet, although a minor character, the Highlander's movements are not always illuminated by the narrative, his talent for disguise and escape allowing him to evade the many forces seeking to contain him. Rob Roy's body, while somewhat asymmetrical, with his arms 'so very long so as to be rather a deformity', has an aesthetic appeal arising from his physical strength, 'his limbs were formed upon the very strongest model that is consistent with agility', in addition to the

²³ See Peter Garside, 'Scott and the "Philosophical" Historians', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 36 (1975), 497-512.

‘remarkable ease and freedom of his movements.’²⁴ This strange body is then given an ethnographic parallel in the image of the Picts who ‘were a sort of half-goblin half-human beings.’²⁵ In this way, Rob’s body is temporalized, but in a manner which allows for great vitality and is placed in opposition to the newly mechanized bodies of eighteenth-century industry, those Rob refers to as ‘weavers, spinners, and sic-like mechanical persons.’²⁶ Rob’s energy and adaptability is contrasted with a new repetitious engagement with the mechanical, and the sense of the different temporalities of bodies is expressed in their physical practices. As Andrew Lincoln argues, Scott’s depiction of Rob Roy signifies ‘a romantic discourse of primitive liberty’ which contrasts with the representation of an emerging commercial society which it aims to critique.²⁷ In this way, by engaging conflicting temporalities within the narrative, Scott provides an element of historical comment, as his border zones can be seen to critique centralized state sovereignty.

The scene within Glasgow cathedral provides the perfect stage from which Osbaldistone can cast an ethnographic gaze on the various worshippers, commenting that the Scottish physiognomy is ‘seen to more advantage in the act of devotion, or in the ranks of war, than on lighter and more cheerful occasions’.²⁸ The congregation is given further local colour by the addition of several Highlanders in Glasgow for a cattle fair, who, unable to understand the language of the sermon, survey the crowd with ‘the unrestrained curiosity of

²⁴ Scott, *Rob Roy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.273.

²⁵ Ibid, p.273.

²⁶ Ibid, p.272.

²⁷ Andrew Lincoln, *Walter Scott and Modernity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), p.123.

²⁸ Scott, *Rob Roy*, p.243.

savage wonder.’²⁹ Even as the wildness of Highland life resonates with the picturesque, there are undertones of backwardness and under-development, both historical and intellectual, in Scott’s portrayal of it.

Lukács describes the Highland chieftain of *Waverley* as a historical composite, ‘Vich Ian Vohr’s peculiar, adventuresome compound of French courtly manners and clan patriarchalism represents the reactionary side of the Stuart Restoration attempts after the “Glorious Revolution” which closely involved backward sections of the Scottish people.’³⁰ The backwardness of the Highlands apparently gives a certain inevitability to the decline of their way of life which consigns them to history. In Scott’s portrayal of Highland culture, Lukács sees a reflection of the eighteenth-century embracing of Homer and ‘the poetry of primitive life’ an aesthetic which was already familiar from Macpherson.³¹ Lukács goes on to equate the fate of the Scottish Highlanders with that of Native Americans, a connection which Scott himself creates, as a dramatization of the inevitable destruction of ‘gentile’ or precapitalist life to make way for bourgeois modernity.³² Yet, as Andrew Lincoln argues, Scott’s ‘Tory scepticism’ often finds him valorizing the state of ‘feudal independence’ embodied in the Highlander vigorously resisting the excesses of centralized state sovereignty.³³ This assessment adds further ambivalence to Scott’s comparisons of Highlanders and Native Americans and to his depiction of the demise of those borderers and outcasts who people the early *Waverley* novels,

²⁹ Ibid, p.244.

³⁰ Lukács, p.40.

³¹ Ibid, p.56.

³² Ibid, p.56.

³³ Lincoln, p.39.

and does indeed provide a critique of the assimilating modernity which seems to triumph at the conclusion of many of his novels.

As Colin G. Calloway argues in his comparative study of Highlanders and Native Americans, in the anthropological discourse of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the two peoples were generally viewed as savage tribal cultures at an earlier stage of human historical development. Superficial comparisons between the two often focused on a perceived martial aspect to their cultures and their mythologized fierce loyalty to clan and tribe. These apparent similarities made it easy to use each culture to metaphorize the other in literary representations, although real connections can also be made, as Calloway writes:

What Highlanders and Indians had in common had less to do with dress, language and social structure than with their historical experiences as peoples living on the edges of an empire and confronting historical currents at work on both sides of the Atlantic. Although they lived in the centers of their own worlds and often expressed disdain for those who sought to change them, both peoples were treated as tribes in the original sense of the Latin term *tribus*: 'barbarians at the Borders of the Empire'.³⁴

Scott's savage figures also function along borders and thresholds, an image which would be translated into American writing through Fenimore Cooper's work, and in turn would feed into the myth of the American frontier and Western narratives. Highland Scots of course enjoyed far more mobility in the

³⁴ Colin G. Calloway, *White People, Indians and Highlanders: Tribal Peoples and Colonial Encounters in Scotland and America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p.10.

imperial order than their Native American counterparts. Many Scots, particularly Lowlanders, relocated themselves away from the periphery to the heart of Empire, holding senior roles in the East India Company, and Scots were generally disproportionately represented throughout the institutions of the British Empire, particularly its military.

While some parallels between Highland and Native American experience are problematic, particularly due to the prominent role of Scots in expanding into and settling Native American land, both peoples have been defined by a colonial frontier. Indeed, the terms 'colony', 'empire' and 'Great Britain' emerged to describe Anglo-Scottish relations in the late 1540s, and in many ways the Highlands of Scotland were a test case for British imperial subjugation and integration.³⁵ This narrative of the peripheral nature of Highland Scots and Native Americans also includes the imagery of Westward movement: as Native peoples were pushed west into the territories in the nineteenth century, so Highlanders would be displaced to the Western coast as a result of clearance. Within American literature this Westward movement would become associated with the frontier and peripheral and primitive ways of being. Scots were then able to move further West to British colonies in Canada and America, while for American natives, once they had reached the Western Coast there was nowhere else to go. Scots carried their frontier heritage to America, and Highland regiments were often posted to the frontier and stood on the frontlines of military expansion into Indian Territory. Highland settlers seeking land were also drawn to frontier areas.³⁶ The border

³⁵ Ibid, p.24.

³⁶ Ibid, p.202.

in Scott's fiction was a direct antecedent of conceptions of the American frontier, as Crawford suggests, 'the word which is often used in early American writing for what we now call the "frontier" is the word "border".'³⁷

Both Highlanders and Native Americans became objects of imperial nostalgia by the nineteenth century, and the Highlands, with the help of Scott, became the heightened image of Scottishness abroad, eventually standing in metonymically for Scotland as a whole. Highland traditions and aesthetics became markers of total Scottish identity, and 'Scotland's history of resisting British dominion now became a noble tradition' when sapped of any radical potential by historical distance.³⁸ Yet Scott's work gave Scotland the use of a fictional tradition which both native and diasporic Scots could identify with, a Romantic vision which both 'confounded and incorporated images generated by imperial nostalgia.'³⁹ As I demonstrate in chapter three, these heightened and aestheticized images of Scottishness continue to resonate into the nineteenth century and beyond in terms of Southern self-representation, from Twain's kitsch domestic artefacts in *Life on the Mississippi* to Faulkner's ambivalent Scottish immigrant legacy.

Scottish writing and emigrants played a central role in the construction of what would become the American South and its vision of itself, as much as the Scottish diaspora in America in turn affected popular images of Scotland. Scots played a role in the construction of the Southern economy after the

³⁷ Crawford, *Devolving English Literature*, p.184.

³⁸ Calloway, p.240.

³⁹ Ibid, p.256.

decline of the deerskin trade, where they were known for their work in negotiation and commerce with Native peoples:

By collaborating in the vast transfer of lands from Indian hunting and farming to cotton production, the Scots traders unwittingly helped return the South to dependence on British money, mills, and markets and thereby promoted reliance on a single crop, which had terrible consequences for the South and the land.⁴⁰

The proposed ethnographic similarities between Highlanders and Native Americans thus did not prevent Scots emigrants from playing their role first as part of the British Empire and then as Americans in subjugating the rights of Native peoples. As Faulkner's fiction dramatizes, the rise of his Scottish plantation families like the Compsons and the McCaslins is predicated on an original land grab from the Native occupants of his fictional Mississippi. In scholarship on the development of Southern literature and identity Scots play a conspicuous and problematic role.

Walter Scott's interest in representing Scottish underdevelopment in terms of historicized primitivism is evident from the early passages of *Waverley*, where the sunburnt children of the hamlet of Tully-Veolan sprawl over an 'unpaved street', 'in a primitive state of nakedness', as Waverley rides past. He is followed by a pack of feral dogs and sees animals housed in a 'miserable wigwam' behind each hut.⁴¹ In many of the early *Waverley* novels the anthropological is dramatized in the form of a travel narrative exploring the British peripheries. Katie Trumpener cites Scott's forbears as the largely

⁴⁰ Ibid, p.205.

⁴¹ Scott, *Waverley*, pp.34-6.

female writers of the ‘national tale’, such as Maria Edgeworth and Charlotte Smith. As Trumpener defines it, the national tale ‘is at once traveler’s tale and anti-colonial tract; it sets out to describe a long-colonized country “as it really is”, attacking the tradition of Imperial description [...] and constructing an alternative picture.’⁴² The tension between representing the society of the British periphery ‘as it really is’ and the Romantic nationalist drive to assert the validity of its cultural difference, is played out in those Scott novels which conform to the narrative of the national tale, such as *Waverley*, *Guy Mannering* (1815) and *Rob Roy*. While Scott does indeed critique ‘improving’ accounts of Scotland such as Samuel Johnson’s *Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland* (1775), he himself never quite escapes the recurrence of a centralized, metropolitan gaze, as is evident when we analyse his references to ‘savage’ Highland life.

The motif of the native or savage as an emblem of the assertion of an earlier historical stage is a central pivot in Scott’s dramatizing of uneven historical development from the Enlightenment tradition. Ian Duncan argues for the centrality of intersecting cultural and spatial temporalities in Scott’s novels and he emphasizes the vitality of his aesthetic representation of Highland life and indicators of Scottish difference:

Through the figure of the up-to-date primitive we glimpse [...] the shadow of a ‘world-system’ – sublime, dynamic, ‘outlaw’ – that exceeds the official, public, enlightened boundaries, historical and ideological as well as territorial, of civil society and the nation state. The British condition of modernity does not after all consist of an internally

⁴² Trumpener, p.142.

unified, civilised “nation”, the product of an evolutionary graduation of discrete historical stages. It consists of a global network of uneven, heterogenous times and spaces, lashed together by commerce and military force, the dynamism of which is generated by the jagged economic and social differences of the local parts.⁴³

For Duncan, Scott’s new geography of imperialism plants the apparently more backward, under-developed and anti-modern aspects of Scottish life within the heart of imperial Britishness. The tensions produced by this affective interaction of times, spaces and divergent cultures and politics provide the circulating energy of the modern British state. I will be building on this critical narrative with an additional focus on the importance of environment and environmental practices, artefacts and materials as significant and neglected markers of Scott’s treatment of the motif of the primitive and the theme of uneven historical transition in the early *Waverley* novels.

Bodies, Practices, Histories

When Scott’s intention is to create a particularly aesthetic moment or encounter, he emphasizes the nobility and dignity of ‘savage’ Highland masculinity. This is visible from his earliest novel, *Waverley* (1814), where young officer Edward Waverley, while exploring the Highland way of life, is drawn into participating in the Jacobite uprising of 1745. In *Waverley*’s first meeting with Highland chieftain Fergus MacIvor, he is ‘struck by the peculiar grace and dignity of the chieftain’s figure. Above the middle size and finely

⁴³ Duncan, *Scott’s Shadow*, p.114

proportioned, the Highland dress, which he wore in its simplest mode, set off his person to great advantage. His countenance was decidedly Scotch, with all the peculiarities of the Northern physiognomy.⁴⁴ Fergus is summarized as a 'bold, ambitious, ardent yet artful and politic character'.⁴⁵ Here Scott draws on the rhetoric of early descriptions of Native American life and character, perhaps echoing Scottish Enlightenment historian William Robertson's account in *The History of America*. Scott held Robertson's *History* in his library at Abbotsford and refers to him, among other Enlightenment figures, in *Guy Mannering*. Robertson states that the most notable qualities of the Native people of America are 'a fearless courage, great strength and agility of body, and crafty policy.'⁴⁶ The notion of subtlety and craft recurs often in the discourses surrounding Native peoples, indicating a certain unknown quantity, a tactical approach which is a challenge for the observer to identify.

The scheming and political manoeuvring of Fergus, and the evasive, almost supernatural physical prowess of Rob Roy, speak to this sense of something which is not easily objectified and understood. This dilemma represents the problem of ethnographic analysis, which must both describe certain bodies and practices as foreign, 'natural' and intuitive, and yet construct them as identifiable artefacts of study. Michel de Certeau formulates this controversy in terms of a frontier, 'The frontier thus no longer separates two hierarchized bodies of knowledge [...] rather it sets off practices articulated by discourse from those that are not (yet) articulated by it.'⁴⁷ A

⁴⁴ Scott, *Waverley*, p.96.

⁴⁵ Ibid, p.100.

⁴⁶ William Robertson, *The History of America*, 8 vols (London: Strahan, Cadell, Davies, Balfour, 1803), vol. iv, p.215.

⁴⁷ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. by Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), p.65.

frontier, physical, linguistic or cultural, is the ‘not yet’ of theory, its practices and images in the course of being formulated into artefacts and objects. Scott dramatizes this push and pull of theory and traditional or folk practices, and at every moment when this tension is felt, a frontier emerges. This image of a receding frontier associated with ordinary speech and ‘reflex’ practices is one of Scott’s major contributions to the form of the historical novel in North America as I shall demonstrate through a discussion of Fenimore Cooper’s writing below.

Yet anthropological discourse and the aesthetics of savage bodies are not merely the author’s tool in portraying traditional Highland life, but strategies which are used by his Highland characters themselves. At their first meeting, Fergus does not advance to meet Waverley with a retinue of Highland fighting men, as his clansman Evan Dhu has led the Englishman to expect; instead he arrives with only one retainer, ‘cautious of exhibiting external marks of dignity, unless at the time and in the manner when they were most likely to produce an imposing effect.’⁴⁸ Flora MacIvor also seeks to affect Waverley with a carefully orchestrated Romantic performance on the harp beneath a Highland waterfall, an act calculated for political rather than personal ends, and where an aesthetic self-romanticization is used tactically.

Edward Waverley is perhaps Scott’s only protagonist to truly cross a cultural frontier and ‘go native’, by participating in the Jacobite uprising of 1745. Waverley offers marriage to a Jacobite Highland woman, swears fealty to Charles Edward Stuart and wears the Highland dress. Yet it is difficult to fathom how much is a Romantic performance and how much is genuine

⁴⁸ Scott, *Waverley*, p.95.

political sympathy on his part. His encounters at the frontiers of war and the British periphery provide an opportunity to throw off the fantasy of his early literary attachments and enter a new maturity, through adopting the pragmatic role of mediator between cultural and political positions. It is only the violent death of Fergus at the hands of the State which represents a less moderate British response to dissension, the punishment for high treason under English law being hanging, drawing and quartering. In this moment Scott offers a stronger anti-colonial perspective than elsewhere in the early Waverley novels: in Fergus's words, the law of high treason places the English on a level with 'a nation of cannibals'.⁴⁹ Scott allows a Highlander to turn an ethnographic representation against the British state, characterizing it in terms of the violent consumption and assimilation usually attributed to 'savage' peoples.

Beyond *Waverley* and *Rob Roy*, Scott's treatment of the Highlander figure in *The Heart of Midlothian* (1818) takes a rather different form. The illegitimate son of George Staunton and Effie Deans, stolen at birth, becomes another of Scott's typical savages, 'his dress a tattered plaid and philabeg, no shoes, no stockings, no hat or bonnet [...] his hair, twisted and matted like the *glibbe* of the ancient wild Irish.'⁵⁰ The Irish connection is employed to signify a broad, shared Celtic culture which looks back to Ossian's cultural project, and accordingly there is still dignity in the savage boy's physical presence, 'his gesture free and noble, like that of all savages.'⁵¹ This figure appears to be truly

⁴⁹ Ibid, p.348.

⁵⁰ Walter Scott, *The Heart of Midlothian*, ed. by Clare Lamont (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), p.480.

⁵¹ Ibid, p.480.

outlawed and degenerate, being finally shipped off to America to perform slave labour on a Virginia plantation, where he organizes a rebellion against the plantation owner and flees to join a local tribe of Native people. This narrative transition finally joins up the Scottish Highlander with the Native American as embodiments of violence and dissent. Nevertheless, this linkage reveals that the savage does not merely represent the trace of a disappearing way of life, but a motif which connects dissent at home with rebellion in the colonies. This savage does not disappear with the advance of modernity but creates a bridge to a new frontier, a 'New' World of opportunity for savage expression. Savagery is therefore temporalized by Scott in a variety of ways, both as a modern phenomenon and a past one, as an image of primitive local culture and of international, anti-colonial rebellion.

Scott's often contradictory uses of the term 'savage', to mean both violent, backward and morally degenerate as well as free, noble and vital, largely conform to the oscillation between savage virtues and vices typical of Renaissance and eighteenth-century ethnographies. While such accounts were founded on a basic negativism about the state of Native peoples, the comparative analysis of 'savage' and European life enabled the ethnographic writer to note both the vices and virtues of other societies relative to their own, thus opening a space for a degree of political critique of European societies and contrasting with the more racially inflected ethnographies which would appear in the late nineteenth century.⁵² Scott's writing often draws on stock portrayals of primitive life, which generalize the features of Native peoples and

⁵² Ter Ellingson, *The Myth of the Noble Savage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), p.29, p.100. See also, Thomas Hylland Eriksen and Finn Sivert Nielson, *A History of Anthropology*, 2nd edn (2001; repr. London: Pluto Press, 2013).

their cultures as they were recorded in early imperial ethnographies and travel accounts. Francis Osbaldistone describes the Highlander Dougal as he is reunited with Rob Roy as ‘resembling my idea of a very uncouth, wild and ugly savage, adoring the idol of his tribe.’⁵³ We can contrast Scott’s most violent savage figure from *Midlothian* with the sentimental comparison which Harry Bertram attributes to struggling artist Dudley in *Guy Mannering*, where in the summer he is ‘free as a wild Indian, enjoying myself at liberty amidst the grandest scenes of nature.’⁵⁴ Scott stages colonial-style encounters between cultures and between multiple centres and peripheries, where savage qualities can be transferred from the border to the industrial metropolis of Glasgow or even Enlightenment Edinburgh.

The image of the wild Indian at liberty reveals the vitality of Scott’s savage bodies as both a resource for ethnographic analysis and a dynamic literary aesthetic. Scott’s primitives are also a wild resource in another sense, as the Highlands would become a fertile reserve of labour for the colonies through the clearances and mass emigration. The motif of the native Highlander is not merely a visual spectacle in *Waverley* but connects to a particular way of moving in and appropriating an environment. This manner of movement is evident in the actions of the Highlander concealing Waverley from discovery by the British army who ‘crawled on all fours with the dexterity of an Indian, availing himself of every bush and inequality to escape observation.’⁵⁵ The native knows his landscape intimately so that intruders

⁵³ Scott, *Rob Roy*, p.258.

⁵⁴ Walter Scott, *Guy Mannering*, ed. by Jane Milgate (London: Penguin, 2003), p.115.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p.196.

will always be at a disadvantage. Rob Roy's escape from British soldiers by diving into a river provides another vision of Highland physical prowess, with the narrator comparing him to an otter escaping from hunters.⁵⁶ What we might call the naturalism of these practices of evasion is part of how they elude discursive analysis and capture, for they constitute what Certeau calls an "intuitive" or "reflex" ability, which is almost invisible.⁵⁷ Rob Roy's licence and extraordinary mobility reflect his independence from all forms of authority and control. Jean-Jacques Rousseau points to this same quality in the savages of the state of nature:

The body of the savage being the only instrument he knows, he puts it to all sorts of uses of which our bodies, for lack of practice, are incapable [...] you will soon see the advantages of having all one's forces constantly at one's command, of being always prepared for any eventuality, and of always being, so to speak, altogether complete in oneself.⁵⁸

While Rousseau's conception of man in the state of nature cannot be directly compared to the state of Native peoples described in the ethnography of the eighteenth-century, Scott's savages appear to owe much to Rousseau's analysis of earliest man, as well as to other French Enlightenment conceptions of the noble savage from the work Voltaire and Montesquieu. Scott follows the lead of Enlightenment conceptions of savagery in depicting the vitality, mobility and organicism embodied in acts of evading the clutches of modernity and the civic state. Savage bodies are in a constant state of movement and response,

⁵⁶ Scott, *Rob Roy*, p.381.

⁵⁷ Certeau, p.69.

⁵⁸ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *A Discourse on Inequality* (London: Penguin, 1984), p.82.

essential skills for navigating harsh environments and traditional hunting. Although these skills are disappearing into new mechanized practices and industrial environments, such historical transitions do not render Scott's savage figures obsolete, as Rob Roy survives at the end of the novel. This transformation of bodies and practices is central in Scott's work as a mode of figuring temporal transition, and the depiction of such bodies also forms an important quality of the mobile frontiers in his texts.

The Border

The motif of the border or frontier allows Scott to condense along a single line the effects of many overlapping historical times and spaces. As in Mark Twain's critique, where 'Sir Walter' renders the American South 'modern and medieval mixed', so the interacting of supposedly distinct temporalities in the topology of the border or boundary line is one of Scott's central literary strategies. His frontiers can be understood as modes of encounter rather than merely the physical frontiers of the Borders and the Highland line. Along these lines of encounter the modern and anti-modern collide in unsettling, affective moments, as in the image of the Jacobite army in *Waverley*:

The grim, uncombed and wild appearance of these men, most of whom gazed with all the admiration of ignorance upon the most ordinary productions of domestic art, created surprise in the Lowlands, but it also created terror. So little was the condition of the Highlands known at that late period, that the character and appearance of their population, while thus sallying forth as military adventurers, conveyed

to the South country Lowlanders as much surprise as if an invasion of African Negroes, or Esquimaux Indians, had issued forth from the Northern mountains of their own native country.⁵⁹

Here the Highland line assumes all the qualities of an imperial frontier, unmapped and porous, disclosing radically different ways of life. The chronotope of the frontier, to modify Mikhail Bakhtin's concept, applicable to both the Borders or the Highland line, reveals overlapping spaces and times – imperial, primitive, modern; yet in this overlapping of chronotopes Scott in fact scrambles easy divisions between an urban, Enlightened modernity and the other times and spaces that it supposedly renders obsolete.

The philosopher Manuel Delanda uses the concept of 'phase transitions' from thermodynamics – the ways in which a substance shifts between solid, liquid and gaseous states – and applies it to the study of history, underlining the analogy which Scott stages between temporal and material transitions. Delanda draws on the idea of phase transitions to argue for a nonlinear integration of natural and human histories, akin to the interactions of different historical bodies, artefacts and practices:

If the different 'stages' of human history were indeed brought about by phase transitions, then they are not 'stages' at all – that is, progressive developmental steps, each better than the previous one, and indeed leaving the previous one behind. On the contrary, much as water's solid, liquid and gas phases may coexist, so each new human phase simply

⁵⁹ Scott, *Waverley*, p.229.

added itself to the other ones, coexisting and interacting with them without leaving them in the past.⁶⁰

This assertion of the coexistence of historical forms of social life is part of Delanda's critique of teleological notions of the development of the West and of purely ideological or discursive historical explanations which relegate the importance of matter and energy. The coexistence of historical phases is the foundation of the drama and interest of novels such as *Rob Roy* and *The Heart of Midlothian*, where savage figures persist beyond the time allotted to them in a stadial theory of social development, despite the more conservative treatment of outlawed or anachronistic figures in *Waverley* or *Redgauntlet*. It is just this variability and mobility of temporal markers and spatial practices which compose Scott's historical border spaces. Savagery is not a quality endemic in specific (Highland) bodies, but part of the atmosphere of the border or threshold itself and of the encounter between cultures, times and geographies condensed into the frontier motif, which produces its effects across bodies and nationalities.

Scott's second novel, *Guy Mannering*, another travel account of the Scottish border, gives us similar images of diffuse primitive aesthetics. In the following scene from *Mannering*, the protagonist Brown/Henry Bertram watches Border locals salmon fishing in the traditional manner:

Now the light diminished to a distant star that seemed to twinkle on the waters, like those which, according to the legends of the country, the water-kelpy sends for the purpose of indicating the watery grave of his

⁶⁰ Delanda, *Nonlinear History*, pp.15-16.

victims [...] the broad flickering flame rendered bank, and rock, and tree, visible as it passed, tinging them with its own red glare. By this light also were seen the figures in the boat, now holding high their weapons, now stooping to strike, now standing upright, bronzed by the same red glare, into a colour which might have befitted the regions of Pandaemonium.⁶¹

Although this scene is highly aestheticized, it is not merely a static image which Scott creates but a kind of affective atmosphere. Through the patterns of movement, illumination and obscurity, colour and form, we are given an image of savage figures with darkened skin wielding their hunting spears in the twilight. Here we have mingled the folk myth of the Kelpie with the imagery of traditional rural life. The repetition of ‘now’ emphasizes the swift, reflex movements – Certeau’s ‘know-how’ – that is always immediate and responsive. This vignette appears as an anthropological dream, and at the same time a vision of hell, capturing the ambiguity of an imperial gaze which is powerfully historicizing and, when turned on local, nonmetropolitan practices heightens their difference from the modernity of the centralized state. It is from the ambivalent clash of radically different ways of life that the atmosphere of savagery, and of the border, is achieved. We might read this scene as enacting an imperial aesthetic, where the real horror of cultural encounters of the early nineteenth century is obscured through historical distance. Yet the transfer of the problem of colonialism to Scotland through Scott’s aesthetics does indeed present a challenge to a homogenous Britishness, as do the many moments of anti-colonial struggle, particularly in

⁶¹ Scott, *Mannerism*, p.137.

Waverley and *Rob Roy*. The emphasis on a pastoral, agrarian vision layered with historical time will recur in specifically ‘Southern’ guise in William Faulkner and Cormac McCarthy as I demonstrate in my two final chapters.

The Scottish Borders are also figured decisively as an extrajudicial region, which Andrew Lincoln reads as a critique of ‘the shifting foundations of state legitimacy’, which illustrates Scott’s ‘Tory scepticism’ and his ambivalence about the encroachments of state law and sovereignty into the arena of local and feudal governance.⁶² In *Redgauntlet* we find other Lowland outlaw figures such as the alcoholic pirate and smuggler Nanty Ewart, who becomes increasingly sober the more he drinks, and who displays extraordinary keenness and vitality in spite of his emaciated appearance, ‘the tropical sun had burnt his originally fair complexion to a dusty red; and the bile which was diffused through his system, had stained it with a yellowish black [...] with excessive use of his favourite stimulus.’⁶³ Nanty’s experience of foreign places and his outlaw lifestyle has dyed him in ‘savage’ colours and his alcoholism has contributed to the production of his savage body. He shows his credentials as a popular hero when he stands up to Hugh Redgauntlet, “D-n all warrants, false or true – curse the justice – confound the constable! [...] The cry of “Down with all warrants” was popular in the ears of the militia of the inn, and Nanty Ewart was no less so. Fishers, ostlers, seamen, smugglers, began to crowd to the spot.’⁶⁴ Lincoln stresses the ‘vigorous language Scott attributes to those who stand beyond the norms of modern polite culture’ in

⁶² Lincoln, p.4

⁶³ Walter Scott, *Redgauntlet*, ed. by Kathryn Sutherland (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), p.273.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p.363.

order to argue that Scott's work represents an integrated British identity as a loss of vitality rather than a confident new national identity.⁶⁵ While there is much evidence in Scott of his embracing a particular form of modified Britishness with a less centralized model of power, it is certainly true that his focus on the vitality of Highlanders and borderers signals an ambivalence about the nature of a British modernity in which such figures are sidelined.

The Heart of Midlothian exhibits a more linear narrative trajectory in terms of its acts of border crossing. The novel describes the efforts of Jeanie Deans to rescue her sister Effie, who has been accused of child murder, by making a pilgrimage to London in an attempt to secure her sister's pardon. Jeanie and the Duke of Argyle seem to inscribe lines of movement which integrate the unfamiliar with the familiar, the periphery with the centre. We can contrast this trajectory with the outlawed movements of Rob Roy and with the smugglers of *Redgauntlet* and *Guy Mannering*, who purposefully transgress national, legal and commercial boundaries. These more dissident lines of movement also have a temporal aspect, although it is not always as simple as moving Northward to the periphery and the past, or South towards the centre and modernity. Scott's frontiers are moveable negotiations of diverse practices, periods and spaces, not absolute boundaries.

Another key method through which Scott constructs the experience of border space in the Waverley novels is through language. Crawford emphasizes Scott's linguistic inventiveness and its effect on the way in which British readers imagined their geography and cultural identity, 'Scott's compositional strategies challenged an audience used to thinking of itself as

⁶⁵ Lincoln, p.14.

monocultural and monolingual [...] this anthropological, linguistically daring multiculturalism was his greatest achievement.’⁶⁶ While his representation of the diversity of speech patterns and vernacular within Britishness is one of his central achievements, moments of unofficial speech often appear marginal to the action, as though in the role of local colour. As Bakhtin writes on the presence of ‘unpublicized speech’ in the novel, ‘Only a small and polished portion of these unpublicized spheres of speech reaches the printed pages, usually in the form of “colourful dialogue” of the protagonists of a story, as removed as possible from the author’s own direct and serious speech patterns.’⁶⁷ However, despite this marginalization, the overflowing and excessive quality of the speech of some of Scott’s central characters constantly pushes at the quotation marks which separate it from the organizing voice of the narrator, or that of his upper-class first-person narrators.

The linguistic borders of Scots, Gaelic and standard English modes of speech are the least of Scott’s innovations in the use of voice.⁶⁸ He uses the demarcations of character speech to signal the regional, linguistic, religious and political heterogeneity of Scottish history in, for example, the long passages of legal speech, pedantic antiquarian discussions and obsession with Latin phrasing which accompany his more comic figures, such as the Baron of Bradwardine:

⁶⁶ Crawford, *Devolving English Literature*, p.133.

⁶⁷ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. by Hélène Iswolsky (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1984), p.421.

⁶⁸ On the linguistic dimensions of Scott’s prose and poetry, see Alison Lumsden, *Walter Scott and the Limits of Language* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010).

I pray you to be hushed, Captain Waverley; you are elsewhere, peradventure, *sui juris*, being foris-familiated and entitled, it may be, to think and resent for yourself; but in my domain [...] and under this roof, which is *quasi* mine being held by tacit relocation by a tenant at will, I am in *loco parentis* to you, and bound to see you scathless.⁶⁹

The Baron's reliance on citation, reference and parenthesis is symptomatic of a desire for official sanction and a bolstering of his own legal status; yet in the same moment it renders his speech archaic and idiosyncratic, working to both defer and obscure his meaning. Bradwardine's language – mixing Latin and legal terminology with archaisms – also blends major and minor registers.

Purveyors of mad speech also populate Scott's texts, such as Peter Peebles in *Redgauntlet* with his obsession with the Scottish legal system, 'the ordinary to the inner House, the President to the Bench. It is just like the rope to the man, the man to the axe, the axe to the ox, the ox to the water, the water to the fire'.⁷⁰ Peebles begins with a legal address which collapses into a sing-song alliterative discourse. His speech, like that of many Scott creations, expands legal discourse with the extra-judicial, causing the major discourse to overflow with song, proverb and the language of madness. Yet insanity has its own, equally clear modes of expression, evident in the use of ballads as a substitute for speech for the 'innocent' David Gellatley (*Waverley*) and Madge Wildfire (*The Heart of Midlothian*). Like Scott's more eccentric speakers, Peter, David and Madge look to an over-arching discourse to express their own individual language, just as Joshua the Quaker (*Redgauntlet*) and Cameronian

⁶⁹ Scott, *Waverley*, p.53.

⁷⁰ Scott, *Redgauntlet*, p.136.

David Deans (*Midlothian*) employ the archaic phrasing of their respective religious traditions. Scott also offers synthetic Shakespearean dialogue in *Kenilworth* (1821) and an accessible modernized version of the content and rhythms of Middle English in *Ivanhoe*. The integration of dialect into narrative voice is achieved more fully by his contemporary John Galt, whose novel *The Annals of the Parish* (1821) abolishes the divide between Standard English narration and spoken Scots. These innovations in dialect voice in Scottish Romantic writing are critical in paving the way for texts like *Huckleberry Finn* (1884) which contains not only a non-standard narrative voice but the representation of contrasting regional speech patterns. The raising of dialect writing to a high literary form in the work of Scott, Hogg, Galt, Burns and others proves to be a major influence on the development of American vernacular literature.⁷¹

Masculinity, Temporality and Environmental Practices

Scott's later Jacobite novel, *Redgauntlet*, also explores the themes of savagery and of temporal and spatial thresholds and the practices which construct them. *Redgauntlet* is concerned with neither the 1715 nor 1745 uprisings, but instead with a speculative uprising in the 1760s. Set in the Scottish borders, on the Solway Firth, the novel follows young protagonists Darsie Latimer and Alan Fairford in their struggles with the intrigues of Jacobite Laird Hugh Redgauntlet, who is eventually revealed to be Darsie's uncle. *Redgauntlet* conforms to the image of the noble savage in a more traditional European

⁷¹ See Crawford, *Devolving English Literature*, pp.111-216.

sense of the term ‘noble’, designating a member of the nobility with attendant rights to land ownership and hunting. From our first image of Redgauntlet, on horseback and spearing fish in the Solway Firth, the qualities with which Scott invests his Highland ‘savages’ are apparent: athletic masculinity realized in aesthetic terms, feudal power, prowess in traditional hunting, and ancestral rights to the land he occupies. In this way, Scott connects the dissent of the Highlanders and that of the Lowland Jacobite lairds, even after the consequences of the ’45, through the ‘noble’ practices of hunting, fishing and ancestral land-owning.

In eighteenth-century Europe, hunting was a practice reserved solely for the nobility as the expression of their ownership of the land, a right which was exercised by the Native peoples of the Americas. As Ter Ellingson explains, ‘by their free practice of hunting [...] the “savages” of America occupy a status that corresponds, from a legal standpoint, to the nobility of Europe.’⁷² This sense of entitlement persists in everyday practices and performances of ‘natural’ authority, as Redgauntlet stresses the organicism of feudal power in an attempt to strong-arm his nephew into leading his house in yet another Stuart uprising, ‘if thou hast not the courage to head the force of thy house, the leading shall pass to other hands, and thy inheritance shall depart from thee, like vigour and verdure from a rotten branch.’⁷³ The savage feudalism of Redgauntlet is both satirized and allowed a certain affective appeal, as Scott gives him a potent style of speech, archaic with gothic overtones, ‘I will not hear you speak a word against the justice of that enterprise, for which your

⁷² Ellingson, *The Myth of the Noble Savage*, p.23.

⁷³ Scott, *Redgauntlet*, p.341.

oppressed country calls [...] or against that noble revenge which your father's blood demands from his dishonoured grave.'⁷⁴ Redgauntlet's authoritarian feudal style is starkly contrasted with the behaviour of his Quaker neighbour, brother Joshua, whose wholesale harvesting of fish in the river with tide-nets appals the Jacobite laird, who perceives it as an affront to his feudal masculinity, 'we, who fish fairly, and like men, as our fathers did, have daily and yearly less sport and less profit.'⁷⁵ Here hunting practices and modes of environmental stewardship are temporalized and associated with antiquity and heredity.

The 'noble' savagery of Redgauntlet is given additional strength through his religious and political fanaticism, his 'antiquated and desperate line of politics'.⁷⁶ He stands as even more of an anachronism than Scott's Highland savages, perhaps due to the novel's setting in the 1760s, when, after the watershed of 1745, the Jacobite cause appears to lose its sympathetic treatment in the Waverley novels. A similar dynamic is played out in the figure of Edgar Ravenswood in *The Bride of Lammermoor* (1819) whose aristocratic heritage trumps that of the Whig usurper on his estate, Sir William Ashton, and in which the loss of the young protagonist's hunting rights is emphasized. This narrative of dispossessed feudal masculinity and the natural land rights which accompany it, finds its immediate literary successor in Fenimore Cooper's Native American figures, and then moves into the Southern literary tradition in the aristocratic plantation families of Twain's and particularly

⁷⁴ Ibid, p.338.

⁷⁵ Ibid, p.56.

⁷⁶ Ibid, p.217.

Faulkner's fiction, and will later find a violent and parodic expression in Cormac McCarthy's *Child of God* (1973).

Objects and Artefacts

A fitting emblem for the problem of historical representation in Scott's work is the image of the artefact, which includes not simply objects but also the classic Romantic motif of the ruin, as a material trace in the landscape with a historicizing function. As temporal and physical borders shift or evaporate, what is left behind is the artefact – a hardened sediment of historical transition. In this way, the artefact in the Waverley novels can often embody the nonlinear quality of Scott's historicism, confusing models of progressive history and antiquarian acts of dating and preservation. The tension between the preservation and decay of historical markers is dramatized perhaps most clearly in the opening sections of *Old Mortality* (1816), where the ageing eponymous protagonist spends his later years travelling from parish to parish reinscribing with a chisel the engravings on the tombstones of martyred Covenanters. After his death, Old Mortality's legend lives on, with rumours of the remarkable preservation of those tombs which he restored:

They even assert, that on the tombs where the manner of the martyrs' murder is recorded, their names have remained indelibly legible since the death of Old Mortality, while those of the persecutors, sculptured on the same monuments, have been entirely defaced. It is hardly necessary to say that this is a fond imagination, and that, since the time of the pious pilgrim, the monuments which were the objects of his care are hastening, like all earthly memorials, into ruin and decay.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Walter Scott, *Old Mortality*, ed. by Peter Davidson and Jane Stevenson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.34.

Here the tone of Peter Pattieson, the novel's secondary narrator, is one of rational analysis, and yet his term 'hastening' would seem to imply that since Old Mortality's death the tombs are in fact decaying exponentially. The competing histories of those eager to remember the Covenanters and their cause, and of the rational, Enlightened narrator of the frame narrative, both seek to verify the persistence or obsolescence of history in the movements of materials.

Material composition is also critical in the artefacts of *The Antiquary*, where Scott's self-parodic emphasis on Jonathan Oldbuck's collecting of pseudo, misplaced historical objects reflects the problematic and nonlinear nature of his historical transitions. However, in Scott, and as I will also argue regarding James Hogg's work in the following chapter, the artefact has the function of problematizing the linear historical constructions implied by the antiquarianism of the period, and in turn highlights alternative interpretations of historical materials through of legends, ballads and folk memory.⁷⁸ This problematization is perfectly encapsulated in *The Antiquary*, where Oldbuck admonishes the novel's young hero Lovel for not being able to clearly perceive the outlines of a Roman fort on a pasture which he had purchased at great expense for the purpose of preserving its antiquarian evidence:

Indistinct? Why, the great station at Ardoch, or that at Brunswick in Annandale, may be clearer doubtless, because they are stative forts, while this was only an occasional encampment [...] ideots will plough

⁷⁸ For this antiquarian aspect of Scottish Romanticism and its foundations in the Scottish Enlightenment, see Susan Manning, 'Antiquarianism, The Scottish Science of Man and the Emergence of Modern Disciplinarity', in *Scotland and the Borders of Romanticism*, pp.57-76.

up the land, and, like beasts and ignorant savages, have thereby obliterated two sides of the square, and gravely injured the third – but ye see, yourself, the fourth side is quite entire.⁷⁹

The frustrated references Oldbuck makes to the effacement of the evidence highlight the problem of the living, working environment which cannot remain static, and the Antiquary seeks to explain the camp's faded contours by supposing it to have been only fleetingly occupied.

As the anthropologist Tim Ingold argues, we cannot escape the reality that all artefacts are composed of materials, which continue to interact with their environments, 'As the underbelly of things, materials may lie low but are never entirely subdued. Despite the best efforts of curators and conservationists, no object lasts forever. Materials always and inevitably win out over materiality in the long run.'⁸⁰ Materiality is here defined as a static substrate which can be passively taxonomized, while materials are dynamic and frustrate temporal analysis by persisting into the present. Unfortunately for Oldbuck, local beggar Edie Ochiltree makes an appearance to reveal the real origin of the remains:

'About this bit bourock, your honour,' answered the undaunted Edie: 'I mind the bigging o't.'

'The devil you do! Why, you old fool, it was here before you were born, and will be after you are hanged, man!'

⁷⁹ Scott, *The Antiquary*, p.28.

⁸⁰ Ingold, *Being Alive*, p.27.

‘Hanged or drowned, here or awa, dead or alive, I mind the bigging
o’t.’⁸¹

Here personal memory and local legend challenge antiquarian interpretations of historical markers, and Edie’s pithy dialect comedically deflates the Antiquary’s triumph. What was supposed to be of great antiquity may perhaps be merely a rustic shelter built only twenty years earlier, originally erected for a wedding and used as a refuge from the weather and for drinking contests.

As sociologist of science Christian Simonetti argues, in the model of constructing the historical through excavation, common in disciplines such as archaeology, time moves from the bottom upwards, as in models of strata, each enclosing its separate historical epoch in material form with the most recent at the surface: ‘in normal conditions of deposition, later soils are deposited on earlier ones, which have a more stable structure at the time of deposition,’ and such stratification implies that ‘history is not visible at the surface but needs to be excavated.’⁸² For the Antiquary, the more buried and indistinct the remains, the more conscious work there is to be done in reconstruction and interpretation. In Simonetti’s analysis, the notion of history as subterranean in turn implies ‘an understanding of the past as being enclosed within surfaces.’⁸³ Yet in *The Antiquary* Scott interrupts this stratigraphic model, as the excavation of historical sediments in the landscape merely turns up the present masquerading as the past, from the excavation of Oldbuck’s fort to the false treasure unearthed by Sir Arthur Wardour later in

⁸¹ Scott, *The Antiquary*, p.30.

⁸² Cristian Simonetti, ‘The Stratification of Time’, *Time and Society*, 24 (2015), 139-162, (p.143).

⁸³ Ibid, p.144.

the novel. In *The Antiquary*, the motif of the excavation of artefacts and the surface of the earth is at the centre of the historical debates concerning Scottish history which it seeks to parody. The artefact is a key motif in the historicizing discourses which inflect Southern writing by Poe, Twain, Faulkner and McCarthy, and I will demonstrate that in their writing also, it provides a critique of processes of constructing national histories.

Chapter 1, Part 2: American Receptions of Scott in James Fenimore Cooper and Mark Twain

Beyond the debt owed to Scott by writers in the Northern United States such as Washington Irving, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Fenimore Cooper, already chronicled in much transatlantic criticism, other artists saw his work as a model to repudiate.⁸⁴ Poe's admiration for Scott and his readership of the Scottish periodicals forms the basis of chapter two, while my third chapter details the complexity of Mark Twain's critique of Scott as well as his revision of Scottish Romantic themes in his fiction. However, Northern responses to Scott were certainly not monolithic or necessarily less problematic than Southern ones. James Fenimore Cooper, like Scott before him, was an

⁸⁴ See Susan Manning, *The Puritan-Provincial Vision: Scottish and American Literature in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). Also, Andrew Hook, 'Scotland, the U.S.A and National Literatures in the Nineteenth Century', *Scotland and the Nineteenth-Century World* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2012) pp.37-52, and Joseph Rezek, *London and the Making of Provincial Literature*.

enormously popular and influential writer in the nineteenth century and is best known for his *Leatherstocking Tales*, historical novels set along the early American frontier as it expanded from upstate New York and the Great Lakes region in *The Deerslayer* (1841), *The Pioneers* (1823), *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826) and the *Pathfinder* (1840), and later to the Midwest in *The Prairie* (1827). All five texts feature frontiersman Nathaniel Bumppo under various denominations, a white man with Delaware connections who comes to the aid of settlers in peril along the frontier and in times of war. Although Scott and Cooper are very different writers they share certain thematic concerns, in particular those of primitivism versus civilization, travel narratives exploring wild, uncharted territory, and the specific period settings of the mid to late eighteenth century. As Robert Crawford argues, there has been for a long time a consensus among Cooper critics that the ‘presentation of his primitives, and the structuring of his novels [...] owed a great deal to Sir Walter Scott. Cooper was known in the nineteenth century as “the American Scott.”’⁸⁵ Yet as Ian Dennis has noted, Cooper resented this label and there are ways in which he publicly took personal aim at Scott, as is evident in his review of John Gibson Lockhart’s biography of his father-in-law. In Cooper’s 1838 review he accused Scott of ‘a cold and calculating worldly expediency, a disposition to advance his own fortunes, in short, a regular old-fashioned *Scotticism*’, and argues that Lockhart, through his publication of Scott’s correspondence had unwittingly revealed an accurate and unfavourable image of the great writer.⁸⁶ Cooper also refers to James Hogg’s biography of Scott, in

⁸⁵ Crawford, *Devolving English Literature*, p.182.

⁸⁶ James Fenimore Cooper, ‘Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott, Bart.’ [review], *Knickerbocker Magazine*, October 1838, 349-366 (p.357).

which he narrates an episode of ill feeling between himself and his patron when an unfavourable review of his work appeared which he believed Scott to have published anonymously. While Cooper designated Scott as ‘a man of a century, as respects talents’, he was only ‘one of the mass, as regards motives and principles.’⁸⁷ Cooper certainly found distasteful the moral ambiguity and the play of impersonation, forgery and anonymity which was central to the culture of the Edinburgh periodicals, and this discomfort informed his revisions of Scott’s themes in the American settings of his own novels, reacting to as well as incorporating Scott’s literary model.

Cooper’s shifting of Scott’s themes to the American frontier explicitly links Scottish and American contexts in ways that would be significant for later writers responding to Scott’s legacy. His work therefore provides an interesting hinge in my narrative of Scottish and Southern literary connections in that he fuses Scott’s styles and his concern with borders and thresholds with the image of American expansion in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. His novels of the frontier would, in turn, influence the Western genre and more recent writers such as Cormac McCarthy.

In *The Prairie*, with its setting in the Midwest in the first decade of the nineteenth century and shortly after the Louisiana purchase, Cooper describes the opening up of the continent to settlement and the colonisation of a new border region. In the following passage, he not only recalls Scott’s borders but also their temporal quality and the imagery of a disjunctive and dynamic stadial history:

⁸⁷ Ibid, p.365.

The march of civilisation with us, has a strong analogy to that of all coming events, which are known 'to cast their shadows before'. The gradations of society, from that state which is called refined to that which approaches as near barbarity as connection with an intelligent people will readily allow, are to be traced from the bosom of the States, where wealth, luxury and the arts are beginning to seat themselves, to those distant and ever-receding borders, which mark the skirts and announce the approach of the nation, as moving mists precede the signs of the day.⁸⁸

While the American nation is becoming intensely settled and complex in the East, the West is liminal and spare, and Cooper signals that barbarity is paradoxically the vanguard of future national progress, with civilization developing slowly in its wake. His 'gradations' recall in a more linear form Scott's treatment of Scottish Enlightenment developmental stages and look ahead to the image of American national progress envisioned by Frederick Jackson Turner in the 'Frontier Thesis'.

The landscape of the Midwest is vast and exposed, 'bleak and solitary', covered only in 'bruised and withered grass, which the cattle plucked from time to time, and as often rejected, as food too sour for even hunger to render palatable.'⁸⁹ We find similar descriptions in Scott, where moving upward to the Scottish borders, or over the Highland line, is also a movement outward into open spaces and unforgiving landscapes. So it is that Osbaldistone

⁸⁸ James Fenimore Cooper, *The Prairie: A Tale* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1996), p.69.

⁸⁹ *Ibid*, p.4.

describes in *Rob Roy* the ‘wild and open’ country north of Glasgow, where ‘huge continuous heaths spread before, behind, and around us in hopeless barrenness.’⁹⁰ While Scott’s harsh borderland is occupied by the MacGregors, Cooper’s prairie belongs to the Teton (Lakota) Sioux and the party of rough squatters from Kentucky, on their way to the more fertile Western coast. Robert Crawford explicitly traces Scott’s borders in Cooper’s novels of the frontier:

Cooper’s occasional use of the adjective ‘American’ to govern his noun ‘borderers’ might remind us that the best known literary border at the time was Scott’s *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, the same border that had featured in Wordsworth’s tragedy *The Borderers* (1795-6) [...] it seems that the whole idea of the border as both a line and an area of strife and intercultural contact – that idea so crucial to Scott’s novels about Scotland and Scottish history – was an important cultural model in the United States.⁹¹

Yet, as we have seen, Scott’s border does more than simply represent an area of contact or conflict. It is also a temporalizing motif, and one which problematizes national constructions of identity and history by emphasizing regional difference and the violence of acts of national construction and consolidation. We will see later how McCarthy in particular, but also Twain, draw on this Americanized Scottish border model in the Southern and South-Western contexts of their fiction.

⁹⁰ Scott, *Rob Roy*, p.313.

⁹¹ Crawford, *Devolving English Literature*, p.185.

Cooper's most famous novel, *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), takes place during the Seven Years War in 1757, with the American front of the conflict usually referred to as the 'French-Indian War'. The action occurs along a border – between the British colonies and New France – and a frontier between settler communities and Indian lands. Set largely in upstate New York near the Great Lakes region, the novel depicts a wilderness landscape contested by warring parties, with the added threat of Native peoples waiting to ambush incomers to their ancestral lands:

Armies larger than those that had often disposed of the sceptres of the mother countries were seen to bury themselves in these forests, whence they rarely returned but in skeleton bands, that were haggard with care, or dejected by defeat. Though the arts of peace were unknown to this fatal region, its forests were alive with men, its shades and glens rang with the sounds of martial music [...] A wide frontier had been laid naked [...] and more substantial evils were preceded by a thousand fanciful and imaginary dangers. The alarmed colonists believed that the yells of the savages mingled with every fitful gust of wind that issued from the interminable forests of the West.⁹²

Here Cooper depicts a disputed land characterized by colonial and tribal confrontations, a scene which seems to echo not only Scott's Highlands and their glens, but also Ossian's primitive Scotland of martial chiefs and warring tribes. Cooper evokes a hostile environment consuming the military forces of incoming civilization, although ultimately the consumption would flow in the

⁹² Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans: A Narrative of 1757* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961), pp.2-3.

other direction. The engagement with environment is critical here; the border is 'laid naked', as a frontier characterized by the clearing of wilderness and by exposed earth.

This act of marking the landscape is also present in the image of the frontier, and the making of roads and paths through the landscape. As in Scott's *Highlands*, Cooper's frontier represents a network of widening paths and lines of movement, lines which run over native ones and expand out into the wilderness, and are associated with distinctive ways of walking and moving in the landscape:

The rude path, which originally formed their line of communication, had been widened for the passage of wagons; so that the distance that had been travelled by the son of the forest in two hours, might easily be effected by a detachment of troops, with their necessary baggage, between the rising and setting of a summer sun.⁹³

This path is travelled by the novel's central characters, Cora and Alice Munro and Duncan Heyward, on their journey to Fort William Henry. On their way they find themselves betrayed by their Indian guide and forced to seek the protection of Hawkeye and his Delaware companions, chief Chingachgook and his son Uncas.

When the party seek refuge deep in the forest while fleeing from the Hurons allied to the French, where they encounter a 'decayed blockhouse' – a relic of earlier frontier peoples:

⁹³ Ibid, p.4.

Such memorials of the passage and struggles of man are yet frequent throughout the broad barrier of wilderness which once separated the hostile provinces, and form a species of ruins which are intimately associated with the recollections of colonial history, and which are in appropriate keeping with the gloomy character of the surrounding scenery.⁹⁴

This scene reimagines the Romantic trope of the ruin and its relation to time and natural processes, here representing the precariousness of any endeavour in the frontier landscape, where the settler is pitted against a consuming wilderness. As with Scott, the artefact stands as the problematic remnant of historical transition. As Crawford argues, ‘Cooper is fascinated not so much by the New World’s newness, as by its juxtapositions of the old.’⁹⁵ This constitutes another way in which he aligns himself with Scott’s multiple overlapping and coexistent temporalities, which in *The Last of the Mohicans* are also the intersecting confrontations between peoples at different temporal stages, where the frontier experience is lived among ‘so many jarring and savage races of men.’⁹⁶

Echoes of Ossian are also visible in Cooper’s presentation of the vanishing Delaware, as Hawkeye describes the situation of Chingachgook as the settlers increase their presence on his tribal land:

Once his family could chase their deer over tracts of country [...] not crossing brook or hill that was not their own; but what is left to their

⁹⁴ Ibid, p.125.

⁹⁵ Crawford, *Devolving English Literature*, p.181.

⁹⁶ Cooper, *Mohicans*, p.205.

descendent! He may find his six feet of earth when God chooses, and keep it in peace, perhaps, if he has a friend who will take the pains to sink his head so low that the ploughshares cannot reach it!⁹⁷

This description echoes Hugh Redgauntlet's dispossession in Scott's 1824 novel, where the breaking of feudal and aristocratic familial ties is exemplified by the loss of traditional modes of hunting on the land. The image of the native body being ploughed over in the settler's pursuit of productive soil prefigures a land marked by layers of human sediments, where obsolete Native cultures become part of the substrate of American history. In Cooper these layers undoubtedly mark the passage of one temporal moment and its supersession by another, in a more linear model than we often find in Scott.

Historian Jenni Calder has examined the experiences of Scottish settlers in Canada and North America, and the necessity of their 'clearing' the land of dense forest to allow for subsistence farming. Yet the term clearance would soon have another connotation in Scottish experience:

From the late eighteenth century, clearance more often meant the removal of human beings, themselves seen as obstacles to productive development. Over a century and a half, thousands of displaced men, women and children arrived in a land that they then had to clear, to transform wilderness into homes and communities, while the homes they had left were transformed into a kind of wilderness. But they [...] were themselves complicit [...] in clearing those human beings for

⁹⁷ Ibid, p.127.

whom the wilderness was a source of material and cultural sustenance.⁹⁸

Both the clearance of Scots from the Highlands and the clearance of Native peoples on the American continent occurred under the rubric of the development of the environment, a modernization that in these cases rendered certain kinds of human dwellers obsolete. This experience would later in the nineteenth century become emblematic of the Postbellum South and occurred also in the South-West with the close of the frontier. Like Scott, Cooper figures the historical forces which designate certain kinds of practices and ways of living on the land to a state of antiquity. The figure of the Delaware chief Tamemund more directly recalls an Ossianic tone of loss and nostalgia in Cooper's novel, "Have I dreamt of so many snows – that my people were scattered like floating sands."⁹⁹ In his images of the passing of America's Native peoples, Cooper imbues the historical moment of *Mohicans* with the same heroic, even epic emphasis typical of 'the legends of ancient poetry'.¹⁰⁰

Cooper also responds to the Scottish tradition in *The Last of the Mohicans* with the inclusion of actual Scottish characters. The Scots-Irish Colonel George Munro, a real historical figure, and the father of Cora and Alice in the novel, plays out typical Scottish characteristics, being temperamental, stubborn and insistent on a separate, exceptional Scottish identity. George Munro's father, Captain George Munro of Auchinbowie, was left in command of the Cameronian regiment battling against a Highland Jacobite army at the

⁹⁸ Jenni Calder, *Lost in the Backwoods: Scots and the North American Wilderness* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), p.43.

⁹⁹ Cooper, *Mohicans*, p.328.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, p.356.

Battle of Dunkeld in 1689. This victory by the Cameronian regiment effectively ended the first Jacobite uprising in Scotland. In a pivotal scene in Cooper's novel the fictional Munro reveals to Heyward that his elder daughter Cora is in fact of mixed race, the result of his ignorance of his first wife's racial background, a similar situation, as we will see, to that of Faulkner's Thomas Sutpen in *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936). For Munro, Scotland's association with slavery is the result of 'her unnatural union with a foreign and trading people', implying that the Scottish participation in Empire as part of the British state has corrupted a previously noble culture.¹⁰¹ Heyward is of Scottish descent, but born and raised in the Southern states, where in Munro's eyes he has also been tainted by an association with slavery. Munro embodies an imagined Scotland identified with masculine daring and chivalry, 'The thistle is the order for dignity and antiquity; the veritable *nemo me impune lacessit* of chivalry. Ye had ancestors in that degree, Duncan, and they were an ornament to the nobles of Scotland.'¹⁰² As Juliet Shields argues, 'Scots represent for Cooper a strange blend of exilic adaptability and Old World feudalism'.¹⁰³ Accordingly Munro refers to the 'honor of Scotland' and gives preferment to Heyward over other members of his garrison whom he perceives as American 'provincials'.¹⁰⁴ It is now America, rather than Scotland, which takes on the dubious title of 'province', while Scotland in Cooper's text seems to stand as a venerated, ancient ancestral nation, whose loss of sovereignty has led to the country's cultural and racial adulteration.

¹⁰¹ Cooper, *Mohicans*, p.162.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, p.160.

¹⁰³ Juliet Shield's 'Savage and Scott-ish Masculinity in *The Last of the Mohicans* and *The Prairie*: James Fenimore Cooper and the Diasporic Origins of American Identity', *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, 64 (2009), 137-162 (p.142).

¹⁰⁴ Cooper, *Mohicans*, p.155.

Munro and Heyward also embody what Twain would cite as the corrupting and reactionary cult of chivalry in late nineteenth-century Southern culture. Ian Dennis has demonstrated that in many ways Heyward follows the typical model of a Scott hero, largely naïve and ineffectual, the embodiment of ‘Old World notions’ rendered useless in the frontier wilderness in which he now finds himself.¹⁰⁵ In one scene Heyward dreams that he ‘was a knight of chivalry’, a role which he, like Don Quixote, seems particularly unqualified to fulfil.¹⁰⁶ Dennis argues that Cooper presents Heyward in highly negative terms in the novel as a way of critiquing the typical Scott protagonist. In his view, Cooper is using Heyward’s arrogance and bungling to demonstrate that ‘the truly destructive ethos and practice that Europe has intruded on these dark woods [...] is not progress or usurping civilisation, but chivalry.’¹⁰⁷ Juliet Shields also claims that Cooper’s work rejects the Waverley novels’ ‘valorization of feudal chivalry’¹⁰⁸, though I would argue that a careful reading of Scott can often reveal the opposite of valorization, as in the critical position adopted by Rebecca towards these values in *Ivanhoe*, or indeed the satirizing of feudal masculinity in a figure such as Hugh Redgauntlet. For Shields, Heyward is ultimately a more effectual figure in the novel, and stands as a ‘union of feudal Scottish chivalry with savage Indian prudence and self-control’, which signifies ‘the evolution of an American identity.’¹⁰⁹ Crawford also picks up on the notion of Heyward as another Waverley or Osbaldistone, a

¹⁰⁵ Ian Dennis, ‘The Worthlessness of Duncan Heyward: A Waverley Hero in America’, *Studies in the Novel*, 29 (1997), 1-16, (p.1).

¹⁰⁶ Cooper, *Mohicans*, p.129.

¹⁰⁷ Dennis, p.4.

¹⁰⁸ Shields, p.140.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid*, p.151.

naïve hero who must translate himself into his new environment, building a bridge between the civilized world of his origins and the more primitive one in which he finds himself.¹¹⁰ As Waverley watches with admiration the martial skill and physical prowess of the Highlanders, so Heyward watches Uncas' expertise in tracking and Indian warfare.

Heyward's grandson Duncan Uncas Middleton in *The Prairie* is named for his Scottish ancestor combined with the name of the young Delaware warrior who dies trying to rescue Cora in *Mohicans*, and has a last name signifying his mediating position between these cultures. The name Uncas is thus passed down through Heyward's descendants as a sentimental memorial for the bravery of the young Delaware. Middleton appears far more acclimated to the American scene than his ancestor, as he appears in the novel dressed in 'a hunting-shirt of dark green, trimmed with the yellow fringes and ornaments that were sometimes seen among the border troops of the confederacy', combined with 'buckskin leggings', 'ordinary Indian moccasins and a 'dangerous straight dirk'.¹¹¹ This combination of indigenous and Confederate garb with the traditional Highland knife figures the adaptability of Scots in American settler narratives, and their perceived role as cultural intercessors. Shields concludes by arguing that Cooper depicts Scottish feudal chivalry only to undercut it with more successful American figures such as Paul Hover in *The Prairie*, whose practicality and real-world experience trumps the out-dated chivalry of figures such as Heyward and Middleton.

¹¹⁰ Crawford, *Devolving English Literature*, p.187.

¹¹¹ Cooper, *The Prairie*, p.120.

Cooper's use of both mediating and cultural bridge-building figures such as Heyward and Hawkeye, as well as characters embodying historical obsolescence such as Chingachgook, draws him closer to Scott's presentation of the historical forces underlying the progress of modernity. Calder makes this connection explicit in her comparison of Scott and Cooper's work, 'By the end of Cooper's Leatherstocking novels Natty Bumppo is an anachronism, like Fergus MacIvor in Scott's *Waverley*, and like a recurrent hero of the Western who faces with dismay the arrival of the machine gun and motor car.'¹¹² This interpretation seems an apt proleptic description of the predicament of Cormac McCarthy's Western heroes in *The Border Trilogy*, particularly the dislocation and loss experienced by an ageing Billy Parham towards the end of *Cities of the Plain* (1998). Yet this narrative of Scott-originated anachronistic figures could be widened to include the embodiments of Southern Plantation culture in Faulkner's writing, such as Thomas Sutpen or Quentin Compson, who are often interpreted as emblems of the demise of the Old South.

In *The Prairie*, we see the movement of Westward expansion creating a new border region, which connects to European counterparts:

The resemblance between the American borderer and his European prototype is singular [...] both might be called without restraint, the one being above, the other beyond the reach of the law – brave, because they were inured to danger – proud, because they were independent – and vindictive, because each was the avenger of his own wrongs.¹¹³

¹¹² Calder, p.44.

¹¹³ Cooper, *The Prairie*, p.69.

This catalogue of qualities recalls Scott's Highland outlaws and rugged borderers, but also underlines the beginnings of the cowboy myth and the basis for later treatments of the historical formation of the American character, such as Frederick Jackson Turner's 'Frontier Thesis'. As it is revised and modified in Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales*, Scott's work has a lasting legacy in American Southern and Western writing, not merely in terms of versions of the frontier but in its depiction of processes of historical change and those they leave stranded or displaced.

Mark Twain on Cooper and Scott

Mark Twain responded to the clear stylistic connections between Scott and Cooper in his examination of 'Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offences' (1895), where many of his critiques of Cooper are comparable to those he aimed at Scott's writing. As in his critique on Scott's influence, Twain the humourist gleefully exaggerates Cooper's style, though his pastiche lacks the more politically inflected vitriol which he reserves for Scott. Twain focuses largely on *The Deerslayer* in his critique, a text which he describes as 'simply a literary *delirium tremens*', while also referencing *The Pathfinder* and *The Last of the Mohicans*.¹¹⁴ For Twain, the author of a genuine piece of literary art must 'Eschew surplusage', 'employ a simple and straightforward style' and 'say what he is proposing to say, not merely come near it.'¹¹⁵ According to Twain, these qualities are entirely lacking in Cooper's writing.

¹¹⁴ Mark Twain, 'Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offences', *Mark Twain in his Times*, <http://twain.lib.virginia.edu/projects/rissetto/offense.html>, [accessed 23/4/2018].

¹¹⁵ *Ibid*, p.2.

These arguments are familiar from Twain's critiques of what he perceives as Scott's inflated and verbose style. In his attack on Cooper, Twain uses similar references as he would in his critiques of Scott in *Life on the Mississippi*, associating Cooper's style with the kitsch, the anachronistic and the crude:

When a personage talks like an illustrated, gilt-edged, tree-calf, hand-tooled, seven-dollar Friendship's Offering in the beginning of a paragraph, he shall not talk like a negro minstrel at the end of it. But this rule is flung down and danced upon in the 'Deerslayer Tale'.¹¹⁶

Although Cooper's rendering of dialect is not as successful or consistent as Scott's, he follows the earlier writer in his drive to depict different linguistic strains and emphases in a space of inter-cultural contact, in a way that would influence later writers from the American regions. Cooper is therefore still part of a dialect tradition with roots in Scottish Romantic work, a tradition which leads to Twain's own innovations with voice and dialogue in texts like *Huckleberry Finn* (1884). Twain's critiques of Cooper also centre on his typical Indian. He argues that for all Cooper's efforts in trying to evince a kind of nobility in his savage figures, 'In that matter of intellect, the difference between a Cooper Indian and the Indian that stands in front of the cigar-shop is not spacious.'¹¹⁷ For Twain, much as Scott's influence has atrophied into the more reactionary and anachronistic elements in Southern culture, so have Cooper's representations come to signal something commercial and clichéd, modelled by the sculpted Indian used to indicate a tobacconist's store.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, p.2.

¹¹⁷ Twain, 'Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offences', p.5.

Through Twain's writing on Scott and the South we can begin to understand the preoccupation with the Scottish Romantic tradition in Southern culture more specifically. I therefore wish to return to *Life on the Mississippi* (1883), where Twain combines commentary on the geography and life of the Mississippi Delta with remarks on the formation of Southern culture and character. This focus prompts him to comment on the influence of Scott's writing on the formation of that identity and what could be termed the romantic construction of Southern difference. Twain seizes on the Mardi Gras pageant as an instance of a romantic practice which could only survive in the South, due to the distortions produced in its culture by Scott's historical novels:

Sir Walter has got the advantage of the gentlemen of the cowl and rosary, and he will stay. His mediaeval business, supplemented by the monsters and the oddities, and the pleasant creatures from fairy-land, is finer to look at than the poor fantastic inventions and performances of the revelling rabble of the priest's day [...] Take away the romantic mysteries, the kings and knights and big sounding titles, and Mardi-Gras would die, down there in the South. The feature that keeps it alive in the South – girly-girly romance – would kill it in the North or in London.¹¹⁸

Although Twain's criticism of Scott is intended to be extreme, particularly in his reference to Scott replacing Catholicism in the South, it nevertheless endows the Scottish writer with a strange, cultish influence within Southern culture. The effeminate Romanticism of the South is contrasted with the

¹¹⁸ Twain, *Life*, p.303.

practical, masculine scepticism of the North and London; yet although Twain's purpose in his book as a whole is to evoke life on the Mississippi, the phrase 'down there in the South' betrays a Northern vantage point from which he surveys the eccentricities of Southern culture.

Twain does not complete the task he has set himself by simply attacking Scott as a Romantic reactionary, but cites his influence in terms of a wider political and cultural malaise:

But for the Walter Scott disease, the character of the Southerner – or Southron according to Walter Scott's starchier way of phrasing it – would be wholly modern, in place of modern and medieval mixed, and the South would be fully a generation further advanced than it is [...] For it was he that created rank and caste down there, and also reverence for rank and caste [...] Enough is laid on slavery, without fathering upon it these creations and contributions of Sir Walter. Sir Walter had so large a hand in making Southern character, as it existed before the war, that he is in great measure responsible for the war.¹¹⁹

The impact of Scott's writing is therefore to retard and stave off the approach of equality and democracy, and to heap on the institution of slavery the language of illegitimate power, that of the pre-Revolutionary structures of old Europe. Scott's apparent role in providing a cultural vision which legitimized slavery leads, in Twain's wilfully provocative thesis, directly to the Civil War in terms of the Southern refusal to enter modernity and relinquish anachronistic values and practices.

¹¹⁹ Ibid, p.304.

The work of Scott which provides the foundation for this critique is *Ivanhoe*, which for Twain has entirely reversed Cervantes's robust critique of medieval chivalry in *Don Quixote*.¹²⁰ Yet it is possible to argue that Scott saw himself as following in the footsteps of Cervantes in seeking to parody or undercut moments of fantasy with realism; for Scott this fantasy is not chivalric but generically Romantic and antiquarian. Scott's own sense of the problems of Romanticism as a literary form is evident in the authorial voice in *Waverley*, where the protagonist's Romantic education is highlighted and slowly eroded in his encounter with the harsh realities of war and politics. This referencing of *Don Quixote* becomes more obvious in *The Antiquary*, where the antiquarian imagination of Jonathan Oldbuck frequently exceeds reality, as evidenced in his vast collection of books and artefacts, and Scott here paints Don Quixote himself as the first 'bibliomaniac'. The mania for books is expressive of the knight's poor connection with reality:

Among other slight indications of an infirm understanding, he is stated [...] to have exchanged fields and farms for folios and quartos of chivalry. In this species of exploit, the good knight-errant has been imitated by lords, knights and squires of our own day, though we have not yet heard of any that has mistaken an inn for a castle, or laid lance in rest against a windmill.¹²¹

The *Antiquary*, as we have seen, does indeed mistake the ruin of an eighteenth-century rural shelter for the remains of a Roman fort. Here we may question Twain's assumption that Scott was concerned wholly with a fantasy

¹²⁰ Ibid, p.306.

¹²¹ Scott, *The Antiquary*, p.23.

of the past, given the many moments when such antiquarian or Romantic yearnings are undercut or made the stuff of parody.

Ivanhoe is in fact a complex treatment of the issue of medieval chivalry, with its rather bland hero defending the art while ironically spending most of the novel wounded and being tended by Rebecca, whose integrity and moral courage are presented as a superior alternative to the affected masculine codes of the period. She argues instead for the higher importance of domestic bonds and peace over what appears to her a dangerous affectation, ‘an offering of sacrifice to a demon of vain glory’.¹²² Scott’s critique of the image of chivalry is evident in the joust at Ashby, where in the midst of the fray ‘the splendid armour of the combatants was now defaced with dust and blood [...] All that was beautiful and graceful in the martial array had disappeared, and what was now visible was only calculated to awake terror or compassion.’¹²³ Given this ambivalence in Scott’s representation of chivalry, we cannot account for Twain’s exaggerations on a purely historical basis. Susan Manning suggests that there must be some other, more writerly reason for Twain’s inflated response to Scott, as his critique of the latter’s influence on Southern culture specifically is not borne out by the historical context:

The Southern aristocracy have been demonstrated to have had a progressive not reactionary image of themselves; we know that ‘medieval’ jousting matches as a popular form of entertainment predated *Ivanhoe* in both North and South [...] Scott’s romances have been shown to be far from uniquely influential on Southern taste; and

¹²² Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p.316.

¹²³ Ibid, p.145.

of course it is easy to demonstrate that he did not advocate chivalry anyway.¹²⁴

Yet Twain's proposal of a medieval-mixed Scottish Romantic South appears as a successful prophecy when we look ahead to Faulkner and his treatment of this very predicament. I argue that it is the image of history as disjunctive and nonlinear that is at the foundation of Twain's distaste for Scottish Romanticism, qualities which he then transfers to his understanding of Southern culture and its anachronisms.

Twain formulates the problem of Walter Scott in the strongest terms: the problem of his politics, his historicism and his Romanticism. Scott's influence is portrayed as highly anti-American and only able to generate a reactionary, separatist politics in the Southern population. Indeed, it is precisely the aesthetics and norms of behaviour derived from Scottish Romantic writing which render the South so very 'un-American'. From Southern architecture to slavery and the predicament of the late nineteenth-century Southern writer, the influence of Twain's 'Sir Walter' is marked by anachronism and temporal disjunction. The problem of Scott is a problem of modernity, of territory and of politics, and at stake is the future life of a people. This is evident in Twain's analysis of the predicament of the writer in the American South who still adheres to a style set by Scott which only serves to shroud and frustrate genuine talent, resulting in a lack of national recognition:

¹²⁴ Manning, 'Did Mark Twain Bring Down the Temple?', p.13.

For the North has thrown out that old inflated style, whereas the Southern writer still clings to it [...] the authors write for the past; they use obsolete forms, and a dead language. But when a Southerner of genius writes modern English, his book goes upon crutches no longer, but upon wings.¹²⁵

Twain sees the florid and archaic literary style of Scott as that of a vanished culture, indeed not merely a style but a language, one which can no longer be translated due to its irrelevance to modernity. This claim is particularly suggestive when understood in the light of the rebirth of Southern writing as embodied in William Faulkner, where the influence of Scott and Scottish Romantic writing is arguably still apparent. While Lukács would later maintain that Scott's work aimed to defend the image of progress embodied in Union and Britishness, for Twain, the literary currency of Walter Scott no longer sustains and integrates a new United Kingdom, but results in the separation of the Northern and Southern United States, both culturally and politically. Indeed, the American Scott does not create an integrated middle way, but two radically divergent cultural and political times and spaces.

Crawford notes that Scott's writing was something which nineteenth-century American writers often sought to define themselves against, 'in the imaginative leap to a democratic poetry, Scott's work, for Whitman as for Twain, was also dangerously "feudal", and so demanded an act of liberating rejection.'¹²⁶ Yet Crawford hints at further, influential, connections between Scott and Twain, 'a novelist whose bringing-together of dialect and Standard

¹²⁵ Twain, *Life*, p.305.

¹²⁶ Crawford, *Devolving English Literature*, p.208.

English, and whose crossings of the boundaries between communities [...] surely make him a border-crosser, collector of languages and cultural anthologist who owes something to the predecessors he disowns.¹²⁷ Indeed, Twain's referencing of the Scottish Romantic tradition in many of his works reveals an understated influence. The literary apparatus with which Twain brings Southern culture, language, history and landscape into focus follows on from Scott's innovations in historical and dialect fiction. Twain's work thus reveals a lively and not always antagonistic relationship to Scottish Romanticism, an influence which is rerouted into many new and self-consciously American directions. Twain's critique continues to resonate through the Southern novel as I will demonstrate with Faulkner and McCarthy, and an engaged response to the tradition of Scottish Romantic influence is a key aspect of the way in which those two writers signal their 'Southernness'.

¹²⁷ Ibid, p.215.

Chapter 2: (Dis)Locating the Regional: James Hogg, Edgar Allan Poe and Transatlantic Romanticism.

In 1840, as part of his short story collection *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque*, Edgar Allan Poe published his tale ‘How to Write a Blackwood Article,’ which sought to mock the ubiquity of *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*. He satirizes the Edinburgh literary scene in this story through the antics of his absurd first-person protagonist Signora Psyche Zenobia, who pays a visit to Edinburgh on a literary quest. Following an instructive interview with William Blackwood, Zenobia ‘spent the greater part of the day wandering around Edinburgh, seeking for desperate adventures – adventures adequate to the intensity of my feelings, and adapted to the vast character of the article I intended to write.’¹ Many of the absurd ‘intensities’ which Poe ascribes to the *Blackwood* style in his satire are thematically reminiscent of his own writing, for example, ‘the record of a gentleman's sensations when entombed before the breath was out of his body – full of taste, terror, sentiment, metaphysics and erudition.’² Ian Duncan attributes this style of *Blackwood’s* ‘Tales of Terror’ to the little-known writers William Mudford and Samuel Warren, although he sees James Hogg as making forays into this mode in his two final

¹ Edgar Allan Poe, ‘How to Write a Blackwood Article’, *The Complete Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe* (New York: The Modern Library, 1938; repr. 1965), p.345.

² *Ibid*, p.340.

novels.³ Robert D. Jacobs contends that Poe was strongly influenced by the *Blackwood's* style, both in terms of modelling his fiction on its sensation tales but also in his work as a literary critic, in which his study of the Scottish journal's reviews was the foundation for his own severe and caustic approach as editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger*.⁴

Zenobia's own take on the *Blackwood* style becomes the short tale 'A Predicament', which accompanies 'How to Write a Blackwood Article' and which takes place in Edinburgh, a place unnecessary to describe as 'Everyone has been to Edinburgh – the classic Edina.'⁵ While peering through an aperture in the wall of a church, Zenobia is slowly beheaded by one of the hands of a giant clock, affording her the opportunity to describe her sensations at length in the typical *Blackwood's* 'heterogenous' style. Another of Poe's tales, 'Loss of Breath' has the subtitle 'A Tale Neither in Nor Out of Blackwood' (1832) and is another satirical account of extreme sensations involving live burial and absurd physical torture. Poe's engagement with *Blackwood's* in these stories clearly demonstrates the reach of the Edinburgh periodicals and their formative influence in the United States, both as a model and as a style so ubiquitous as to be open to satire and critique. In this chapter I will demonstrate that Poe's writing does not merely allude to the Scottish Romantic tradition by mocking literary Edinburgh, but in fact makes deeper engagements with the legacy of Walter Scott and James Macpherson, and that most crucially Poe can be read as a younger contemporary of James Hogg.

³ Ian Duncan, 'Walter Scott, James Hogg and Scottish Gothic', *A Companion to the Gothic*, p.79.

⁴ Robert D. Jacobs, *Poe: Journalist and Critic* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969), p.175, p.76.

⁵ Edgar Allan Poe, 'A Predicament', *The Complete Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe*, p.349.

My aim in this chapter is to explore an additional narrative of transatlantic exchange to the one I have already established with Scott's literary legacy in the United States, which I will pick up again in the following chapter on Mark Twain. I wish first to elucidate the until recently overlooked impact of James Hogg in nineteenth-century American letters by tracing his links with the Southern writer Edgar Allan Poe. I will first deal with Hogg's importance in this narrative of Scottish-Southern literary connections before situating both him and Poe within a culture of transatlantic Gothic fiction dominated by the Scottish periodicals. While they are divergent artists in many respects, Hogg and Poe both combine Gothic with exaggerated violence, satire and absurdity, as well as authoring complex psychological narratives, and a comparison of their work is fruitful in the task of shifting our understanding of the structures of literary influence and generic boundaries in the late Romantic period. I close this chapter with an analysis of Hogg and Poe's fictional narratives of polar exploration, *The Surpassing Adventures of Allan Gordon* (1837) and *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket* (1838), in which both authors depict worlds stripped of any recognizable natural order, thereby problematizing conceptions of bounded regional spaces as well as the practices of historicization and classification associated with nineteenth-century exploration and colonial expansion. Both these novels draw on the topology of the extreme environments of the North and South Poles to map geographic frontiers and new thresholds of knowledge – borderlands which challenge a stable sense of place, identity and empirical understanding.

While this chapter will not provide an exhaustive account of the linkages between these two writers, my intention is to stage a comparison between Hogg's and Poe's work to demonstrate the significance of the culture of Scottish and American literary exchange in the 1830s and 40s. I will be outlining the different ways in which Hogg and Scottish Romanticism can be seen to shape Poe's work, firstly through biographical contexts, then via a culture of transatlantic literary exchange and finally within a shared drive to alienate nation-state based conceptions of space and history. Although these authors may appear separated by disparate geographies, political contexts, and class backgrounds, their stylistic and generic dialogue offers new perspectives on gothic short fiction in the late Romantic period.

James Hogg and Scottish Romanticism

After suffering neglect later in the nineteenth century, Hogg's recent resurgence has provided crucial critical insights into the literary project of Scottish Romanticism. Often placed critically alongside or in opposition to Scott's writing, Hogg's work affords a new emphasis on the themes of class, genre, dialect and issues of censorship in the period. Penny Fielding describes Hogg as a post-Enlightenment writer, 'reacting to the appropriation or invention of popular culture by a middle-class, urban readership.'⁶ Issuing from the rural border culture which produced the raw materials for Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802), Hogg's writing offers an alternative literary relationship to those same models of folk and border lore than that which we find in Scott. Despite his rustic persona of 'The Ettrick Shepherd'

⁶ Penny Fielding, *Scotland and the Fictions of Geography: North Britain 1760-1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p.162.

Hogg was also a consummate literary professional who played a major role in the cultural developments of his day as a regular figure in the pages of *Blackwood's* and as a master of the genres of parody, anecdote and review. Recent critical reevaluations of Hogg's achievement have recentred him at the heart of the Romantic project, with his experimentalism lauded as exemplary of the Romantic enterprise.⁷ Therefore, Hogg stands both as an emblem of a curious and traditional culture in his persona as The Ettrick Shepherd, as well as being a figure invested in reflecting on that culture from a centralized, modern and metropolitan standpoint.

Despite recent critical reassessments, Hogg's writing is still disadvantaged by its reception within his own period, where he gained acceptability while confining himself to traditional pastoral topics and forms, but found that reviewers, in Duncan's words, 'rebuffed the fierce energy with which Hogg reimagined metropolitan genres, accusing him of boorishness and indelicacy.'⁸ It seems that within his own period Hogg simply did not fit the requirements of a literary figure in post-Enlightenment Edinburgh, and yet his poetry and short fiction attained great popularity both in Britain and the United States, though his novels were considerably less successful. Hogg's Modernist critical reappraisal via Andre Gidé's enthusiastic introduction to the 1947 republication of *The Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, places him in an unusual position vis-a-vis Romantic literary history, and his novels, particularly the *Confessions*, have garnered considerable acclaim in recent

⁷ See Ian Duncan and Douglas S. Mack, eds., *The Edinburgh Companion to James Hogg* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), also Meiko O'Halloran, *James Hogg and British Romanticism: A Kaleidoscopic Art* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

⁸ Duncan, 'Introduction: Hogg and his Worlds', *The Edinburgh Companion to James Hogg*, p.2.

years. In recent criticism, Hogg is praised as a pioneer of the psychological novel, of crime fiction and of metafiction. Consequently, he troubles the project of canon formation in terms of nation, period, style and form. His highly eccentric and striking approach is particularly visible in the *Perils of Man* (1822), where a snow-topped mountain is compared to ‘millions of razors’:

Every pile of bent and heath being loaded with ice on the one side, so that each had the exact resemblance to a razor blade, all of which seemed to be cast in the same mould, and of the same beautiful metal. The feet of the horses as they travelled through this made a jingling noise, as if they had been wading among crystal.⁹

This unexpected, experimental and even surreal imagery gives Hogg’s writing its uniqueness and power. The action of Hogg’s novels is imagined with broad, bold brushstrokes, in many ways a striking departure from the more pedantic, subtle insights of Scott. Hogg’s was a rougher-edged style which tended to grate on Romantic-era reviewers, but whose uniqueness was not lost on other contemporaries such as Lord Byron.

Hogg’s blending of fantasy, Gothic, national history and folktale with more elite Romantic genres such as parody and review, provides an equally adept response to prevailing models of Enlightenment historicism as does Scott’s work. I will demonstrate via a discussion of Hogg’s novels and short fiction first how his work relates to the major themes of this study – temporality, artefacts, borders – and then the contribution he makes to the

⁹ James Hogg, *The Three Perils of Man: War, Women and Witchcraft* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1989), p.364.

Southern tradition through a comparison with the work of Edgar Allan Poe. In the following section I highlight those aspects of Hogg's work which form his most visible legacy in Poe's fiction, with a particular focus on his use of gothic tropes, violence and satire.

The Confessions of a Justified Sinner

Hogg's final novel has for some time been the central guarantor of his reputation and the focus of most of the criticism on his work. *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner: Written by Himself, with a Detail of Curious Traditional Facts and Other Evidence by the Editor* (1824) is set in Lowland Scotland in the early eighteenth century; it begins and ends with an Editor's narrative, which strives to illuminate the historical reality behind the interior confessional 'sinner's' narrative which it encloses. For Robert Wringham, the Antinomian Calvinist 'sinner' of the interior narrative, the confirmation of his place as one of the elect lays him open to temptation by a shape-shifting devil, Gil-Martin, who convinces him that he can never fall from grace once elected and can, consequently, commit any crime in the defence of the Reformed Church. Robert is induced to torment and murder his brother and a local minister, eventually escaping to the Borders, where he is pursued by demons until he takes his own life. The final stage of the Editor's narrative involves the exhumation of Robert's grave where the sinner's deceptive autobiography is first discovered. The novel depicts an early post-Union Scotland still pervaded by all the religious schisms of the country's Reformation. The framing of the Editor's narrative emphasizes the temporal dislocation between the early eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, raising these boundaries to the level of form, where an unstable, insular Biblical

confession meets a historicizing, post-Enlightenment editorial narrative. The fanaticism and superstition which characterize the sinner's narrative are temporalized by the editor as a curiosity, distinct and discrete from the present time of his inquiry. The sinner's narrative is left uncensored for the judgement of the reader, yet the culture that it depicts, both in Edinburgh, Glasgow and the Borders, is one of fierce political and religious division.

Hogg draws on the same Scottish Enlightenment Conjectural historicism as Scott and utilizes similar generic markers – the artefact, historical sediments in the landscape, and temporalized cultural distinctions between the Borders, the Lowlands and the Highlands. As we saw with Bakhtin's reading of Scott, temporalization is the mark of the historical novel, and combined with spatialization it is the essential task of novelistic narration – the representation of time in space. In the *Confessions*, the temporal is also linked to the spatial, not merely the geography of distance between metropolitan Edinburgh and the more primitive border country, but also in the topology of the subject. Robert Wringham's life is crowded with doubles: M'gill the schoolboy, Gil-Martin his doppelgänger, and his brother George.¹⁰ Robert's subjectivity transcends its own limits when he is marked as one of the elect, where he comes to occupy a different time and space, singled out for salvation from the beginning of the world, 'I deemed myself an eagle among the children of men, soaring on high, and looking down with pity and contempt on the grovelling creatures below.'¹¹ The temporality of

¹⁰ For the classic study of the double in Hogg's novel see Karl Miller, *Doubles: Studies in Literary History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985). For a treatment of Hogg's doubles as an influence on American writing see Susan Manning, *The Puritan-Provincial Vision*.

¹¹ James Hogg, *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, ed. by P.D Garside (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002), p.80.

predestination informs Robert's narrative, stretching from the beginning of time to its end, since all events are preordained. With its doubles and its extreme, competing perspectives Hogg's novel achieves a psychological depth to its historicism which is not so readily visible in Scott's work. Robert's subjectivity becomes fractured across the narrative and even, in the case of his double Gil-Martin, eludes the boundaries of the text, as the latter's movements and identity remain a mystery to the Editor. Robert falls into a strange state where he feels he is two people, "The most perverse part of it was, that I rarely conceived myself to be any of the two persons [...] and I found, that to be obliged to speak and answer in the character of another man, was a most awkward business at the long run."¹² This problem of identifying and locating the self is treated with absurd humour, and Robert's narrative does not illuminate his predicament but merely allows him to spiral further into doubt and madness. In this way, Hogg scrambles and challenges an epistemological mode of narration, which seeks to classify and compare, substituting instead an absurd world based on confusion, misrecognition and horror.

Like Scott, Hogg offers a parody of the antiquarian project, as the appearance of his fictional self in the *Confessions* makes explicit, 'I hae mair ado than I can manage the day, foreby ganging to houk up hunder-year-auld banes.'¹³ This fictional 'Hogg' is uninterested in artefacts, concerned only with daily business at the cattle market and his animal emblem, the border sheep. Yet Scott himself indulges in a gentle satire of his own antiquarian pursuits in *The Antiquary*, where the pragmatic voice of beggar Edie Ochiltree

¹² Ibid, p.106.

¹³ Ibid, p.170.

undermines and parodies the historical hypotheses of the Antiquary himself, Jonathan Oldbuck. As I demonstrated in the previous chapter, Scott illustrates how any artefact appears to harbour different temporal possibilities, and it is the fact of Oldbuck's supposed Roman fort having returned almost wholly to the earth, in natural processes of erosion and sedimentation, that confuses the temporal coordinates of the ruin. Scott's representation of the artefact reveals it to be a tool for muddying historical distinctions, and through its own material temporalities it stymies acts of historical dating.

In Tim Ingold's terms, the process which gives rise to the solidified form of the artefact is analogous to the flow of consciousness halted in the crystallization of the image. To focus on either object or image is to disregard the processes and flows that give rise to them; it constitutes a failure to attend to their material composition, the patterns of their usage, and their continuing life in the present. When we argue that artefacts carry on, leak, exchange materials and decompose (like Oldbuck's fort), we are left with a very different sense of how to mark the closure of one epoch and the advent of another which supersedes it, which is the classic epistemological challenge of Scottish Enlightenment historicism. Ingold describes the generally accepted view of artefacts in anthropology as 'instances of what scholars call material culture, a phrase that perfectly captures this theory of making as the unification of stuff supplied by nature with the conceptual representations of a received cultural tradition.'¹⁴ This very notion of what comprises an artefact – raw natural material imprinted with 'cultural' design and significance – appears to be foremost in the mind of the Editor of the *Confessions*.

¹⁴ Ingold, *Making*, p.20.

The term 'artefact', etymologically signalling something which is man-made with a preexistent design, conjures up a world of objects of significance, complete and self-contained and ready to be gathered in some practice of knowledge. An artefact is conventionally conceived as the dead remains of a once living past, leading to its association with the Gothic and the supernatural in Romantic narratives. The cultures that have produced such artefacts are consigned to a literally or developmentally past world, taxonomized and extinct. The Editor's rational dismissal of Robert's narrative is attended by a desire to 'possess the skull', to lay hands on the tangible artefact of Robert's unaccountable narrative.¹⁵ In this way, the grave artefact represents the result of a historical process, a material frozen in its trajectory through the illumination of a rational, classifying present. Yet it transpires that the grave of Hogg's sinner is not after all the ideal historical project for a gentleman antiquarian:

The breeches were a sort of striped plaiding, which I never saw worn, but which our guide assured us was very common in the country once, though [...] he judged that it could not be less than 200 years since it was in fashion [...] I have likewise now got possession of the bonnet, which puzzles me most of all. It is not comformable with the rest of the dress. It is neither a broad bonnet or a border bonnet [...] It seems to have been a Highland bonnet, worn in a flat way like a scone on the crown, such as is sometimes still seen in the West of Scotland.¹⁶

¹⁵ Hogg, *Confessions*, p.172.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p.172-3.

The materials of the suicide's grave possess a frustrating hybridity, not only of periods, traditions and customs, but of materials and of natural and historical processes. Following and building on Bakhtin, we can call the historical artefact a kind of localized chronotope, enclosing a variety of temporal and material forces and providing a generic marker for both Hogg and Scott.

Hogg reminds us that the artefact has its own temporality born from its materials, with its own spatial coordinates and line of development. Its development in time is founded in the interactions between its materials and their environment, where materials in flux construct our consciousness of the temporal. If we can think of the artefact not as half-inert matter/ half-cultural object, but rather as lively material playing host to many overlapping times and spaces as Ingold requires us to, this fluid model seems more in keeping with the strategies of the *Confessions*. In fact, in Hogg's text, the artefact functions as a critique of the limited practices of knowledge which produce a narrow, often elitist version of the historical, and this critique echoes the dynamic Scott creates between an exclusive historicism and a localized folk memory which we witnessed in *The Antiquary*.

This critique of the official ideology of the artefact can be extended to Hogg's treatment of the very stuff of the suicide's grave; the heaps of strange, coarse cloth, mingled with a half-decomposed corpse, apocryphal manuscript, loosened teeth, pocketbook, moss, clay and liquid.¹⁷ The body in the grave appears to be partly mummified, making the dating of the corpse even more challenging. Each object in the grave has survived according to the nature of its material composition and exposure to the elements, 'The shoes were all

¹⁷ Ibid, p.172-3.

opened in the seams, the hemp having decayed, but the soles, upper leathers, and wooden heels, which were made of birch, were all as fresh as any of those we wore.¹⁸ These images question the divide between tangible raw material and cultural artefact, between objects of practices of knowledge such as antiquarianism, and the objects of everyday life. Hogg's unstable and recalcitrant artefacts possess an uncanny materiality, which is not merely visible in the grave but also in the hay rope from which Robert is found hanging: the rope is so brittle as to be almost impossible to tie, and so weak as to be incapable of taking any weight, so that suicide becomes impossible without the devil's assistance. In this way, Robert Wringham's grave goods point forwards to our more recent theories of materiality, to what Jane Bennett calls the 'efficacy of objects in excess of the human meanings, designs or purposes they express or serve.'¹⁹ This material animacy is rejected by the Editor as belonging to another time and culture before matter was understood to be passive and unchanging. Placed outside his own present, these active materials which refuse to be passively historicized are relegated to a primitive human unconscious. In Robert's grave, the antiquarian, proto-anthropological gaze struggles to find its object of study.

The Two *Perils*

Hogg's two earlier novels of Scottish history have only recently begun to garner critical attention. Much like the *Confessions*, the *Perils of Woman* (1823) can also be read as a text of obsession. The first peril, 'Love', begins as a

¹⁸ Ibid, p.172.

¹⁹ Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), p.20.

straightforward domestic tale of a love triangle, before descending into darker territory where love turns to destructive obsession. The final two perils compose one narrative, set in the Highlands during the 1745 uprising and the aftermath of Culloden. *The Perils of Man* also contains two narratives, one charting the siege of Roxburgh castle by the English and the Scottish attempts to reclaim it, and the other a supernatural quest narrative gleefully drawing on a medley of Border folklore.

One of the central preoccupations which unites Hogg's three novels is the dramatization of overwhelming, inexplicable drives which are often the real source of agency in the narrative and which bring about the downfall of his protagonists. Hogg's work continually dramatizes impossible situations, where his protagonists are torn apart by entirely opposing desires and forces. This predicament is also dramatized as a split between impossible empirical perceptions and the demands of rational understanding, compounded by the psychic dislocation which this causes, as Mrs Logan describes after witnessing Gil-Martin's supernatural impersonation of the late George Colwan, 'We have nothing on earth but our senses to depend upon: if these deceive us, what are we to do.'²⁰ This dual vision of perception also plays out in impossible predicaments where Hogg's protagonists are split apart by a conflicted agency. Just as Robert is amazed at how he 'can have been doing a thing, and not doing it at the same time', so Lord Musgrave in the *Perils of Man* is driven mad by being unable to decide whether to save Lady Jane Howard or preserve his honour by continuing to hold Roxburgh Castle.²¹ Ultimately, Musgrave is

²⁰ Hogg, *Confessions*, p.56.

²¹ *Ibid*, p.122.

incapable of making either decision and, like Robert Wringham, chooses suicide.

This sense of crisis and controversy within action is viscerally depicted in one of the embedded stories in the *Perils of Man* during a metafictional interlude in the supernatural subplot. It describes a young man, Jock, whose desire for meat is uncontrollable. When employed as a cattle herd, his hunger overtakes him and he attempts to kill the farmer's favourite lamb:

He hesitated long, long, and sometimes his pity awoke, – but there was another natural feeling that proved the stronger of the two [...] Next he opened the fleece on the lamb's throat till its bonny white skin was laid bare and not a hair of wool to intervene between it and the point of his knife. He was again seized with deep remorse, as he contemplated the lamb's harmless and helpless look; so he wept aloud and tried to put his knife again into its sheath, but he could not.²²

Jock's body appears acted upon by competing forces over which he has no control and his 'long, long' hesitation emphasizes this crisis of decision. The word 'bonny' signals the story-teller Gibby Jordan's vernacular beneath the Standard English narration. Jock's grotesque appetite leads inevitably to another murder, that of the farmer seeking revenge, whom he stabs to death to preserve his own life. These inextricable, oppressive predicaments are often a source of black comedy, as in the *Confessions*, when Robert becomes caught in a loom in a weaver's cottage while the weaver, suspecting him of being an emissary of the devil, clubs him over the head. The more Robert struggles, the

²² Hogg, *Perils of Man*, p.222.

more tightly he is held in the web.²³ The acute nature of these impossible situations leads ultimately to exaggerated violence which in Hogg's novels is mingled with black humour, often making for an uncomfortable and unclassifiable reading experience.

Violence, Gothic and Critique

Unlike Scott, Hogg explicitly uses extreme violence as a form of critique: to challenge a sanitized vision of chivalry in the *Perils of Man*, to satirize doctrines of justification in the *Confessions*, and to create an anti-colonial vision of Culloden and its aftermath in the *Perils of Woman*. In the latter novel, the narrator pauses to address the reader, warning that certain events in the aftermath of Culloden will be omitted, 'But, as they are the disgrace of the British annals, it is perhaps as well that I am obliged to pass over them.'²⁴ Hogg's narrative does not recount the 1745 uprising itself in any detail but focuses on its consequences for the Highlands, where civilian massacre and violent reprisals take the place of heroism on the battlefield – an emphasis missing from Scott's narrative of the 1745 uprising in *Waverley*.

Hogg's novels typically employ disrupted chronologies and uneven tones and structures, even as they retain markers of familiar genres. The Gothic mode, characteristically used in Scott to imagine a Catholic and Jacobite past, is applied by Hogg to narratives of chivalry, the domestic tale

²³ Hogg, *Confessions*, pp.148-9.

²⁴ Hogg, *The Three Perils of Woman*, ed. by Antony J. Hasler and Douglas S. Mack (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002), p.357.

and even the pastoral genre.²⁵ In the sentimental domestic novel which forms the first section of the *Perils of Woman*, the familiarity of the domestic drama quickly descends into obsession, tragedy and gothic farce with the deaths of the two love rivals, first Cherry and then the partial death and resurrection of Agatha Bell. Agatha's death scene is not permitted to play itself out as sentimental domestic tragedy, nor as joyful resurrection, but becomes an absurd scene of death in life as her body is suddenly reanimated:

It did not rise up like one wakening up out of a sleep, but with a jerk so violent that it struck the old man on the cheek, almost stupefying him; and there sat the corpse, dressed as it was in its dead-clothes, a most appalling sight [...] the frame seemed as if agitated by some demon that knew not how to exercise or act upon any one of the human powers or faculties. The women shrieked, and both of them fell into fits on the floor.²⁶

Undercut with bizarre comedy, Hogg's reinvention of the death-bed scene dramatizes his free hand with genre and audience expectation. His motifs of fits, convulsions, tics and unconscious movements are employed throughout his novels to indicate where the limits of human comprehension have been surpassed and the body thrown into chaos in its attempts to process impossible experiences.

²⁵ For significant summations of Scottish Gothic in the Romantic period and beyond, see Ian Duncan, 'Walter Scott, James Hogg and Scottish Gothic', pp.70-80. Also, Carol Margaret Davidson and Monica Germana, 'Borderlands of Identity and the Aesthetics of Disjuncture', *Scottish Gothic: An Edinburgh Companion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press 2017), pp.1-13.

²⁶ Hogg, *Perils of Woman*, p.200.

The *Perils of Woman* is divided into ‘circles’ instead of chapters or volumes, as the narrator asserts that ‘I like that way of telling a story exceedingly. Just to go always round and round my hero.’²⁷ The disordered circularity of life/death, as we have seen, is visible in the construction of the *Confessions*, where the final volume, containing the exhumation of the sinner's grave, in fact precedes the first volume where the found manuscript is analysed and historically situated. The *Perils of Woman* also mimics this experimental plotting, as the final narrative is set almost a hundred years before the first. This going ‘round and round’ certainly problematizes the easy accommodation of Hogg’s work in the genre of the historical novel. While I have argued that Scott problematizes the distinct developmental stages of Scottish Enlightenment historicism by exploring conflicting temporalities in each historical stage, Hogg’s work can be seen rather to dramatize a history of perpetual repetition, which also stands as a critique of progressive stages. This gothic repetition also moves through Hogg’s bodies, just as confusing temporal and natural forces flow through the sinner’s corpse, or as Jock the cattle-herd is buffeted by waves of conflicting drives.

Hogg’s use of violence is another unique attribute of his writing and as we have seen, it is often combined with black humour, slapstick and satire. In the *Perils of Man* the battle for Roxburgh Castle is depicted as bloody, miserable and farcical, as Hogg constructs image after image of absurd, dismembered and ‘living-dead’ bodies:

When the day light arose, the English fought within a semi-circular wall of mangled carcasses; for grievous to relate, they were not corpses; yet

²⁷ Ibid, p.25.

they were piled in a heap higher than a man's height, which was moving with agonized life from top to bottom, and from the one end to the other.²⁸

In this instance extreme violence is used as a critique of narratives of chivalry and war, a more extreme version of Scott's implied critique in his treatment of the tournament at Ashby in *Ivanhoe*. Yet this violent othering and destruction of the integrity of the body occurs throughout Hogg's oeuvre, with dismembered and displaced bodies forming one of his central motifs.

James Hogg's American Reception

Having taken a brief survey of Hogg's major prose works, we are in a better position to define his unique influence on transatlantic Romanticism and in particular those aspects of his work which are germane to understanding his impact on Edgar Allan Poe. The key qualities I have noted in his work – psychological depth, his combining of the Gothic with the absurd and blackly comic, and a pessimistic, repetitious historical vision – all contribute to Southern Gothic forms, and I suggest that they do so chiefly through the influence of Poe. Hogg's international legacy has previously been underestimated due to a lack of material on the international circulation of his writing. However, the recent AHRC-funded project into Hogg's global presence in international periodicals has unearthed over three hundred and thirty republications of his poems, stories and essays in periodicals published in the United States; these were collected in preparation for the new

²⁸ Hogg, *Perils of Man*, p.391.

Stirling/South Carolina edition of Hogg's international contributions.²⁹ Due to a lack of copyright laws in the United States, these texts were gleaned from Scottish periodicals such as *Blackwood's* and found their way into both major American journals and smaller regional publications. We are only now beginning to see the remarkably wide circulation of Hogg's writing in the United States and to grasp what this means for his international literary standing. His periodical presence was indeed global, with his work reprinted across the English-speaking world and discovered in publications in the Caribbean, Australia, New Zealand and Ireland.

Hogg's 1820 collection *Winter Evening Tales*, including short stories, sketches and novellas, sold enormously well in the United States. As Tim Killick notes, the text went through various editions published from New York, Philadelphia and Hartford until the 1850s, making a name for Hogg in an American market which could already boast 'an extremely strong domestic tradition of short fiction, particularly in the neo-mythic mode of Poe and Hawthorne, authors whose writings Hogg's tales from the Old World seemed to complement.'³⁰ With the success of Hogg's short fiction in the United States and his exposure through the Edinburgh periodicals, his influence on a writer like Poe may be more significant than previously thought. As Meiko O'Halloran writes of Hogg's popular impact, 'A new generation of writers including the young Brontës and Edgar Allan Poe grew up reading his *Blackwood's* stories and sketches, and his plaid-clad image was made easily

²⁹ 'James Hogg in the World', [Exhibition], The University of Stirling, 8 May – 22 July 2017.

³⁰ Tim Killick, *British Short Fiction in the Early Nineteenth Century: The Rise of the Tale* (London: Routledge, 2008), p.134.

recognizable in portraits by prominent artists of the day.'³¹ Hogg's poem 'There's Nae Laddie Coming' was published in the *Southern Literary Messenger* in January 1835 only a few months before Poe was hired as Editor of the publication.³² Andrew Hook also refers to the favourable reception of both Hogg's poetry and prose works in America, and argues that he was the most well-known Scottish writer in the United States after Scott in the early nineteenth century.³³ I will now demonstrate through a review of Poe's interest in Scottish Romanticism the depth of his literary links with Hogg.

Edgar Allan Poe and Scottish Romanticism

Edgar Allan Poe's dual regional heritage – a childhood in the South and a literary life lived largely in the North – as well as what is often perceived as his lack of engagement with typically American themes, make him a difficult figure to classify as a regional writer. Recent criticism has attempted to place him more securely in his historical, national and regional milieus, and to rethink his reputation as an aberration in the early American canon. Due to this contextual ambiguity, dissecting Poe's European influences can be particularly fruitful and offers opportunities for theorizing him as drawing on a global Romantic culture which, although internationally influential, was also rooted in depictions of the provincial and regional. As a Romantic writer steeped in earlier Gothic tradition and the sensation tales contained in *Blackwood's* and the other Edinburgh periodicals, Poe's work is critical for an analysis of the international influence of Scottish Romanticism. While his

³¹ O'Halloran, p.4.

³² James Hogg, 'There's Nae Laddie Coming', *Southern Literary Messenger*, 1 (1835), p.200.

³³ Hook, *Scotland and America*, p.152.

stories and poetry often trouble rather than confirm a sense of place, a comparison with Scottish work can reveal the potential for understanding him in the light of a Romantic-era global regionalism, one which problematizes stable geographies at the high tide of imperial expansion and exploration and dramatizes the conflict between materials and objects in flux and their discursive mapping.

As J. Gerald Kennedy and Liliane Weissburg argue in *Romancing the Shadow: Poe and Race* (2001), in terms of literary criticism Poe has tended to be excluded from ‘most nationalist critical paradigms’ and has often ‘occupied an anomalous position in both the old and new canons of Antebellum American writing.’³⁴ Terence Whalen argues in the same volume that Poe pragmatically negotiated the sectional disagreements of his day in his desire to appeal to a national readership and accommodate a spectrum of opinion on slavery from both North and South. There are ways in which Poe’s work can, if problematically, be drawn into typically ‘Southern’ cultural legacies, as Tom F. Wright summarizes, ‘his work was compatible with the memorialisation involved in fashioning Lost Cause myths, and it was possible to present the values of his writings – his rejection of the ideas of perfectibility, dislike of utopianism, urbanism and intellectual abstractions – as founding ‘Southern’ myths.’³⁵ As we will see, Poe’s taste for Classical tragedy, the novels of Scott and the elegiac qualities of Macpherson’s Ossian poems place him within a

³⁴ J. Gerald Kennedy and Liliane Weissburg, ‘Introduction: Poe, Race and Contemporary Criticism’, in *Romancing the Shadow: Poe and Race*, ed. by J. Gerald Kennedy and Liliane Weissburg (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp.xi-xviii (p.xiii).

³⁵ Tom F. Wright, ‘Edgar Allan Poe and the Southern Gothic’, in *The Palgrave Handbook of the Southern Gothic*, ed. by Susan Castillo Street and Charles L. Crow (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2016), pp.9-20 (p.17).

familiar domain of typical 'Southern' literary taste. As fellow Virginian Ellen Glasgow would later describe his style, 'The formalism in his tone, the Classical element in many of his stories, the drift toward rhetoric, the aloof and elusive intensity, all these qualities are Southern.'³⁶ While this summation of 'Southern' literary aesthetics seems at odds with a conception of Southern literature which includes African American writing, these artistic qualities clearly reflect the absorption of Scottish Romantic writing into Southern culture.

The analysis of Poe's racial politics as an exercise in locating his 'Southern' allegiances has suffered from the misattribution to him of the anonymous Paulding-Drayton review, published in the *Southern Literary Messenger* during his editorship in 1836. This proslavery essay sought to justify the institution by illustrating the mutually beneficial and sympathetic relationship between master and slave.³⁷ Although the account of Poe's authorship of the review has been disproven, Whalen argues that the critical tendency to define Poe's racism as an object of his Southernness, as in fact 'a Southern disease to be eradicated through a liberal dose of enlightenment' (an idea reminiscent, as we have seen, of some of Twain's rhetorical positions in *Life on the Mississippi*), elides what Antebellum America in fact represents, 'a world of Orwellian complicity far beyond the explanatory reach of praise and denunciation.'³⁸ Teresa Goddu has also sought to problematize assumptions about Poe's racial politics based on his Virginia upbringing, styling him as a

³⁶ Ellen Glasgow, *A Certain Measure: An Interpretation of Prose Fiction* (New York: Harcourt, 1943), p.132.

³⁷ Terence Whalen, 'Average Racism: Poe, Slavery, and the Wages of Literary Nationalism', *Romancing the Shadow: Poe and Race*, pp.3-40 (p.6).

³⁸ *Ibid*, p.35.

writer whose 'ghostly position can dislocate traditional critical paradigms' by exposing how race is 'recognized regionally and exorcised nationally.'³⁹

In response to the complex critical challenges surrounding the location of Poe as a Southern or regional writer, James H. Hutchisson's collection *Edgar Allan Poe: Beyond Gothicism* (2011) aims to address this issue through a refocusing on genre and aesthetics. These essays strive to produce through a wider reading of Poe's work the image of a more consistent artist than is often achieved in appraisals which focus primarily on famous stories such as 'The Fall of the House of Usher' (1839) or 'The Pit and the Pendulum' (1842). This broader reading of Poe as a versatile writer, critic, poet and playwright, 'enmeshed in the social fabric of the nineteenth century' also allows for a more wide-ranging understanding of his literary influences.⁴⁰ This line of criticism enables us to join Poe's work generically to other writers of Romantic short fiction in the period, crucially for my purposes James Hogg, but also other eclectic writers featured in the Scottish periodicals. Such an approach to Poe provides new avenues for perceiving Southern Gothic as a global phenomenon rather than an expression of cultural hauntings confined within the limited setting of a bounded 'South'. As we have seen, Scott's work tapped into American anxieties concerning national cohesion and historical progression and regression, and he presented an image of Scotland which, although regionally specific, was charged and inflected with global dynamics of colonialism, constitutional ruptures and rapid economic change. In this line of argument, I am following Edward Sugden's concept of the Gothic South as 'a

³⁹ Teresa A. Goddu, *Gothic America: Narrative, History and Nation* (New York: Columbia University Press 1997), p.93.

⁴⁰ James M. Hutchisson, ed., *Edgar Allan Poe: Beyond Gothicism* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2013), p.x. Ibid, p.x.

global rather than regional genre, with the signifier “South” indicating less a zoned, bordered formation than a permeable edge that allows for the access of often invisible, haunting transnational forces.⁴¹ In outlining critically these concepts of global Norths and Souths, we make visible the lines of contact between Romantic-era writing in an international context, thereby allowing for the reconfiguration of concepts of genre and spheres of literary influence.

Edgar Poe’s fostering by John and Frances Allan on their tobacco plantation in Richmond, Virginia, provides him with his Southern roots. Yet the lack of formal adoption and his later volatile relationship with John Allan complicate this picture of his early life in the South. John Allan had emigrated to America from Ayrshire, and in 1815 took his family, including the young Edgar, to visit Scotland. Poe thus has both biographical as well as literary links to Scotland. As late as 1846 he wrote to a Scottish correspondent to inquire about possible family connections in Stonehaven, Aberdeenshire, who were related to his known relatives ‘the Allans and Galts of Kilmarnock’.⁴² John Allan had inherited the plantation from his Uncle William Galt, and Poe’s ‘cousin’ through his fostering by the Allans was the Scottish Romantic writer John Galt. Such linkages contribute to a picture of Poe’s early life with the Allan family as affording significant exposure to Scottish culture and Romantic writing. John Galt’s period with *Blackwood’s* magazine was a highly productive one, including serializations of his depictions of Scottish provincial life such as *The Ayrshire Legatees* (1821). Also published through

⁴¹ Edward Sugden, ‘The Globalisation of the Gothic South’, *The Palgrave Handbook of the Southern Gothic*, ed. by Susan Castillo Street and Charles L. Crow (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), pp.69-79, p71.

⁴² John Ward Ostrom, ed., *The Letters of Edgar Allan Poe*, 2 vols (New York: Gordian Press, 1966), ii, p.337.

Blackwood's was Galt's most notable experiment with Gothic in *The Omen* (1825), a novella in which the protagonist Henry becomes obsessed with signs and omens. Resulting from childhood trauma and a sense of profound familial shame, Henry's neurosis is characterized by 'The hectic flush, the palsied hand, and the frenzy of delirium' and thus is comparable to the 'excessive nervous agitation' of Roderick Usher in Poe's 'The Fall of the House of Usher'.⁴³ While incest is implicated but not made explicit in Poe's famous tale, in *The Omen* Henry actually stumbles into an incestuous engagement reminiscent of the sub-plot of Scott's *The Antiquary*. *The Omen* can therefore be read as a forerunner to Poe's story and makes Galt another significant Scottish contemporary of Poe.

Yet given the wholesale breakdown of Poe's relationship with John Allan and the death of the more sympathetic Frances Allan which further alienated him from the family, we must not over-stress his Scottish familial connections. However, there is strong evidence in Poe's literary criticism and fiction to attest to a continuing preoccupation with the Scottish Romantic tradition. Critics have sifted the influence of other Romantic writers on Poe, such as Samuel Coleridge and William Godwin, and have emphasized stylistic links with the English Gothic tradition in the form of Ann Radcliffe and Matthew Lewis, in addition to the German Romantics. However, by reintegrating the Scottish Romantic influence on Poe, apparent in his criticism and fiction, I will focus on some less familiar strands in his work which hold

⁴³ John Galt, 'The Omen' (Edinburgh: William Blackwood, 1825) <https://archive.org/details/omenbyjgalttoogaltgoog> [accessed: 25/06/18], p.23. Google ebook.

out the possibility for a shift in our understanding of the development of Southern Gothic literature.

Poe, the Scottish Periodicals and Transatlantic Gothic

If we are to think of Poe as influenced by a global tradition of Scottish writing in the late Romantic period, we must first define the specific Scottish contribution to the Gothic genre. As I noted above, Ian Duncan defines Scottish Gothic, as distinct from its English counterpart, as demonstrating links between the '*national*' and the '*uncanny or supernatural*', where the return of an ancestral identity alienated by the development of modernity is figured as a primitive, temporal disjunction.⁴⁴ Therefore it is a particular reimagining of Scottish Enlightenment historicism which is key, and in this Scottish tradition the image of gothic ancestral return is treated with 'greater historical and anthropological specificity than in England.'⁴⁵ The historical ruptures created by the Scottish Reformation and Counter-reformation, the dissolution of the Scottish parliament in 1707 and the Jacobite uprisings, become the typical material for Scottish Gothic work by writers such as Scott and Hogg. The gothic project which Duncan reads in their innovations is a subversion of the modern desire to reassemble the otherness of the past into the form of an organic concept of national culture, the project of 'romance revival', but this ancestral return becomes instead an unnatural reanimation. This national focus also differentiates Scottish Gothic from the English model, 'While the historical referent of English Gothic tends to be a superseded

⁴⁴ Duncan, 'Walter Scott, James Hogg and Scottish Gothic', p.70.

⁴⁵ Ibid, p.70.

imperial, aristocratic regime [...] the Scottish equivalent usually designates some form of a broader national culture, shared by a community or people historically separated from the emergent modernity.⁴⁶ However, this concept of Scottish Gothic may, as I shall suggest in chapters four and five, seem more relevant to the depictions of the gothic planter dynasties of William Faulkner, or the Celticized Appalachians of Cormac McCarthy, rather than to Poe's work as a whole.

However, Duncan's definition is in some ways not a strongly 'Scottish' departure from more conventional definitions of the Gothic genre, as, for example in Chris Baldick's classic analysis:

For the Gothic effect to be attained, a tale should combine a fearful sense of inheritance in time with a claustrophobic sense of enclosure in space, these two dimensions reinforcing one another to produce an impression of sickening descent into disintegration.⁴⁷

Poe responds more to this concept of Gothic in his typical tropes of the temporality of decay, expressions of mourning, and unnatural preservations and reanimations. Yet Duncan is right to suggest a peculiarly Scottish dimension to the notion of a haunting by history or 'inheritance' within modernity – which is the critical Scottish contribution to the theorization of modernity in the Enlightenment. Therefore, Scottish Gothic offers a particular strand in the development of the genre, where the reaction against the project

⁴⁶ Ibid, p.71.

⁴⁷ Chris Baldick, 'Introduction', *The Oxford Book of Gothic Tales* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) pp.xi-xxi, (p.xix).

of Enlightenment modernity involves the resurrection of a past culture which is distorted and even monstrous.

Many of Poe's thematic concerns are comparable to those of the Scottish Romantics, and the similarities with Hogg are particularly resonant. Hogg's dark and absurd psychological predicaments prefigure those of Poe, whose stories often employ philosophical discourses on similar uncontrollable, aberrant drives, what the narrator of 'The Black Cat' (1843) describes as the 'spirit of PERVERSENESS. Of this spirit philosophy takes no account [...] perverseness is one of the primitive impulses of the human heart.'⁴⁸ In this manner we can see Hogg's writing as a forerunner of Poe's short stories such as 'The Imp of the Perverse' (1845) or 'The Black Cat', which dramatize absurd and destructive drives within their internally divided narrators. The self-destructive drive to confess in the narrator of 'The Imp' and the alcohol-fuelled acts of torture and murder of the narrator of 'The Black Cat', both dramatize a dark and conflicted vision of human nature and agency, which complements Hogg's narrators beset by destructive psychological as well as supernatural forces. Poe's most clear rewriting of Hogg's doppelgänger narrative from *The Confessions* comes in the form of 'William Wilson' (1839), where the double's ability to assume the features of the narrator is strongly reminiscent of Hogg's Gil-Martin. However, in Poe's story Wilson's double appears as a voice of conscience rather than the corrupting influence that we find in Hogg's novel.

We can see both Hogg and Poe as in many ways anti-moralistic and anti-didactic writers. Hogg's writing challenged many of the ethical mores of the early nineteenth century in his frank depiction of female sexual agency in

⁴⁸ Poe, 'The Black Cat', *The Complete Tales and Poems*, p.225.

texts such as *The Perils of Woman*, and of religious hypocrisy in *The Confessions*. As we have seen, in Hogg history is a cyclical affair which perpetuates violence and destruction, as is visible toward the close of *The Three Perils of Woman* where the destruction of the Highlands is perceived as God's punishment for the Clans' support of the persecution of Reformist sects during the Counter-Reformation. Poe demonstrates his anti-didactic and anti-moralistic stance in his rejection of the progressivist movements of his day as is visible in his criticism, where he expresses particular scorn for Transcendentalism, and his fiction emphasizes social decay and decline over progression or perfectibility. He parodies more didactic and moralistic literature in stories such as 'Never Bet the Devil your Head' (1841), satirically subtitled 'A Tale with a Moral'. In this tale, Toby Dammit's childhood delinquency is displayed when 'At eight months he peremptorily refused to put his signature to the Temperance pledge', and his tendency to make elaborate bets eventually leads to his beheading.⁴⁹ Both writers also share the trope of satanic, disrupting and mischievous entities, such as Poe's 'Angel of the Odd' or the sinister stranger who comes to disrupt time and order in 'The Devil in the Belfry', both of whom are comparable to Hogg's figure of Gil-Martin and his more flamboyantly supernatural shape-shifting devil in *The Three Perils of Man*.

Hogg's absurd treatment of live burial in his story 'Some Terrible Letters from Scotland' (1832) precedes the accounts of live internment collected by the narrator of Poe's 'The Premature Burial' (1844). Poe's story begins with various accounts of premature inhumation, including one as a

⁴⁹ Edgar Allan Poe, 'Never Bet the Devil Your Head', *The Complete Tales and Poems*, p.483.

result of paralysis from typhoid fever, while in Hogg's text it is cholera which leads to the narrator's death-like stupor:

I had great hopes that the joiner's hammer would awake me; but he only used it very slightly, and wrought with an inefficient screw-driver: yet I have an impression that if any human eye had then seen me, I should have been shivering; for the dread of being buried alive, and struggling to death in a deep grave below the mould, was awful in the extreme!⁵⁰

This permeable border between life and death, as two states distinguishable only by degree, is a common preoccupation throughout Hogg's writing. Yet this moment is also treated with a degree of absurdity and results in a slapstick, convulsive reanimation similar to that of Agatha Bell in *The Perils of Woman*. Similarly, for Poe's narrator in 'The Premature Burial', 'To be buried while alive is, beyond question, the most terrific of these extremes which has ever fallen to the lot of mere mortality.'⁵¹ The return from the tomb of Madeline in 'The Fall of the House of Usher' has an antecedent in the gothic reanimations of Sarah and Gatty in Hogg's *The Perils of Woman*, or even in the story of the first narrator of 'Some Terrible Letters from Scotland' who waits in vain for the revival of his sweetheart Mary.

Hogg skilfully employs narrative structures of criminality and detection, with *The Confessions* providing the prime example of early crime fiction in his oeuvre, but similar structures are also at work in earlier short

⁵⁰ James Hogg, 'Some Terrible Letters from Scotland', *The Metropolitan: A Monthly Journal of Literature, Science and the Fine Arts*, 3 (1832) 422-431, (p.424). John Galt had also previously published on the theme of live burial in his story, 'The Buried Alive', in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 10 (1821), 262-64.

⁵¹ Edgar Allan Poe, 'The Premature Burial', *The Complete Tales and Poems*, p.258.

narratives such as ‘The Long Pack’ (1820), where a botched burglary is attempted through the means of an ‘uncanny’ pedlar’s pack. In this way, he anticipates the structures of Poe’s detective fiction in ‘The Murders in the Rue Morgue’ (1841) and ‘The Purloined Letter’ (1844). Yet in both the examples from Hogg, acts of detection and resolution are blocked or halted, while in Poe’s two stories the material evidence of criminality becomes self-explanatory and leads to an ultimate unveiling. The combination of tropes of Gothic and the uncanny with narrative structures involving the detection of criminality, coupled with depictions of unstable psychological states, demonstrates significant links between Hogg’s and Poe’s writing. The images of aristocratic decay, dispossession and feudal masculinity which accompany Walter Scott’s gothic figures such as Hugh Redgauntlet and Edgar Ravenswood are carried forward in the form of Legrand of ‘The Gold-Bug’ (1843). We can therefore read Poe as in fact a younger contemporary of Scottish writers such as Hogg and Galt, beginning his career in a period when the Edinburgh literary periodicals were still formative in American letters, and Scott remained the most influential writer of the day.

Poe’s literary criticism reflects a strong awareness of a tradition of influential Scottish writing in the United States. While he referred depreciatively to ‘the heresy of what is called very foolishly, The Lake School’ of Romantic poetry, he is frank about his admiration for Macpherson’s Ossian poems and even defends them from Wordsworth’s criticisms contained in his supplementary essay to the Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (1815).⁵² Wordsworth’s

⁵² Edgar Allan Poe, ‘Letter to B—, July 1836’, in *Edgar Allan Poe: Essays and Reviews*, pp.6-7.

critique gives particular focus to Macpherson's rendering of the landscape of ancient Scotland, 'In nature everything is distinct, yet nothing defined into absolute independent singleness. In Macpherson's work it is exactly the reverse; everything (that is not stolen) is in this manner defined, insulated, dislocated, deadened—yet nothing distinct.'⁵³ For Wordsworth, the uncanny and alien effects which Ian Duncan has attributed to the Ossianic corpus render it a contrived and literary approximation of reality, where natural objects are atrophied and alienated from proper organic contexts. In contrast, Poe argues for the unique aesthetics of Macpherson's work. Without weighing in on any controversies surrounding their authenticity, he attests that 'in estimating the merit of certain poems, whether they be Ossian's or M'Pherson's, can surely be of little consequence', adopting a similar position to Scott writing in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1805.⁵⁴ Poe objects to Wordsworth's role in the debate against the Ossian corpus by employing a different criterion of literary merit, as he describes Wordsworth's critique of Macpherson:

That he may bear down every argument in favour of these poems, he triumphantly drags forward a passage [...] It is the beginning of the epic poem 'Temora.' 'The blue waves of Ullin roll in light; the green hills are covered with day; trees shake their dusky heads in the breeze.' And this – this gorgeous yet simple imagery – where all is alive and panting with

⁵³ William Wordsworth, 'Essay Supplementary to Preface', in *Poems by William Wordsworth, Including Lyrical Ballads, and the Miscellaneous Pieces of the Author, with Additional Poems, a new Preface and a Supplementary Essay*, 2 vols (London: Longman, Hurst, Reese, Orme and Brown, 1815), <http://spenserians.cath.vt.edu/TextRecord.php?textsid=35963> [accessed: 18/9/18] ebook.

⁵⁴ Poe, 'Letter to B—', p.9.

immortality – this – William Wordsworth, the author of *Peter Bell* has *selected* for his contempt.⁵⁵

What Wordsworth derides as the poem's vagueness, its dream-like, artificial quality, seems precisely what for Poe is an aesthetic strength. The basis of his admiration for *Temora* is its epic nature and the vital, 'immortal' quality of its imagery. This is critical in understanding Poe's engagement with arguably the foundational texts of Scottish Romanticism, poems which engage with place and temporality in a mournful, early gothic register.

What Wordsworth noted as the wraith-like indistinctness of Macpherson's ancient Scotland lends Ossian its gothic and elegiac qualities. A similar aesthetic can be read in a number of Poe's stories and poems, for example, in 'Silence: A Fable' (1838), 'There, like the waves about the Hebrides, the low underwood is agitated continually. But there is no wind throughout the heaven. And the tall primeval trees rock eternally hither and thither with a crashing and mighty sound.'⁵⁶ The motion of the waves of the Hebrides has here been entirely detached from the shores of the Scottish archipelago and is transported to the shores of Libya in an occult description of an unsettling and exotic landscape. This relocation serves to demonstrate how far the Ossianic aesthetic has travelled in Poe's work and illustrates his unique absorption of Macpherson's style.

In his criticism Poe also expresses his admiration for Scott and employs his legacy as a yardstick with which to assess the work of his American

⁵⁵ Ibid, p.9.

⁵⁶ Edgar Allan Poe, 'Silence – A Fable', *The Complete Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe*, p.459.

contemporaries. In a review for the *Southern Literary Messenger* he expresses his enthusiasm for *The Bride of Lammermoor* as the writer's masterpiece, describing it as 'that purest, and most enthralling of fictions':

It is not too much to say that no modern composition, and perhaps no composition whatever, with the single exception of Cervantes' *Destruction of Numantia*, approaches so nearly to the proper character of the dramas of Aeschylus, as the magic tale of which Ravenswood is the hero. We are not aware of being sustained by any authority in this opinion – yet we do not believe it the less intrinsically correct.⁵⁷

The tragic determinism of the plot of *Lammermoor* seems to be Poe's point of comparison with Classical tragedy. As we have seen in chapter one the decline of the feudal Episcopalian family of Ravenswood, usurped in their estate by the Whig Ashton family, sets the scene for the doomed attachment between Edgar Ravenswood and Lucy Ashton. The novel can be read as inaugurating critical themes for the Southern Gothic tradition, including that of a dispossessed, vengeful aristocracy, murder, insanity and a family curse. Poe presents his admiration of the novel as a more general editorial opinion, telling us much about the place of Scott's legacy in Southern literature and criticism, as well as his own perspective.

Poe's continuing interest in Scott's work is evident in his choice of title for his 1840 collection *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque*, which is inspired by the definition of these terms in the context of a discussion of E.T.A Hoffman's work in Scott's 1827 essay 'On the Supernatural in Fictitious

⁵⁷ Edgar Allan Poe, 'Henry F. Chorley, Conti the Discarded: with Other Tales and Fancies', in *Edgar Allan Poe: Essays and Reviews*, pp.164-7 (p.167).

Composition'. Appearances of the supernatural in literature should, according to Scott, be 'rare, brief, indistinct, and such as may become a being to us so incomprehensible.'⁵⁸ He argues that supernatural elements should be introduced carefully and handled with subtlety so as not to dissipate the effect through overuse, as he describes using Poe's two resonant terms:

In fact, the grotesque in these compositions partly resembles the arabesque in painting, in which is introduced the most strange and complicated monsters [...] dazzling the beholder as it were by the unbounded fertility of the author's imagination [...] while there is in reality nothing to satisfy the understanding or inform the judgement.⁵⁹

The fact that Poe chose this title for a collection including many now-famous tales such as 'William Wilson' and 'The Fall of the House of Usher', shows him rejecting any derogatory aspects which Scott attaches to these terms in his essay as markers of gothic literary excess. Scott reiterates this critique in his appraisal of the typical *Blackwood's* tale, 'In many of our modern tales of terror, our feelings of fear have, long before the conclusion, given way under the influence of that familiarity which begets contempt.'⁶⁰ Yet we would be wrong to think that what Scott finds excessive and distasteful Poe wholeheartedly embraces. In his essay 'The Philosophy of Composition', Poe takes the reader methodically through his prosaic method of composing 'The Raven'(1845), with 'the precision and rigid consequence of a mathematical

⁵⁸ Walter Scott, 'On the Supernatural in Fictitious Composition; and Particularly on the Works of Ernest Theodore William Hoffman', *The Foreign Quarterly Review*, 1 (1827), 60-98 (p.63).

⁵⁹ Ibid, pp.81-2.

⁶⁰ Ibid, p.64.

problem.’⁶¹ To this end Poe speaks frankly of trying to strike a balance between the fanciful and the mundane or serious, ‘an air of the fantastic – approaching as nearly to the ludicrous as was admissible – is given to the Raven’s entrance’, yet at the same time, in terms of actual narrative, the poem ‘is within the limits of the accountable.’⁶² Here we can see Poe as conscious of the supernatural effects he wishes to produce and how to achieve them, as well as showcasing his awareness of public taste and the appetite for poems and tales of terror in the 1830s and 40s. While Poe’s use of gothic conventions is far more accentuated than Scott’s, the resolution of the supernatural into the mundane, generally characteristic of the latter’s writing, is also replicated in many of Poe’s works.

Where Poe approaches a Southern regional setting, as he does in his depiction of Sullivan's Island, South Carolina, in his 1843 story ‘The Gold-Bug’, he renders it unfamiliar and uncanny. As Liliane Weissburg has shown, Poe’s description of the island is far more depopulated and desolate than it was in his own time, with ‘a geography and vegetation more dramatic than that of the actual place.’⁶³ The story documents a reversal of fortunes for impoverished aristocrat Legrand when he is led by a series of clues and coincidences to the buried treasure of the pirate Captain Kidd. Told by an unnamed narrator, ‘The Gold-Bug’ has been read as a tale which sheds light on Poe's racial politics in the treatment of Legrand's free black servant Jupiter, whose ignorance and heavy dialect mark him as a comic racial stereotype.

⁶¹ Edgar Allan Poe, ‘The Philosophy of Composition’, in *Edgar Allan Poe: Essays and Reviews*, p.15.

⁶² Ibid, pp.22-23.

⁶³ Liliane Weissburg, ‘Black, White, and Gold’, in *Romancing the Shadow: Poe and Race*, pp.127-156, (p.130).

However, as some critics have noted, the relationship between Jupiter and Legrand, while problematic, does not always follow the lines of racial hierarchy, as Jupiter describes being prepared to beat Legrand for his own good when he perceives him to be in a fit of madness.⁶⁴ The gold-bug itself is an alien species, somewhere between insect and object, ‘unknown to naturalists – of course a great prize in a scientific point of view’.⁶⁵ While Jupiter first believes that the bug has bitten Legrand and caused his madness, it transpires that the bug is in fact made of pure gold, leading Legrand to the site of pirate treasure. This combination of a strange, wild environment, the apparent breakdown of traditional hierarchies of racial and economic status, and the unearthing of the sediments of the past which confuse temporal distinctions, creates a topology of inversion and suspension of natural order. In this story, however, order and aristocratic rights are restored, and full explanations finally offered for the narrative’s previously inexplicable elements. The story’s indeterminacy is matched by appeals to practices of discursive naturalism, mapping, measurement and cryptography which ultimately illuminate the strange behaviour of Legrand and lead to the restoration of his aristocratic wealth. Yet in other areas of Poe’s fiction such resolution is not offered, for example, in his only novel-length work *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket* (1838), where the setting of an alien polar geography cannot ultimately be made consonant with any map or descriptive practice.

⁶⁴ See Weissburg, ‘Black, White, and Gold’, in *Romancing the Shadow: Poe and Race* and Emmy Stark Zitter, ‘Language, Race and Authority in the Stories of Edgar Allan Poe’, *Studies in Popular Culture*, 21 (1998), 53-69.

⁶⁵ Edgar Allan Poe ‘The Gold-Bug’, *The Complete Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe*, p.48.

Journeys to the pole

My demonstration of Scottish Romantic influence on Poe is in accordance with the trend among Poe critics to contextualize him more fully in the literary innovations of his period, to remove him from a space of stifling, symbolist gothic interiors and instead stage him as an artist concerned with the historical developments of a truly global South. Following the critical reappraisal of Scott by critics such as Ian Duncan, Penny Fielding and Evan Gottlieb, who read his work as concerned with the mutually constitutive effect of national and international structures and dynamics, I will now argue that Poe can be read along similar lines. For we can see Poe's writing as engaged with the temporal disjunctions and conflicts inherent in an emerging global order of economic and colonial expansion, with the central theme of much Scottish Romantic work – the transition from feudal to capitalist economies. Naturally, this is not to write out the issue of slavery or Poe's undoubtedly racist politics, but rather to ground these issues in a wider conception of global racial discourses. The racial and regional anxieties which Poe dramatizes in a gothic register emphasize those international forces which disrupt the supposed integrity of the nation-state.

As we have seen, Poe and Hogg are both eclectic adepts in various genres, with a focus on Romantic short fiction, in a literary atmosphere saturated with Scott and the Edinburgh periodicals on both sides of the Atlantic, from the 1820s to the 1840s. Having examined thematic and generic similarities in the work of these writers, I will now explore more fully their engagements with global space and border-crossing through a comparison of their treatments of polar exploration. Journeys of Arctic exploration were

common in the pages of *Blackwood's* and Poe also reviewed accounts of travel to the Antarctic for the *Southern Literary Messenger*.⁶⁶ In the American canon, Fenimore Cooper authored two texts involving travel to the South Pole, the satirical novel *The Monikins* (1835), and *The Sea Lions* (1849). These texts followed the anonymous *Symzonia: A Journey of Discovery* (1820), a work of obscure authorship which details an exploration to discover the centre of the earth via the South Pole. It may have been authored by John Cleves Symmes, whose 'Hollow Earth' theory postulated that the earth contained holes at the Arctic and Antarctic through which it was possible to travel into the hollow interior of the planet, and Symmes's theory was certainly an influence on Poe in his writing of *Pym*.⁶⁷

In the English canon, Coleridge's 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner' (1798) and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) stand as antecedents of the Arctic voyage narrative. Poe's two literary treatments of the polar theme are *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* and his short story 'M.S. Found in a Bottle' (1833).⁶⁸ Hogg's contribution comes in the form of his novella *The Surpassing Adventures of Allan Gordon*, which formed part of the collection *Tales and Sketches of the Ettrick Shepherd*, published posthumously in

⁶⁶ See Fielding, p.173. For another treatment of Hogg's *Allan Gordon* see Sarah Moss 'Romanticism on Ice: Coleridge, Hogg and the Eighteenth-Century Missions to Greenland', *Romanticism on the Net*, 45 (2007), <<https://doi.org/10.7202/015816ar>> [accessed: 6/12/18]. For a comprehensive recent study of the genre of Arctic exploration, see Adriana Craciun, *Writing Arctic Disaster: Authorship and Exploration* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

⁶⁷ Darryl Jones, 'Ultima Thule: *Arthur Gordon Pym*, the Polar Imaginary and the Hollow Earth', *Edgar Allan Poe Review*, 11 (2010), 51-69.

⁶⁸ Poe's fiction also ventures into the far North in his portrayal of the Arctic land mass as seen from above by the balloonist protagonist in his story 'The Unparalleled Adventure of one Hans Pfall', in *The Complete Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe*, pp.3-41.

1837.⁶⁹ Both Poe's texts and Hogg's novella employ first-person narrators, after the style of real-world accounts of polar voyages. Hogg's mid-eighteenth-century protagonist becomes the sole survivor of the wreck of the whaling ship *Anne Forbes*. Just as in the grave of Hogg's sinner in *The Confessions*, where a downward movement to excavate the past leads to a confusion of historical markers, so these two journeys of outward exploration and mapping lead to a disorientating experience of space which tests the limits of empirical and rational knowledge. These journeys towards a far North and South move both Hogg and Poe beyond their respective regions and nations and indicate more global engagements.

Both Gordon and Pym flee as young men from authority and restraint, seeking adventures at sea. They both undergo periods of unconsciousness and stupor where time passes rapidly, and both encounter cannibalism and savagery in their journeys to the two opposing poles. Hogg's protagonist lives in the wreck of the *Anne Forbes* until he adopts an orphaned polar bear cub as a companion who helps him to survive in the Arctic landscape. Eventually Gordon tracks and discovers human inhabitants in Greenland, a group of Christians who live in terror of the Arctic bears, and who are massacred by them at the close of the narrative. For Hogg's comic, almost picaresque, working-class protagonist, his Captain's joy at reaching the North Pole appears absurd, as Gordon can only imagine a physical pole which never actually materializes. Yet Gordon perceives the alien nature of Arctic space by its effect

⁶⁹ For another treatment of the Arctic in Hogg's oeuvre see his comic poem, 'The P and the Q; or The Adventure of Jock M'Pherson', in James Hogg, *Contributions to Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, vol. 1 (1817-1828), ed. by Thomas C. Richardson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), pp.61-5.

on the ship's compass, which either 'stood where we put it or kept whirling or wheeling as if it had been dancing a highland reel.'⁷⁰ The pole in Hogg's narrative is therefore not so much a local site or limit, but rather a threshold into an alien environment where time and distance operate differently, comparable in this to Scott's borders and their temporal effects. Much of Gordon's narrative is taken up with descriptions of the behaviour of the polar landscape, which is portrayed as disorientating, shifting and ephemeral.

On his outward journey massive ice flows prevent the return of the *Anne Forbes* to Scotland and eventually crush the ship in their path. In Hogg's Arctic, vectors of direction are constantly shifting, with no stable point from which its landscape can be surveyed for the viewer to orientate herself. Gordon sees snowy landscapes which disappear and reappear as they shuttle between solidity and fluidity, 'when climbing over mountains of ice as firm as rocks I came to other parts which had little more consistency than froth.'⁷¹ Hogg's Arctic is characterized by constant slippages between solid and fluid states, a world in constant formation and flux. For Manuel Delanda, as I argued in my Introduction, material forms possess stability only through their relative speeds of flow and breakdown, 'I always think of objects as *dynamic*, that is, in need of being continuously stabilized so that they can preserve their identity.'⁷² Hogg's Arctic vision lacks any stabilizing natural forces and therefore results in a disordered flux of phenomena, causing a disruption of a chronological

⁷⁰ James Hogg, 'The Surpassing Adventures of Allan Gordon', ed. by Gillian Hughes, *Altrive Chapbooks*, 2 (1987), 1-57, <https://www.stir.ac.uk/media/schools/artsandhumanities/english/HoggAllanGordon.pdf>, [accessed: 4/4/17] (p.3).

⁷¹ *Ibid*, p.5.

⁷² Manuel Delanda and Graham Harman, *The Rise of Realism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2017), p.66.

sense of time through the instability of its natural materials. The Arctic's wider seasonal shifts of melting and contracting ice are sudden and violent and blur any boundaries between solid ground and ocean. Gordon describes the tearing up of the ice flow during the Arctic summer where 'broad crystal flakes which gradually rising to a perpendicular position to the height of a hundred feet [...] fell backward with a crash that made the frozen ocean groan and heave like a blanket.'⁷³ This landscape appears as so many folds and ruptures in a solid-fluid surface, and Gordon's life is one of precarious balance on an ocean in various states of fleeting solidity. This deceptive terrain is psychologically inflected in typical Hogg style, and the text narrates many instants of disorientation, misapprehension and absurdity. Gordon mistakes polar bear tracks for human ones, clouds for hills, and when he later joins the Greenlanders, he mistakes his new wife and mistress for numerous other women who later bear his children.

Penny Fielding emphasizes *Allan Gordon* as a critique of the global imagination inaugurated by Enlightenment thought and its acts of mapping and classification. This infinite space cannot be quantified, and as Fielding argues, 'At the extreme north, even the most primary or archaic space, that of the body, takes on Gothic qualities far removed from the rational divisions of Enlightenment geography.'⁷⁴ Gordon kills a polar bear which comes to eat his stock of salt biscuits, and which appears to die half in and half out of the wreck, where it manages to be both frozen solid and still living, 'how a creature could be dead and frozen in its hinder parts and munching and eating with its

⁷³ Hogg, *Allan Gordon*, p.20.

⁷⁴ Fielding, p.181.

foreparts was to me quite inconceivable.’⁷⁵ The duality of Hogg’s bodies in his major novels is here replicated spatially in an entity signalling both life and death simultaneously. Gordon makes comparisons between the Arctic landscape and familiar landmarks from his Aberdeenshire upbringing, attempting to apply a sense of shape and scale to the shifting terrain, but any resemblance proves to be transitory and deceptive. Unlike the spaces of *The Antiquary* which stand saturated with historical deposits and inscriptions, Hogg’s icescapes deliver no historical markers or artefacts and no temporal or cultural coordinates. As Fielding comments, this loss of coordinates means a loss of a sense of relative space and distance, which raises the question of ‘how the seemingly endless pole could support a signification which depends on borders and differences.’⁷⁶ We might say that in the Arctic space of *Allan Gordon*, there are no objects, only unpredictable material processes which stop short of giving rise to solid entities. Objects which make their way to the pole lose their identity and context, like the collection of tools from the ship which for Gordon ‘would have been of great use had I had any use for them.’⁷⁷ Unlike the antiquarian objects I have emphasized in Scott and Hogg’s fiction, which signal multiple, problematic temporalities, any objects imported into Gordon’s formless Arctic lose all signification.

This kind of space proves inaccessible to rational understanding or to an empirical ordering of sensations and impressions that would give rise to continuous meanings or a sense of cause and effect. David Hume’s position that subjectivity is used to order our impressions to create a sense of

⁷⁵ Hogg, *Allan Gordon*, p.11.

⁷⁶ Fielding, p.179.

⁷⁷ Hogg, *Allan Gordon*, p.6.

continuity in time - the act of 'feigning a continu'd being, which may fill those intervals and preserve a perfect and entire identity to our perceptions', is tested to its limits in *Allan Gordon*.⁷⁸ While lying in a stupor in the frozen wreckage of the ship, Gordon must piece himself together again without the aid of any familiar impressions, 'to trace myself all the way from the minister's glebe at Auchendoir to Aberdeen and then away to the North Pole and back again to my deplorable habitation.'⁷⁹ Ultimately, he can only attempt to understand the Pole through a sense of God's incomprehensible workings and through metaphor and analogy.

In stark contrast to Hogg's protagonist, Poe's narrator is middle-class and educated, yet he undergoes horrific experiences aboard the *Grampus*, beginning with a mutiny, leading to shipwreck, starvation and cannibalism, until he and shipmate Peters are picked up by the British vessel the *Jane Guy*. When shipwrecked and adrift in the South Atlantic Ocean, Pym is beset by heat rather than ice, which accelerates decomposition and putrefaction, causing terrible thirst and disorientation. The body of Pym's friend Augustus disintegrates in the attempt to throw it overboard, becoming nothing but a 'mass of putrefaction', but the transgression of previously stable material boundaries on this polar voyage is dramatized more explicitly in the depiction of cannibalism.⁸⁰ When close to a piece of human liver dropped by a gull feasting on the victims of a plague ship, Pym is struck by 'a thought which I

⁷⁸ David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. by David Fate Norton and Mary J. Norton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p.138.

⁷⁹ Hogg, *Allan Gordon*, p.6.

⁸⁰ Edgar Allan Poe, *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket, The Complete Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe* (New York: The Modern Library, 1965), p.826.

will not mention'.⁸¹ For Pym cannibalism is 'that last horrible extremity' to which death is preferable.⁸² Hogg's Gordon has no such qualms; after being saved from the shipwreck by being thrown from the mast onto the ice, Gordon returns to the wreck to find food, 'with the hope of finding one of my dead companions on whom I had made up my mind to prey most liberally.'⁸³ Fortunately, he is unable to retrieve any of the bodies and so is preserved from cannibalism. Here Gordon himself seems playfully aware of the literary conventions which pertain to accounts of polar exploration, including the extremity of cannibalism. Despite Pym's extreme horror of the act he is ultimately brought to the necessity of consuming his shipmate Parker.

In the latter part of Poe's novel, the *Jane Guy* reaches the island of Tsalal, where at first the natives seem eager to trade, though they later betray and massacre the sailors, with only Pym and Peters escaping. This episode has been read as emblematic of Poe's racial politics, with the irrational and bloodthirsty 'black' natives and their bizarre phobia of all white objects staging an essential opposition between a racialized 'black' and 'white'. In a moment of antiquarian puzzlement, Pym and Peters find graven in the back caverns of Tsalal what appear to be hieroglyphics and the form of a human figure, which Pym dismisses as the product of natural erosion. As in the examples I have read from Scott and Hogg's fiction, dynamics of inscription and erosion serve to confound historicizing practices and can produce misleading temporal narratives, and Pym pragmatically rejects this unstable signification. As with the narrator/Editor relationship in Hogg's *Confessions*, the antiquarian editor

⁸¹ Ibid, p.810.

⁸² Ibid, p.816.

⁸³ Hogg, *Allan Gordon*, p.5.

of Pym's narrative disputes his dismissive account of the hieroglyphics, affirming the resemblance of the letters Pym describes with words expressing 'to be shady' and 'to be white'.⁸⁴ Although this episode appears expressive of contemporary American anxieties about the origins of racial difference, Teresa Goddu argues persuasively that in the text's fluctuating and diffuse images of black and white it 'paradoxically registers a fear of delineating racial identity [...] instead of policing the color line, *Pym* transgresses it, exploiting rather than allaying readers' fears.'⁸⁵ In fact, Pym himself has already engaged in violence and cannibalism which adds a layer of irony to his accusations of savagery against the natives.

As an educated explorer, Pym describes in detail the flora and fauna he encounters and makes ethnographic descriptions of the natives of Tsalal in his diary entries. In contrast, Hogg's protagonist declares 'I can give no dates', and describes what he witnesses as an incomprehensible phenomenon only accessible to divine intelligence.⁸⁶ In both texts, although more explicitly in *Pym*, there is a conflict between discursive frames of mapping and description and what they cannot contain. Gordon stages the struggle of empirical sense-making strategies in a landscape which appears to lack a conventional natural order, while Pym attempts to narrate and interpret the inexplicable. As with Hogg's *Confessions*, *Pym* contains an editorial narrative which only serves to further confuse and contradict its protagonist's own testimony. The contrast in the descriptive styles of Poe's and Hogg's narrators is visible when Pym narrates the sighting and capturing of a bear in the Antarctic:

⁸⁴ Poe, *Pym*, p.883.

⁸⁵ Goddu, p.87.

⁸⁶ Hogg, *Allan Gordon*, p.16.

This bear, upon admeasurement, proved to be full fifteen feet in his greatest length. His wool was perfectly white, and very coarse [...] The eyes were of a blood red, and larger than those of the Arctic bear; the snout also was more rounded, rather resembling the snout of the bulldog. The meat was tender, but excessively rank and fishy.⁸⁷

This precise, comparative description is in stark contrast to the portrayal of Hogg's intelligent, anthropomorphic polar bears, who plot and scheme against the Greenlanders, drink rum, and are famed among the natives for 'liking best to eat children alive [...] then they affirmed that they ravaged all the women and then sucked the blood from their throats.'⁸⁸ Unlike Hogg's bears which muddy human/animal distinctions, Poe's creature can be described minutely, and is immediately identified and killed, as an object of human discursive and then literal consumption. Rather than being comparable to other animals, the vampiric bears Gordon describes most closely resemble 'naked human creatures with long brutal heads.'⁸⁹

In the last pages of Poe's novel, Pym and Peters make their escape from Tsalal with a native hostage and sail towards the pole, where they encounter a fantastic landscape:

From out the milky depths of the ocean a luminous glare arose and stole up along the bulwarks of the boat. We were nearly overwhelmed by the white ashy shower [...] the summit of the cataract was utterly lost in the dimness [...] At intervals there were visible in it wide, yawning

⁸⁷ Poe, *Pym*, p.846.

⁸⁸ Hogg, *Allan Gordon*, p.38.

⁸⁹ *Ibid*, p.7.

but momentary rents, and from out these rents, within which was a chaos of flitting and indistinct images, there came rushing and mighty, but soundless winds, tearing up the enkindled ocean in their course.⁹⁰

This final scene concludes in the sighting of ‘a shrouded human figure, very far larger in its proportions than any dweller among men,’ which in colour is ‘of the perfect whiteness of the snow.’⁹¹ This episode could be read as concluding the racial narrative begun in the depictions of Tsalal and figuring the ultimate South as vividly ‘white’. However, if this is indeed an image of Southern whiteness it is certainly a deeply ambivalent and alien one. As in Hogg’s depiction of the fluctuations of the Arctic landscape, in this final episode of *Pym* oceanic and geological phenomena coalesce into a luminous volcanic sea. The paradox of soundless winds and fiery oceans signals the ultimate edge of the world and the limits of description.

In Hogg and Poe’s revision of the Romantic sublime the experience is no longer a resource for the creative imagination, but rather one which overwhelms the faculties and prevents any activity of meaning-making. This case of the sublime never reaches beyond what Thomas Weiskel has defined as the anxiety and indeterminacy produced by the excessive object in the second phase of the sublime moment, while in the third phase ‘the mind recovers the balance of outer and inner by constituting a fresh relation between itself and the object such that the indeterminacy which erupted in phase two is taken as symbolising the mind’s relation to a transcendent order.’⁹² Such

⁹⁰ Poe, *Pym*, p.882.

⁹¹ Ibid, p.882.

⁹² Thomas Weiskel, *The Romantic Sublime: Studies in the Structure and Psychology of Transcendence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), p.24.

transcendence is not made available to either Pym or Gordon in their encounters with these sublime and disturbing polar topologies. Poe's 'M.S. found in a Bottle' ends in a similar fashion to *Pym*, with the unnamed protagonist sailing towards a threshold marked by extraordinary natural phenomena:

All in the immediate vicinity of the ship is the blackness of eternal night, and a chaos of foamless water; but, about a league on either side of us, may be seen, indistinctly and at intervals, stupendous ramparts of ice, towering away into the desolate sky, and looking like the walls of the universe.⁹³

The strange ship on which the 'M.S.' narrator finds himself is named 'Discovery', a word subverted into a gothic terror of an incomprehensible boundary or frontier at the bottom of the world. This story also engages, as *Pym* does, with Symmes's 'hollow earth theory', which in the close of both texts is figured as a journey into a new, subterrestrial reality. This gothic pole connects with Hogg's in *Allan Gordon*, in that the exploration of the far North, far from affording discursive understanding, is a site of horror and dislocation.

These Northern and Southern frontiers depicted by Poe and Hogg indicate different but complementary gothic responses to narratives of exploration, dramatizing regional concerns of race and the integrity of the human subject in an increasingly globalized modernity. The horizontal spaces of the ocean and the polar North are stripped of orientating landmarks on which identity and perception can rest or from which the viewer can derive a

⁹³ Poe, 'M.S Found in a Bottle', *The Complete Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe*, p.125.

sense of spatial order. This disorientation, I have argued, provides a disconcerting response to an emerging modernity based in the networks between nations and regions, where acts of mapping and comparison were paramount. While both these narratives focus on areas other than Scotland and the South, those regions are dislocated into new hemispheric connections, which render previously familiar spaces alien and unmappable. Both regions become permeable and leak into extreme Norths and Souths in ways that trouble the idea of the bordered nation state and its racial, social and temporal hierarchies. Like Scott's frontiers and borders, the Arctic and Antarctic represent the edges of the known world and signal something far from a linear, clean demarcation between one territory and another. In Hogg's Arctic and Poe's Antarctic, historical coordinates vanish, and space becomes de-centred, resisting processes of mapping and history-making.

Chapter 3: Mark Twain and Scottish Romanticism: Temporality, Materiality and Performance in the Postbellum South

As we have seen in Mark Twain's hyperbolic critique of Walter Scott in chapter one, the Scottish Romantic influence in the South is by no means limited to simple acts of reading, but rather in Samuel Clemens's writing is dispersed throughout the domain of Southern culture and everyday life. What drives Clemens to rhetorically associate Scott with what he perceives as the South's cultural and political failings is a question of some complexity which I will address in this chapter. I wish first to demonstrate that the influence of Scottish Romantic work is visible and critical in Samuel Clemens's writing, while at the same time looking more closely at how his Scottish Romantic references operate and how they come to signal urgent political and cultural tensions in the nineteenth-century South. It is not merely Scott's use of dialect, genre and regional anthology which is present in Clemens' work, but also a concern with anthropological depictions, the performance of race and cultural heritage, and with the very 'stuff' of cultural anthology – the relics and artefacts of the past.

Twain's stylistic and generic objections to Walter Scott's writing can be partly attributed to the drive toward literary Realism in late nineteenth-

century America.¹ The rejection of Scott explicitly forms part of the project of American literary Realism, and yet many elements of the new 'realist' style paradoxically had antecedents in Scott's prose works. William Dean Howells's discussion of the new realism in 'Criticism and Fiction' (1891) proclaims the necessity of rejecting Scott and other nineteenth-century British writers. Howells, like Clemens, was a Midwesterner, and they appear to share a common purpose in their definition of the kind of writing which should be pursued in their time. For Howells, the refutation of Scott and other Romantic authors is critical to a simultaneous refocusing on everyday, unmediated reality:

The young writer who attempts to report the phrase and carriage of everyday life, who tries to tell just how he has heard men talk and seen them look, is made to feel guilty of something low and unworthy by people who would like to have him show how Shakespeare's men talked and looked, or Scott's [...] He is approached in the spirit of the pedantry into which learning, much or little, always decays when it withdraws itself and stands apart from experience in an attitude of imagined superiority.²

Scott is thus associated, perhaps correctly, with pedantry, pedagogy and an effusive literary style, involving a distant 'superior' kind of omniscient narration. We can see this realist rejection of the position of the omniscient

¹ See Warner Berthoff, *The Ferment of Realism: American Literature 1884-1919* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), or for a more critical study see Michael Davitt Bell, *The Problem of American Realism: Studies in the Cultural History of a Literary Idea* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

² William Dean Howells, 'Criticism and Fiction', *Criticism and Fiction and Other Essays*, ed. by Clara Marburg Kirk and Rudolf Kirk (New York: New York University Press, 1959), p.12.

outsider in the first-person narration of *Huckleberry Finn*, and in that text's ambitions towards immediacy and naturalism. Nevertheless, this supposed conflict between a romantic or literary worldview set against a more pragmatic, rational engagement is exactly the one expressed in Scott's *Waverley* itself, and indeed in Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, which was a significant literary resource for Clemens.

Scott's style is objected to as 'tiresomely descriptive', yet Howells ultimately terms him, for his time, a 'great' writer, but one now only suitable for younger readers. Like Twain before him, Howells feels obliged to list Scott's political failings, 'his mediaeval ideals, his blind Jacobitism, his intense devotion to aristocracy and royalty; his acquiescence in the division of men into noble and ignoble, patrician and plebeian, sovereign and subject, as if it were the law of God.'³ As with Twain's account, Howell's political critique of Scott seems heavy-handed and based on a cursory reading of a writer with complex affiliations who, like Samuel Clemens himself, did not put his own name to his works, and cultivated an elusive and often contradictory authorial presence.

For Howells, the Walter Scott problem extends to American literary critics, who still yearn for his antiquated, effusive and sentimental style. As we will see in Clemens's work, Scott becomes the emblem of the anachronistic and primitive in American culture, and his critical followers are painted as superstitious, barbaric figures:

To be sure, the critic sometimes appears in the panoply of the savages

³ Howells, p.17.

whom we have supplanted on this continent; and it is hard to believe that his use of the tomahawk and the scalping-knife is a form of conservative surgery.⁴

The critical gap between Realism and Romanticism here becomes another frontier, where the realist seeks to supplant the primitive and violent native whose worldview has faded into irrelevancy, a desire which reveals Realism's imperial ambitions in American culture. This remark may have been aimed at the memory of an American Romantic writer whom Howells also sought to reject – Edgar Allan Poe, whose savage *Blackwood's*-style reviews of his American contemporaries in *The Southern Literary Messenger* earned him the moniker 'Tomahawk Man'.⁵

As with Twain's critique of Scott, it is interesting to note the cultural associations which attend the novelist's legacy in the American tradition in Howell's account, when he asserts that, 'these amusements have their place, as the circus has, and the burlesque and negro minstrelsy, and the ballet, and prestidigitation.'⁶ Categories of performance, crude and offensive impersonations, and the practice of illusions are here all associated with Scott's writing. These amusements range from the high and affected culture of old Europe (the ballet) to the lowest forms of popular entertainment (burlesque) and racialized performances (minstrelsy). Twain, with his narrower view of the South, focuses on Mardi Gras in the same vein, as an unacceptable remnant of French and Spanish culture, which is shorn of earlier religious associations and infected instead with the 'Walter Scott disease'. In

⁴ Howells, p.20

⁵ See Brett Zimmerman, *Edgar Allan Poe: Rhetoric and Style* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), pp.85-106.

⁶ Howells, p.54.

Howells's text, the sanity, practicality, and mimesis of Realism are set against the hysterical, the effete and the affected in the Romantic tradition as embodied by Scott.

The 'Walter Scott Disease' and Southern Racial Politics

Mark Twain famously associates Scott's influence with the reactionary politics of White Southerners, particularly in relation to slavery and the Civil War. Laura Doyle has examined the role of *Ivanhoe* as part of the relationship of British Romanticism to the racial categories of empire through the novel's explorations of medieval anti-Semitic and anti-Islamic discourses, as well as the tensions between the Normans and the Saxons, 'What one may call "domestic" race distinctions – between Gaul and Franck, Celt and Norman, Norman and Franck – not only shape Romantic thought but also form the seedbed for colonial racial thought.'⁷ The issue of the appropriation of the narrative and imagery of chivalry, along with the racial politics of a text such as *Ivanhoe*, has perhaps its most disturbing expression in Thomas Dixon's 'Reconstruction Trilogy', which includes *The Leopard's Spots: A Romance of the White Man's Burden 1865-1900* (1902), *The Clansmen: A Historical Romance of the Ku Klux Klan* (1905), and *The Traitor: A Story of the Fall of the Invisible Empire* (1907). For Dixon, the Clansmen represented 'the reincarnated souls of the Clansmen of Old Scotland', arrived to protect White America from equality with African Americans.⁸ The notion of Scottish

⁷ Laura Doyle, *Bordering on the Body: The Racial Matrix of Modern Fiction and Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p.36.

⁸ Will Kaufman, 'Literature and the Civil War', *The Cambridge Companion to the Literature of the American South* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p.44.

Highland culture as a noble tradition pushed to the margins, sometimes evident in texts such as *Waverley* and *Rob Roy*, reappears in this trilogy as attached to Postbellum white Southerners and narratives of the 'Lost Cause', a connection to which William Faulkner would later allude, as I will demonstrate in chapter five. This trilogy clearly ties Scottish Romanticism to narratives of neo-medievalism, chauvinism and white supremacy in Southern culture.

The use of the fiery cross as the symbol of the twentieth century Klan originated in the Scottish Highlands as a device for gathering the clans in a time of emergency or preparation for war. Scott depicts this practice in *The Lady of the Lake* (1810), when Roderick Dhu orders the fiery cross to be lit to gather the Clan Alpine in an uprising against King James the Fifth. Through its appearance in Dixon's trilogy, the fiery cross became a feature of the activities of the twentieth century incarnation of the Klan.⁹ Yet the lighting of the cross is treated with great ambivalence in Scott's poem, as it is attended both by Roderick's destructive jealousy over being rejected by Ellen Douglas and by the sinister pagan incantations of Brian the Hermit. Even so, the fiery cross is associated with an authentic Highland heritage as a rallying cry for clan loyalty, and as a symbol it is highly aestheticized by Scott, 'While clamorous war-pipes yelled the gathering sound, /And while the Fiery Cross glanced like a meteor, round.'¹⁰

⁹ Wyn Craig Wade, *The Fiery Cross: The Ku Klux Klan in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p.146.

¹⁰ Walter Scott, *The Lady of the Lake* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2016), C.3, 1, ll.17-18.

Yet white Southerners were not alone in seeking to appropriate aspects of the Scottish Romantic tradition and in fact there is no evidence for a wider or more enthusiastic readership of Scott's work in the South than in the North.¹¹ Frederick Douglass's enthusiasm for Scottish Romantic writers began with his taking his surname from the character of James Douglas in *The Lady of the Lake*. He did so at the behest of the abolitionist Nathan Johnson, who hosted him after his escape to the North, and Douglass recounts their conversation in *My Bondage and My Freedom* (1855):

He had been reading 'The Lady of the Lake,' and was pleased to regard me as a suitable person to wear this, one of Scotland's many famous names. Considering the noble hospitality and manly character of Nathan Johnson, I have felt that he, better than I, illustrated the virtues of the great Scottish chief.¹²

This choice of name can be interpreted as a deliberate attempt by Douglass to boldly install himself within the domains of white Southern cultural taste. His fictional claim to Scottish ancestry may very well have had a factual basis given how many slaves in the South could trace their ancestry back to a Scottish forbear, including Faulkner's Lucas Beauchamp who can chart his lineage back to the very beginnings of the McCaslin dynasty in Yoknapatawpha as I will discuss in chapter four. As Alastair Pettinger argues, Douglass's choice of last

¹¹ See Susan Manning, 'Did Mark Twain Bring Down the Temple on Scott's Shoulders?', *Special Relationships: Anglo-American Affinities and Antagonisms 1854-1936*, ed. by Janet Beer and Bridget Bennett (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002) pp.8-27.

¹² Frederick Douglass, *My Bondage and My Freedom* (Radford: Wilder Publications 2008), p.187.

name allowed him to ‘write himself, playfully, provocatively, into Scottish and Southern “families” that might normally consider him “out of place”.’¹³

Douglass also expressed his fondness for Burns’s Enlightenment universalism and for the poems of Byron, along with ‘the works of Sir Walter Scott, especially “Ivanhoe”’.¹⁴ He quotes Burns in various specifically American contexts, particularly the refrain ‘A Man’s a Man for A’ That’, from the song ‘Is there for Honest Poverty’ (1795), as an expression of his egalitarianism and also in relation to his sense of the innate tendency of the American people to integrate and unify, ‘They easily adapt themselves to inevitable conditions, and all their tendency is to progress, enlightenment and to the universal.’¹⁵ Douglass also turns Burns’s rhetoric specifically to the issue of slavery, arguing from nature and reason for the essential freedom and independence of men.¹⁶ In 1846 Douglass visited Scotland accompanying white American abolitionists and lectured across the country. Central to this tour was his campaign to urge the Scottish Free Church to divest from plantation profits in the South, since it had accepted funds from Southern slaveholders to establish its new Church. Calls of ‘Send the Money Back’ were heard throughout Scotland and made the subject of antislavery songs during the campaign. As Douglass recalls in a speech given in Washington D.C. in 1887:

¹³ Alastair Pettinger, ‘Frederick Douglass, Scotland and the South’, *STAR* (Scotland’s Transatlantic Relations) Project Archive, (2004), http://www.bulldozia.com/resources/pdf/Pettinger_DouglassScotlandSouth.pdf > [accessed: 19/07/2018].

¹⁴ Frederick Douglass, *The Frederick Douglass Papers: Series One, Speeches, Debates and Interviews*, 8 vols., 1881-95, eds. John W. Blassingame and John R. McKivigan (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), vol. v, p.499.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p.80.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p.621.

The debate was sharp and long – the excitement was great. Nearly everybody in Scotland, outside the Free Church, were on the side of freedom, and were sending back the money. This sentiment was written on the pavements and walks and sung in the streets by minstrels.¹⁷

Douglass's Scott-inspired term 'minstrels' portrays a romantic view of his visit to Scotland, even though the Free Church never returned the money despite his efforts. He can also be seen to employ Scott and Burns as a way to legitimize and strengthen his persona as a lecturer and campaigner, and he also appropriated the masculine force of Byron's language, particularly in *Don Juan* (1819) and *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1812-1818), frequently paraphrasing the latter text, 'Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow [...] You know that liberty given is never so precious as liberty sought for and fought for.'¹⁸

Douglass' appropriations demonstrate that the high rhetoric, Enlightenment universalism and complex masculinities present in Scottish Romantic work can be appropriated politically beyond a narrow white cultural narrative, and in such a way that they intersect with the language of American democratic values in the mid-nineteenth-century. His rhetorical appropriation of a Scottish Romantic lineage through his use of Scott and Burns in this way again anticipates Faulkner's Lucas Beauchamp, who strategically performs his Scottish heritage making him a thorn in the side of his white McCaslin relatives, as I will demonstrate in chapter four.

¹⁷ Frederick Douglass, 'A Sentimental Visit to England: An Address Delivered in Washington D.C., On 22 September 1887', *The Frederick Douglass Papers*, pp.271-2.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p.95.

Life on the Mississippi

It is not purely in the realm of the literary that Mark Twain locates the presence of Scott and Scottish Romanticism in his autobiography and travelogue, *Life on the Mississippi*; it is rather, as we will see, in public buildings, rituals of burial, second-rate journalism, sentimental domestic objects and the public festivities of Mardi Gras – in short, the whole panoply of Southern material culture. I will demonstrate that these material, communal and performative aspects of Twain's argument are critical in understanding his relationship with his Scottish Romantic forbears, in addition to the fact of his taste for satire and comic exaggeration which complicates any analysis of his connection with Scott.

Twain's Southern travel narrative follows the influence of Scott in the South, proceeding from the architecture, practices and rituals of public life into the heart of the Southern home. According to the narrator, 'all the way from the suburbs of New Orleans to the edge of St. Louis the home of the first citizens of every town can be described in the same manner.'¹⁹ Viewed from outside the Southern mansion is a 'big, square, two-storey 'frame' house, painted white and porticoed like a Grecian temple.'²⁰ Moving inside, Twain describes the typical contents of the parlour:

Ingrain carpet; mahogany centre-table; lamp on it, with green-paper shade – standing on a gridiron, so to speak, made of high-coloured yarns, by the young ladies of the house, and called a lamp-mat; several

¹⁹ Twain, *Life*, pp.262-3.

²⁰ *Ibid*, p.259.

books, piled and disposed, with cast-iron exactness, according to an inherited and unchangeable plan; among them, Tupper, much pencilled; also, 'Friendship's Offering', and 'Affection's Wreath', with their sappy inanities illustrated in die-away mezzotints; also, Ossian; 'Alonzo and Melissa:' maybe 'Ivanhoe:' also 'Album', full of original 'poetry' of the Thou-hast-wounded-the-spirit-that-loved-thee breed; two or three goody-goody works – 'Shepherd of Salisbury Plain,' etc.²¹

The selection of books is presented as a predictable list of nostalgic, sentimental and moralistic tomes for young ladies, a literary system where 'inherited' notions of style and value hold sway. The two Scottish works among them are Macpherson's *Ossian* and Scott's *Ivanhoe*, a text which Twain criticizes copiously in *Life on the Mississippi* and would continue to satirize in *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889). This presence of *Ivanhoe* in the typical Southern parlour is not surprising, as William Faulkner would later assert as late as 1957 in regard to Scott's popularity in the South, that 'every household that [...] at all pretended to be literate had Scott.'²² Macpherson's work, as we have seen, was enormously influential and popular in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Britain, Europe and America. Admired by prominent Southerners Thomas Jefferson and Edgar Allan Poe, *Ossian* continues its Southern legacy in Twain's exemplary parlour. What then connects Scott's Romantic medievalist novel *Ivanhoe*, Macpherson's text, which had a seminal influence on the Romantic movement and the Gaelic

²¹ Ibid, p.259.

²² 'English Department Faculty and Wives' [Interview], *Faulkner at Virginia* [online], 13 May 1957, <http://faulkner.lib.virginia.edu/display/wfaudio13#wfaudio13.3> [accessed 22/10/2015].

Revival in Ireland, with garish hand-crafted lamp-mats and Southern interior décor?

Macpherson's poems return us to an apparent tension between a preexistent reality and its alienation or falsification through literary style, which as we have seen is so critical to Howells's analysis, and is also the Quixotic premise which Clemens would draw on in texts like *Huckleberry Finn*. This is the same dichotomy rehearsed in the confrontation of Poe and Wordsworth over Macpherson's poems which I examined in the previous chapter. *Don Quixote* itself, of course, is presented as a found manuscript, discovered by Cervantes and translated. However, the poems of Ossian have been taken as an attempt to evidence a real past, to provide a solid foundation for the heritage of Scottish Gaelic culture in a time of political and cultural pressure. As Ian Duncan describes the influence of Macpherson's text in the Scottish tradition:

The 'Poems of Ossian' effectively inaugurate the modern tradition of works of historical fiction supported by an antiquarian apparatus, with the crucial difference that in this case the authentication was meant to be taken literally. The 'authenticity effect' [...] advertises a problematical, unstable boundary between history and fiction, evidence and invention, textual surface and ontological depth. Far from being anomalous, it is a cornerstone of modern Scottish national representation.²³

²³ Duncan, *Scott's Shadow*, p.277.

As with the sinner's grave in Hogg's *Confessions*, in the consciously 'inauthentic' space of Scottish Romantic writing it is the very material evidence which is most problematic as a foundation for knowledge, as the parts, when reassembled, make something other than a coherent whole. Yet there is perhaps something beyond nostalgia and simulation in the presence of *Ossian* in Twain's Southern parlour, as it is a text which complicates easy distinctions between 'authentic' and invented cultures and traditions, and which in turn speaks to the problematic nature of American narratives of national origin.

The Ossianic metaphor gives us a foundation on which we can begin to understand the role of the other objects filling Twain's Southern household. In this representative parlour, everyday things seem overdetermined, steeped in sentiment and affectation. These objects are in the process of constructing an American narrative of identity, revealing imperialist associations and political and cultural tensions, and in their very materials they are operating, temporally, to undermine Twain's dichotomies of old and new. The interior of the Southern mansion is described in terms of mess, decay and profusion, with the aspect of a collection without classification or demarcation, a sort of flux of things:

Californian 'specimens' – quartz, with gold wart adhering; old guinea-locket, with circlet of ancestral hair in it; Indian arrow-heads, of flint; pair of beaded moccasins, from Uncle who crossed the Plains [...] convention of desiccated bugs and butterflies pinned to a card.²⁴

²⁴ Twain, *Life*, p.261.

These artefacts refer to some of the formative events of American history, such as Westward expansion and the gold rush; they signal the contexts of American expansion associated with Native peoples no longer politically visible, and the whole collection appears to embody a primitive and illogical attachment to 'things', including articles connected, as with the locket, in a very physical way with the dead. These artefacts speak to an elegiac 'Ossianic' narrative of improvised heritage, the construction of a mythology of primitive origins shaped by the movement of Western expansion.

Movement underlies the presence of these objects, as the piece of quartz is both the product of geological movements as well as the human ones of travel, mining and excavation. They are relics of frontier encounters, an attempt at reassembling lost cultures and peoples into a display of imperial nostalgia. This collection is comparable to that of Scott's *Antiquary*, with its effect of age, dust and disarray, as in Oldbuck's study with its 'papers, parchments, books and nondescript trinkets and gewgaws, which seemed to have little to recommend them, besides rust and the antiquity which it indicates.'²⁵ Macpherson's text is a site of much controversy in Scott's novel, as the eponymous protagonist derides its claim of authenticity. There is also the sense with Oldbuck's collection, as with the Southern upper-class parlour, that the things which fill it have no practical use, like the 'miscellaneous trumpery' which clutters the *Antiquary's* floor, 'where it would have been as impossible to find any article wanted as to put it to any use when discovered.'²⁶ It is Scottish Romanticism that Twain associates with this excess of sentimental

²⁵ Scott, *The Antiquary*, p.22.

²⁶ *Ibid*, p.22.

objects, and with dirty, dusty, useless things. The Antiquary's objects are not neatly arranged and classified but undergoing constant interpretation and revision, and it is presumed that much of the collection may simply be miscellaneous contemporary objects mistaken for antiquarian finds. The Antiquary's collection, like that of Twain's elite Southern family, is essentially experimental and speculative, rather than a system of classification expressive of an already given national or regional identity; it articulates a speculative sense of region and nation pursued by means of objects and artefacts. As we will see in both Cormac McCarthy's and Frederick Jackson Turner's depiction of geological materials, matter and its forms and movements play a decisive role in the ongoing production of a sense of space and time, the bedrock of formulations of national and regional identity.

So it is with Twain's household objects: the properties and appearances of their materials are mutually constitutive of the expansion of local identities and values. It would be wrong to impute this whole collection to sentimental nostalgia and ignore its creative and productive aspects. This documenting, ethnographic snapshot catches these objects in an apparently fixed form, as congealed and atrophied. Yet their multiplicity and their various materials and textures are described in such detail, and at such length and breathless pace, that the objects become paradoxically active. This microcosm of white, upper-class Southern culture is in fact highly eclectic and playful, the objects' patterns of materials, engagements and investments constructing their own heterogeneous narrative of regional identity.

Yet in recognizing that these objects are not merely passive but play a central role in Twain's commentary, we need to think through more fully how

the movements of their materials relate to the effects of Scottish Romanticism in Southern culture in Twain's narrative. As I have shown in my Introduction and in reading the grave goods of James Hogg's sinner, Tim Ingold argues that all organisms and objects are in process, immersed in wider forces which provide the conditions for their carrying on in the world. To remove things from these material currents, and then attempt to reanimate them by mapping their relations or granting them a secondary 'agency', for Ingold only serves to obscure what really makes things active. In contrast to the 'material culture' model, he argues for a greater emphasis on materials rather than materiality, 'The properties of materials, in short, are not attributes but histories.'²⁷ Twain's objects form their own histories and geographies, from eighteenth-century Scotland to the Great Plains.

If, following Ingold, these objects are not temporally static or encased in their surfaces, but rather carry on along their own lines of formation and decay, then despite their defunct, historicized narratives they must also be part of Southern American modernity. In the case of Twain's objects, the sense of heaviness, mustiness and being frozen in a past state begins an association with an almost gothic aesthetic. Twain's assertion that the contents of the Southern parlour have not changed for generations gives this collection of things a quality of atemporality and anachronism. As with the grave goods of the sinner in Hogg's *Confessions*, the drive to keep things temporally in their place is overtaken by the natural processes which act on material artefacts, creating odd and dynamic relationships between preservation and decay, thereby problematizing and fragmenting linear historical constructions.

²⁷ Ingold, *Being Alive*, p.32.

Twain's parlour objects and their effects on Southern temporalities therefore follow on from the temporal aesthetics of Scott and Hogg, which as I argued in earlier chapters challenge the concept of teleological transitions within Scottish Enlightenment historicism.

Materials are indeed critical in Twain's aesthetic argument against the nostalgic relics of the upper-class Southern dwelling, as he stresses the musty, old-fashioned feel of the furnishings and the impractical, decaying grandeur of it all:

Window-shades of oil stuff, with milk-maids and ruined castles stencilled on them in fierce colours. Lambrequins dependent from gaudy boxings of beaten tin, gilded. Bedrooms with rag carpets [...] snuffy feather bed – not aired often enough [...] Not a bathroom in the house; and no visitor likely to come along who has ever seen one.²⁸

The materials, colours and textures of the objects are also highly significant, such as the 'horse-hair sofa which keeps sliding from under you,' for the stubborn and awkward qualities of these objects cause both the friction of mess and multiplicity and an impractical slipperiness.²⁹ Twain's punchline affirms his sense of Southern under-development, which becomes associated with a sentimental attachment to the past and the old social order. This image of the elite Southern home prefigures the description of the Grangerfords' mansion in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, which was composed in the same period as *Life on The Mississippi* (which itself contains an extract from the forthcoming novel). While Huck's inventory of the Grangerfords' parlour

²⁸ Twain, *Life*, p.262.

²⁹ *Ibid*, p.262.

does not contain such a comprehensive list of curios, the pile of books there also contains a volume of *Friendship's Offering*, and the parlour table is graced with a fruit basket that 'had apples and oranges and peaches and grapes piled up in it which was much redder and yellower and prettier than real ones is, but they warn't real because you could see where pieces had got chipped off.'³⁰ As with the generalized Southern parlour, the Grangerfords' mansion harbours a collection of gaudy, ephemeral things which paradoxically attempt to refer to something original, historical or authentic. The garish ceramic fruit bowl betrays its superficiality as a simulated image but also reveals its messy, worn materiality.

In the Grangerfords' parlour, a Scottish Romantic presence is signalled more explicitly by the mawkish paintings Huck calls 'Highland Mary's', referring to the female subject of several of Robert Burns's poems. The 'Mary's' are hung alongside 'Washingtons and Lafayettes, and battles', so seamlessly have Scottish Romantic themes and images become entangled with Southern upper-class lifestyles and political values.³¹ Despite the emphasis on the antiquated quality of the Southern home there is something strikingly modern about Twain's emphasis on the clichéd and gaudy nature of its contents. Postmodern theorist Jean Baudrillard has traced the development of the 'kitsch' object back to the rise of the department store in the late nineteenth century (1870-90), the same period in which Twain wrote both *Huckleberry Finn* and *Life on the Mississippi*. For Baudrillard, the kitsch object comprises

³⁰ Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, ed. by Emory Elliott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.93.

³¹ *Ibid*, p.93.

‘a superabundance of signs, of allegorical references, disparate connotations, a glorification of details and a saturation by details.’³² Some of the references to kitsch objects in his analysis reflect Scottish Romantic aesthetics as they are deployed by Twain, ‘the bygone, the “neo”, the exotic, the folksy’ recalling the synthetic ‘folk material’, neo-gothic and neo-medieval imagery which are perceived as staples of the Scottish Romantic tradition.³³ In this regard, the contents of the Southern parlour resist being temporalized; for the out-dated and backward emphasis Twain is trying to effect in his depiction is troubled by the presence of early kitsch and consumer objects, which speak to a more ‘modern’ aesthetic. In Tim Ingold’s terms, in their very materials these objects are operating to undermine Twain’s separations between old and new. At the same time, and at every step, these objects relate to Scottish Romanticism’s anachronistic presence in American modernity.

Beyond the home, as he moves into the realm of Southern public life, the narrator of *Life on the Mississippi* is never far from some material evidence of Walter Scott’s cultural entrenchment. For Twain, the State Capitol building of Louisiana in Baton Rouge has an incurable Scott problem, ‘for it is not conceivable that this little sham castle would ever have been built if he had not run the people mad, a couple of generations ago, with his medieval romances.’³⁴ A reference to *Don Quixote* is implicit here, as though the problem of Cervantes’ knight errant is being restaged in terms of the Southern affection for Scott, who, for Twain, does medievalism with a straight face in

³² Jean Baudrillard, *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures* (London: Sage Publications, 1999), p.110.

³³ Ibid, p.110.

³⁴ Twain, *Life*, p.270.

contrast to Cervantes' own satirical and anti-elitist stance, 'As far as our South is concerned, the good work done by Cervantes is pretty nearly a dead letter, so effectually has Scott's pernicious work undermined it.'³⁵ Ironically, the Capitol building was in fact designed by a Northerner, New York architect James H. Dakin. The issue here is again one of visual anachronism, as it is the continued upkeep of the Capitol building which most frustrates Twain, 'By itself the imitation castle is doubtless harmless [...] but as a symbol and breeder and sustainer of maudlin Middle-Age romanticism [...] it is necessarily a hurtful thing and a mistake.'³⁶ Whether in the form of the Capitol building or the typical Southern parlour, Twain again stages a dichotomy between sentimental simulation and honest modernity. Yet, as Ian Duncan writes, anachronism 'is itself a historicizing trope, developed in Scottish Enlightenment theorizations of uneven development.'³⁷ The Capitol building is in fact not old but new, not anachronistic but current. As it is continually rebuilt it endures into the present reality of Southern culture, and rather than being a relic of an 'other' past it in fact provides the precondition for concepts of modernity. Twain's constant emphasis on the necessity of wholeheartedly embracing a linear American modernity, implying that in many ways American identity just *is* modernity, refuses the creative drive towards reimagining the past which lies behind the erection and maintenance of the Capitol Building. In this mode, Twain reveals himself as something of an anti-Romantic antiquarian, like Jonathan Oldbuck or the editor of Hogg's

³⁵ Ibid, p.306.

³⁶ Ibid, p.271.

³⁷ Duncan, *Scott's Shadow*, p.248.

Confessions; for he seeks out and categorizes relics of antiquity purely to outline his notion of a progressive and technological modernity.

During Twain's stay in New Orleans in *Life on the Mississippi*, he describes its famous graveyards and muses on the social role of burying the dead in Southern life. He scorns the flowers and relics left for the dead and describes a cheap alternative used by the less affluent in New Orleans, a traditional French mourning wreath called an 'immortelle':

The immortelle requires no attention: you just hang it up, and there you are; just leave it alone, it will take care of your grief for you, and keep it in mind better than you can; stands weather first rate, and lasts like boiler iron.³⁸

Again, Twain insists on the absurdity of linking objects with human affections and sentiments, and the use of an immortelle signifies a kind of juvenile bad taste and the more excessive aspects of grief. Later in his discussion of inhumation, Twain speaks of his desire to be cremated rather than being buried and thus permitted to physically linger. This problem with relics, temporality and decay, runs through his Southern travelogue. He describes, with a dose of hyperbolic humour, the story of a 'colored acquaintance' who, on the loss of his daughter, decided to buy coffin costing twenty-six dollars, well beyond his means. Twain remarks that the coffin 'would have cost less than four, probably, if it had been built to put something useful into.'³⁹ The notion of grief as affectation and sentimentality seems extreme here, yet it is in keeping with Twain's strict demarcations between people and 'things'. Once a

³⁸ Twain, *Life* p.279.

³⁹ *Ibid*, p.282.

body becomes thing-like, any sentimental or financial gestures on its behalf become ridiculous and are indicative of an irrational, premodern sensibility.

In Twain's account, practices of interring in coffins and tombs, laying wreaths and indulging in maudlin and extreme displays of emotion are treated as barbaric and gothic behaviours. Decomposition itself represents the loss of the cohesion of the skin, muscles and ligaments which hold form together, as the body loses its organic integrity. Decay also allows for the recycling and reconfiguring of matter, ideas and traditions, rather than allowing the old to be immediately superseded by the new which would be a more hygienic transition in Twain's terms. He describes this problem more explicitly in a section titled 'Hygiene and Sentiment':

It is all grotesque, ghastly, horrible. Graveyards may have been justifiable in the bygone ages, when nobody knew that for every dead body put into the ground, to glut the earth and the plant-roots, and the air with disease-germs [...] maybe a hundred persons must die before their proper time.⁴⁰

Twain's language expresses a distaste for the process of decomposition, for the very idea of disintegration and the continued organic life of the body after death. He attacks the fetishizing of the relics of the dead, which is never enough to compensate for the presumed damage done by the corpse to public health, 'A Saint can never quite return the principal [...] for his dead body *kills* people, whereas his relics *heal* only – they never restore the dead to life.'⁴¹ In the burying of the dead, as perhaps with the lack of a toilet in the elite

⁴⁰ Ibid, p.280.

⁴¹ Ibid, pp.280-281.

Southern home, sentiment and archaic beliefs win out over hygiene and progress. The narrator of *Life on the Mississippi* explicitly marks his dislike of all things which hang around beyond their proper time, to gather dust, infect the air and cause theatrical displays of emotion. This problem of duration is perhaps also one of genre – of Romantic historicism, antiquarianism and Gothic – overtaking modern realism with its immediacy, brevity and authenticity.

Scott's influence has even been absorbed into Southern journalism, as Twain cites the over-use of the phrase 'the beauty and the chivalry of New Orleans', to refer to the respectable women and men of the city. For the New Orleans reporter, the phrase has 'a kind of swell medieval bulliness and tinsel about it that pleases his gaudy barbaric soul.'⁴² Scott's style has here infiltrated Southern language and modes of self-representation. For Twain, the 'finest thing' which he has witnessed throughout the entire Mississippi journey was from the steam tug as it approached New Orleans, 'the curving frontage of the crescent city lit up with the white glare of five miles of electric lights. It was a wonderful sight, and very beautiful.'⁴³ Here it is the aesthetic of encroaching modernity which he finds most appealing in Southern life and culture. Like Scott's Scottish-set texts, Twain's dissection of Southern society and culture never escapes from an 'improving' modern eye, a gaze which constantly makes temporal and cultural comparisons.

Yet despite caricaturing Southern mores and sensibilities so forcefully, *Life on the Mississippi* also contains a critique of Twain's own position of

⁴² Ibid, p.298.

⁴³ Ibid, p.326.

cutting, exaggerated satire, in the figure of the tugboat parrot which he describes as he sails upriver from New Orleans. A 'sentimental and romantic' journey upriver is ruined by the parrot 'whose tireless comments upon the scenery and the guests were always this-worldly and often profane'.⁴⁴ The parrot acts as a highly satirical figure with an unsettling laugh:

a superabundance of the discordant, ear-splitting, metallic laugh common to his breed – a machine made laugh, a Frankenstein laugh, with the soul left out of it. He applied it to every sentimental remark, and every pathetic song [...] Romance and sentiment cannot long survive this sort of discouragement; so the singing and talking presently ceased; which so delighted the parrot that he cursed himself hoarse for joy.⁴⁵

Twain's fondness for new technologies and his suspicion of the romantic and sentimental are captured in the mechanistic laugh of the parrot. Yet the soulless laugh of the bird seems to undercut many of his earlier statements on sham sentimentality in Southern culture, and the exaggerated nature of his denunciation of Scott consequently begins to collapse into a parodic self-image, a caricature of a Northern, Republican cultural critic.

Like the conjoined protagonists of his story 'Those Extraordinary Twins' (1894), 'Twain' seems split between two opposing but inextricable perspectives. The eponymous twins are Luigi and Angelo, who are conjoined and must share one torso and one pair of legs. They appear to play out

⁴⁴ Ibid, p.311.

⁴⁵ Ibid, pp.311-2.

Romantic political and social tensions, as free-thinking Luigi reads Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason*, while Angelo picks up his *Whole Duty of Man*, a protestant devotional text.⁴⁶ In the split between the twins we can read a Byronic assertive masculinity and rejection of conventional religion in Luigi, as embodied in Paine's text, and a more conservative, dutiful and Burkean sensibility in Angelo. In many ways this dualism mirrors the tensions not only between Clemens and Twain but within the persona of Twain itself: the supposed oppositions between a foreign, Romantic, chivalrous and backward South, and the Republican, American, reformist forces of progress. Luigi appears as on the surface a more Twainian figure with his irreverent humour, as, for example, when Angelo sings 'From Greenland's Icy Mountains' and Luigi is determined to drown out 'his plaintive tenor with a rude and rollicking song delivered in a thundering bass.'⁴⁷ 'Those Extraordinary Twins' was published as a short story after being extracted from the body of what would become the novel *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, itself the story of an impossible combination, as Twain explained, 'It is not practical or rational to try to tell two stories at the same time; so I dug out the farce and kept the tragedy.'⁴⁸ We could say that in *Life on the Mississippi* there are at least two Souths, and Twain, perhaps unwittingly, finds himself grappling with an uneven and divergent temporal development embodied particularly in white, upper-class Southern culture. The Civil War, which for Twain should be the hinge between an old and a new South, paradoxically collects around itself the imagery of an anachronistic and often Scottish Romantic past.

⁴⁶ Mark Twain, 'Those Extraordinary Twins', *Pudd'nhead Wilson and Those Extraordinary Twins*, ed. by Sydney E. Berger (New York: Norton, 2005), pp.123-186 (p.134).

⁴⁷ Ibid, p.135.

⁴⁸ Ibid, p.185.

Mardi Gras, *Pudd'nhead Wilson* and Racial Performance

In Twain's comments on Walter Scott's influence in the nineteenth-century South which I examined in chapter one he asserts that:

His mediaeval business, supplemented by the monsters and the oddities, and the pleasant creatures from fairy-land, is finer to look at than the poor fantastic inventions and performances of the revelling rabble of the priest's day [...] Take away the romantic mysteries, the kings and knights and big sounding titles, and Mardi-Gras would die, down there in the South.

Twain links the New Orleans Mardi Gras with a naïve reaction, the appropriation of an old European religious form into a Scott-fuelled pageant of sham folk tradition and medievalism. In *Life on the Mississippi* he explains that he arrived too late in New Orleans to witness that year's pageant (1882), but he describes one he had witnessed twenty-four years earlier with a strange degree of enjoyment, considering the invective he would, only a paragraph later, pour on the event. Twain describes the parade by the white Krewe of Comus, 'with knights and nobles and so on, clothed in silken and golden Paris-made gorgeousness [...] and in their train all manner of giants, dwarfs, monstrosities, and other diverting grotesquerie – a startling and wonderful sort of show.'⁴⁹ Although his recollection of the sensual spectacle of the finery of Comus could perhaps be ironic, the narratorial voice still seems strangely taken by the atmosphere of the 1850s pageant. Twain here is clearly a spectator of Mardi Gras and not a participant. Certainly, by the late nineteenth

⁴⁹ Twain, *Life*, p.302.

century Mardi Gras had been appropriated and organized by the white elites of New Orleans.⁵⁰ It can therefore be argued that the event during and after Reconstruction exhibited the elite values of social conservatism and white supremacy which Twain had come to associate with Scott. White carnival krewes such as Rex and Comus drew on British folk myths such as the Robin Hood tradition, familiar from *Ivanhoe* and other texts, and often featured medieval knights. This aspect of carnival practice again returns us to the Scottish Romantic tradition, adding another dimension to the connection Twain makes between the two in terms of the reconstruction and synthesizing heritage and tradition, associated particularly with Scott's 'invention' of Scottish heritage aesthetics.

Indeed, there appears to be some clear reasoning behind Twain's association of Scott with Mardi Gras parades, carnivals and neo-medieval tournaments. Yet there is another dimension to this connection which relates to performance, assertion and heritage. Reid Mitchell situates the spirit of the New Orleans carnival in a paradoxical display, 'to announce an identification with one point of view [...] while openly behaving in a contradictory fashion.'⁵¹ He analyses Mardi Gras as an assertive display by numerous social and ethnic groups in New Orleans which often led to violence and tended to reveal societal divisions and conflicts. We can therefore see why the motif of Mardi Gras was so emotive for Twain, both in its aesthetic of exaggeration and paradox, two qualities inherent in the persona of Mark Twain and his literary style, but also in its problematic and often violent pluralism, which contests a

⁵⁰ See Reid Mitchell, *All on a Mardi Gras Day: Episodes in the History of New Orleans Carnival* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).

⁵¹ *Ibid.* p.1.

monolithic narrative of American national progress and cohesion. Scott's depictions of uneven historical transitions in the Waverley novels involving his protagonists' awkward and compromised negotiations with the stubborn plurality of their historical moment provide a clear foundation for Twain's own rhetorical position in *Life on the Mississippi*, and a way of understanding the metaphor of Mardi Gras. Considering the uncomfortable heterogeneity of the parade and Twain's distaste for medievalism, pomp, ceremony and excess, it is clear why Mardi Gras receives so much criticism. The 'dress up' or masked aspect of carnival more generally is also significant; Twain's novels often depict acts of dressing in disguise, such as Huck Finn's unconvincing attempt to disguise himself as a girl (a ploy which Tom Driscoll also uses to disguise his night-time burglaries in *Puddn'head Wilson*), Hank Morgan's discomfort in his choking armour, and King Arthur's masquerading as peasant and slave in *Connecticut Yankee*. Mitchell's analysis of the role of the mask and costume in the Mardi Gras revels could be applied not merely to many of Twain's characters but to Clemens and his alter ego, 'The transformation of individual into masker, of self into character, separates people from their actions and permits extravagances [...] of consumption, of eros, of physical movement, of noise and music and speech, but extravagances of assertion and violence as well'.⁵² There are, therefore, dramatic and indeed literary dimensions to the carnival which perhaps initially prompted Twain to associate it with Scott.

The African American elements of carnival also became part of this 'invented tradition', from the Mardi Gras Indians in the late nineteenth century to the later founding of the Zulu Krewe, whose wearing of grass skirts,

⁵² Ibid, p.4.

animal print, and extravagant headdresses, as well as their 'primitive' style African dance, drew disapprobation from middle-class blacks during the Civil Rights era for perceived elements of racial caricature. The Mardi Gras Indians represented an act of 'integrating American elements into African traditions and creating a new cultural form.'⁵³ The African-Creole traditions of Carnival were a vehicle for black New Orleanians to assert themselves on the streets of the city and 'explore white society and confound it through disguise.'⁵⁴ Masquerade as a carnival practice lends another perspective to the scene in *Puddn'head Wilson* (1894), where enslaved Roxanna dresses up her own son as 'white' and the Driscoll heir as a black slave. This and other instances of inversion and acts of masking in Twain's writing explain his preoccupation, although largely negative, with Mardi Gras festivities. In late nineteenth-century America we can see objections to both Walter Scott and Mardi Gras being expressed in the same voice, one which is clearly audible in *Life on the Mississippi*, a voice representing Protestantism, Republicanism, and a 'Northern' sensibility which questions the validity and politics of a tradition perceived as backward, juvenile and contrived.

Pudd'nhead Wilson has a small-town setting like that of *Tom Sawyer*, and Dawson's Landing may be another version of Clemens' Hannibal in Missouri. The eponymous 'pudd'nhead' is David Wilson, 'a young fellow of Scotch parentage.'⁵⁵ Thanks to his college education and intellectual pursuits, coupled with an inappropriate remark about a dog, Wilson becomes something of an outsider in the town, unable to procure the legal work for

⁵³ Ibid, p.7.

⁵⁴ Ibid, p.37.

⁵⁵ Twain, *Puddn'head Wilson*, p.5.

which he is well-qualified. He is a collector and record keeper, most notably of fingerprints, which he labels, dates and archives. It is, therefore, Wilson who ultimately delves into his collection of prints to find proof of the origin of the two swapped boys who stand at the centre of the narrative. Twain's novel mingles acts of classification with acts of obfuscation and disguise, revealing the absurd and arbitrary nature of social and racial demarcation, like the inversions and tensions inherent in Mardi Gras itself, where racial difference is both asserted and destabilized.

Twain and the Scottish Heritage Tradition

In other areas of his life, Clemens endorsed and amused himself with notions of Scotland and Scottish heritage beyond the Romantic-era writing he derided. He formed a close friendship with the Scottish authors George Macdonald and Robert Louis Stevenson, two figures who were significantly influenced by Scottish Romantic writing, particularly James Hogg's work.⁵⁶ Like Frederick Douglass, Twain was a regular speaker at meetings of St. Andrew's Societies, and in his speeches he both plays on and satirizes his familiarity with Scotland and Scottish mores. This kind of performance is visible in a speech given at a St. Andrew's Society dinner in London in November 1873:

I remember when in Edinburgh I was nearly always taken for a Scotchman. Oh yes! I had my clothes some part colored tartan, and rather enjoyed being taken for a Scotchman. I stuck a big feather in my cap too, and the people would follow me for miles. They thought I was a

⁵⁶ See Tom Hubbard, 'Mark Twain and Scotland', *Scottish Affairs*, 82 (2015), 119-138.

Highlander, and some of the best judges in Scotland said they had never seen a Highland costume like mine. What's more, one of those judges fined me for wearing it – out of mere envy, I suppose.⁵⁷

This anecdote satirizes notions of performance versus authenticity, image opposed to reality, within the theatrical enactment of a hackneyed heritage aesthetic. Yet this performance appears as a manoeuvre worthy of Scott, since the theatrical reappropriation of Highland imagery was the hallmark of Scott's staging of the visit of King George IV to Scotland in 1822. Twain's speech also satirizes the very impulse behind the heritage societies in the United States, conveying a sense that the tartanry and Highland culture they celebrate is already an absurd curiosity in late nineteenth-century Scotland. Yet such satire is also playful and self-deprecating, showcasing Twain's own penchant for theatricality. Twain even insists that, like St Andrew, his birthday falls on the 30th of November.⁵⁸

This element of playful performance and its pitfalls is a conflict within many of Twain's protagonists, as in the case of Hank Morgan in *Connecticut Yankee* as he seeks to evade the law, 'There were plenty of ways to get rid of that officer by some simple and plausible device, but no, I must pick out a picturesque one; it is the crying defect of my character.'⁵⁹ The tendency to place the picturesque and affective before the practical and sensible can also be applied to the placing of immortelles, the collecting of trinkets or the performances of Mardi Gras. This opposition between theatrical sentiment

⁵⁷ Paul Fatout, *Mark Twain Speaking* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2006), p.82.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, p.425.

⁵⁹ Mark Twain, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, ed. by Allison R. Ensor (New York: Norton, 1982), p.215.

and restrained practicality is at the heart of Twain's ambivalence toward white Southern culture. It is also a problem for Tom Sawyer at numerous points in his adventures, for example when he imagines making his entrance to Aunt Polly after the whole town has given him up for dead 'the theatrical gorgeousness of the thing appealed strongly to his nature.'⁶⁰ There is, therefore, a sharp tension within Twain's literary style and values between a worthy realism and the imaginative play of image and excess. This friction is accompanied by a sense that the love of performance and illusion is misleading and harmful, for as with the gaudy barbarism of the New Orleans reporter, there is violence in the excesses of Southern culture.

Medievalism and *Connecticut Yankee*

Susan Manning has argued that the connection between Twain and Scott is bound up with the Civil War but not in the directly causal way which Twain argues for in *Life on the Mississippi*. In her view, the issue is instead 'a very real relationship between Scott and the Civil War as elements unassimilable in the redaction of an American post-Romantic ideology of nationhood – an embodiment that itself exemplifies a wider problem of the failure of idealism.'⁶¹ Indeed it is clearly not the 'influence' of Scott on Southern culture which is at issue, but instead the association of that culture with facets of Romantic nationalism, regionalism and heritage practices, which for Twain speak to an excessive and dangerous cultural and political dislocation that then often finds ready metaphors in Scottish history and

⁶⁰ Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, ed. by Peter Stoneley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p.97.

⁶¹ Susan Manning, 'Did Mark Twain Bring Down the Temple?', p.21.

Romantic literature. Despite his own theatricalities and those of his protagonists, Twain still seems to find the whole notion of physical pageantry distasteful, for example, in his comments on the anachronistic staging of a medieval tournament in Brooklyn, ‘coming out of its grave to flaunt its tinsel trumpery and perform its “chivalrous” absurdities in the high noon of the nineteenth century, and under the patronage of a great, broad-awake city and an advanced civilisation.’⁶²

On one level, Twain appears to ascribe to Scott’s medievalism everything that is anachronistic, barbaric and sentimental in Southern culture. Yet later Southern writers such as William Faulkner would draw on this very aspect of Southern culture in their writing, as Tison Pugh and Angela Weisl argue:

Latent medievalism and the darkness of the gothic tradition imbue their fictions with the appropriate atmosphere and philosophical tenor to consider the condition of the South and the cultural weight of losing the Civil War, a conflict fought to defend the indefensible practice of slavery.⁶³

The necessity of medievalism and the Gothic in representing Southern history recalls Poe’s gothic translation of Southern racial anxieties in *Pym* and ‘The Gold-Bug’, where that genre provides the foundation for Poe’s inversions of racial, temporal and spatial markers. While the aesthetics of medievalism and the Gothic would be critical for William Faulkner and Cormac McCarthy in

⁶² Mark Twain, ‘The Tournament in A.D. 1870’, in Allison R. Ensor, ed., *Mark Twain, A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court* (New York: Norton, 1982), p.271.

⁶³ Tison Pugh and Angela Jane Weisl, *Medievalisms: Making the Past in the Present* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), p.42.

their representations of Southern life and history, for Twain both signify modes of representation to be roundly rejected.

In *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* he launches his most consistent critique of medievalism and, by association, its literary proponents. The novel is narrated by Hank Morgan, the eponymous Yankee who is transported back to England in the Middle Ages during the reign of King Arthur. The association of medievalism with primitivism, violence and irrational beliefs is opposed by Morgan to the scientific and social advancements of his own American milieu. While Twain does not specifically refer to the Ku Klux Klan's use of medieval regalia and notions of knighthood in his invectives against medievalism, in *Connecticut Yankee* the Medieval worldview is based on the normalcy of slave-owning. Twain compares the poor 'freemen' of Arthur's day with the 'poor whites' of the South at the time of the Civil War, who 'did also finally shoulder their muskets and pour out their lives in an effort to prevent the destruction of that very institution which degraded them.'⁶⁴ Morgan continues:

there was only one redeeming feature connected with that pitiful piece of history; and that was, that secretly the 'poor white' did detest the slave-lord, and did feel his own shame. That feeling was not brought to the surface, but the fact that it was there and could have been brought out, under favouring circumstances, was something – in fact it was enough; for it showed that man is at bottom a man, after all, even if it doesn't show on the outside.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Twain, *Connecticut Yankee*, p.172.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p.172.

Morgan concludes his description with a rather Burnsian phrasing of the image of universal man, reminiscent of Frederick Douglass's rhetorical use of the Scottish poet. His position here is that Walter Scott's work sanitized the Middle Ages, eliding its essential violence, racism and political tyranny, just as his works purified and upheld similar values in the nineteenth-century South:

Suppose Sir Walter, instead of putting conversations into the mouths of his characters, had allowed the characters to speak for themselves? We should have had talk from Rachel and *Ivanhoe* and the soft lady Rowena which would embarrass a tramp in our day.⁶⁶

Twain here reiterates his portrait of Scott as an idealist enemy of realism and naturalism in historical representation.

His staunch critique of literary neo-medievalism also connects to his distaste for a gothic sensibility, as these two genres developed in tandem in the late eighteenth century. The emphasis on the premodern in those genres is often linked by Twain to notions of savagery, in a similar vein to Scott's association of Scottish primitivism with American Indian peoples; as Morgan asserts, 'Measured by modern standards, they were merely modified savages, those people.'⁶⁷ Later Morgan describes a magician who appears at a monastery to astonish the monks with his miracles:

His dress was the extreme of the fantastic; as showy and foolish as the sort of thing an Indian medicine-man wears. He was mowing, and

⁶⁶ Ibid, p.26. Twain's citing of 'Rachel' rather than 'Rebecca' as the heroine of Scott's *Ivanhoe* in this passage is based on a mistake made in the first American edition of the novel.

⁶⁷ Ibid, p.64.

mumbling, and gesticulating, and drawing mystical figures in the air and on the floor, – the regular thing, you know.⁶⁸

Once again, Twain insists on the archaic nature of performance and theatricality as an attribute of premodern systems of belief. Yet this kind of physical theatre was a staple of late nineteenth-century Mardi Gras, in the form of the Indians and other black Krewes, and this mode of performance is temporalized and racialized by Twain. Here he seems to resurrect temporal categories typical of Scott's post-Enlightenment writing, where Native Americans are perceived as occupying an earlier stage of human development which white Europeans have long left behind. For Susan Manning, the figure of Merlin in the novel can be read as an image of Scott himself as Twain perceived him – a master of sham illusions.⁶⁹

Yet despite his emphasis on the savagery of the Middle Ages, ironically it is Hank himself who is the author of the most violent episode in *Connecticut Yankee*, when, with the aid of nineteenth-century technology, he electrocutes thousands of knights in a single instant:

Our camp was enclosed with a solid wall of the dead – a bulwark, a breastwork of corpses, you may say [...] I shot the current through all the fences and struck the whole host dead in their tracks! *There* was a groan you could *hear*! It voiced the death-pang of eleven thousand men. It swelled out on the night with awful pathos.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Ibid, p.132.

⁶⁹ Manning, 'Did Mark Twain bring down the Temple?', p.15.

⁷⁰ Twain, *Connecticut Yankee*, p.255.

Here it is unclear whether it is the primitivism of medieval England that is the violent and barbaric force or the onrush of the modern and technological in the figure of Hank himself. In Hank's final move, the institution of chivalry is destroyed by the influx of an anachronistic modernity, and the scene is deeply ambivalent despite the scathing critique of medieval values which the text appears to represent.

Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn

It is in the figure of Tom Sawyer that Twain's depiction of a false 'literary' consciousness is taken to the extreme. As the most Quixotic figure in Twain's oeuvre, Tom's speech is a chaos of allusions, images and literary performance. This theatricality is painfully felt in his botched attempt to rescue Jim at the end of *Huckleberry Finn*, where he spends an excessive amount of time plotting a literary escape and planning Jim's coat of arms:

On the scutcheon we'll have a bend *or* in the dexter base, a saltire murrey in the fess, with a dog, couchant, for common charge, and under his foot a chain embattled, for slavery, with a chevron *vert* in a chief engrailed [...] crest, a runaway nigger, sable, with his bundle over his shoulder on a bar sinister.⁷¹

The centrality given to the improvisation of image, colour, sign and lineage and the assertion of nobility are all questionable qualities in Twain's writing and are expressed as a kind of nonsense language. Yet the assertion of invented heritage and nobility in visual and theatrical terms again returns us to the pageantry of Mardi Gras. As we have seen, among some of Twain's

⁷¹ Twain, *Huckleberry Finn*, p.232.

protagonists there is a deep affection for all things gaudy and histrionic, as when ‘Tom joined the new order of Cadets of Temperance, being attracted by the showy character of their “regalia”.’⁷² Invented regalia is a staple of Mardi Gras parades from Rex to the Zulu king, but also anticipates, more disturbingly, the aesthetic of the Ku Klux Klan.

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (1876) appears more nostalgic and confined than *Huckleberry Finn*, as it details the anatomy of a town rather than a region. Yet the text contains its own satire of Scott’s writing in the maudlin and juvenile school compositions of St. Petersburg’s young ladies. Signalled by a ‘petted melancholy’ and ‘opulent gush of “fine language”’, the themes of the compositions remain eternally the same, “Memories of Other Days;” “Religion in History;” “Dream Land;” “The Advantages of Culture;” “Forms of Political Government Compared and Contrasted;”⁷³ The focus on historical, cultural and temporal comparisons and on ways of structuring social life are familiar themes from Scottish Enlightenment thought, as well as being the stuff of anthropological or archaeological investigation. Two of the compositions are in fact based on Romantic-era works by Byron and Felicia Hemans. Here again Twain reiterates the connection between the writing of the Romantic era and a juvenile, feminine bad taste.

Huckleberry Finn, the direct sequel to *Tom Sawyer*, stands as Twain’s most daring experiment in dialect and voice. The spectre of Scott also looms large in the novel, signalled by the explicit presence of, in Twain’s view, his ideological opponent, Cervantes:

⁷² Twain, *Tom Sawyer*, p.131.

⁷³ Ibid, p.127.

I didn't see no di'monds, and I told Tom Sawyer so. He said there was loads of them there, anyway; and he said there was A-rabs there, too, and elephants and things. I said, why couldn't we see them, then? He said if I warn't so ignorant, but had read a book called 'Don Quixote', I would know without asking. He said it was all done by enchantment.⁷⁴

Ironically, Tom has rather misinterpreted the import of those passages in Cervantes' novel where the knight believes ordinary sights to be scenes from his chivalric romances. When the Don mistakes a herd of sheep for an approaching army or windmills for giants, Sancho Panza is there to disabuse him. However, although Tom appears here as a highly Quixotic figure, Huck, due to his lower-class and uneducated status, is not able to fully correct him, despite the evidence of his senses. In this passage, Cervantes' novel itself plays a similar role to *Ivanhoe* – a text which, in Twain's view has inspired harmful nonsense and anachronistic versions of reality – despite Twain's opposing of the two texts in *Life on the Mississippi*. It was Clemens' sojourn on the steamboat for the latter book, where he accomplished his most explicit critique of Scott, which seems to have allowed him to finally finish *Huckleberry Finn*. Following a similar realist agenda to that of William Dean Howells, he took great pains with the different forms of dialect presented in the novel, which in the author's explanatory note are referred to as Missouri Negro dialect, the backwoods South-Western dialect and the 'Pike-Country' dialect of Missouri. Naturally the notion of vernacular frontier or border speech, as well as the juxtaposition of different dialects and rustic, regional forms of English, can be traced back further to Walter Scott's early Scottish-set Waverley novels, such

⁷⁴ Twain, *Huckleberry Finn*, p.14.

as *Waverley* itself and *Rob Roy*. However, Twain accomplishes in *Huckleberry Finn* what Scott never sought to perform and what Hogg only subtly gestured towards – the transformation of omniscient narration into first-person dialect speech. While Hogg in the *Three Perils of Man* allows vernacular character voice to transform into omniscient Standard English narration, perspective is never wholly given over to the dialect speaker, and not with such psychological depth and detail as in Clemens's novel.

As in Scott's national tales, *Huckleberry Finn* charts a journey into new territory for Huck and Jim – the deep South – and into the experience of frontier-style societies, with familial feuds, vigilante justice and a journey to a more 'primitive' time and place. As in the early *Waverley* novels, Huck's journey crosses cultural, temporal and racialized frontiers. Huck and Jim miss the river opening which will lead them North to Cairo and the free states and instead travel into the deep South. While Huck cannot find the intellectual, discursive language to describe the culture and practices of the Antebellum deep South, as the narrator of *Life on the Mississippi* is able to do in the 1880s, his account still charts the practices of the slave states made foreign and unfamiliar, and in this way opens them to comparison and critique. Like *Waverley*, *Huckleberry Finn* is set about half a century before the time of Clemens's writing and depicts a culture which appears foreign and lawless to its contemporary readership. This half-century gap seems critical as it does in *Waverley*, facilitating an attempt to catalogue a vast change in manners and, perhaps optimistically, the increased unification and modernization of a new state as in Scott's Britain of the early nineteenth century. In *Huckleberry Finn*, the name 'Walter Scott' is used for a shipwreck in the process of being looted,

perhaps signalling Twain's sense of the collapse and deterioration of the Scottish writer's legacy. The wreck becomes a death trap for the gang of thieves whose boat Jim and Huck steal after their raft is destroyed, and Huck sees the ship, 'dim and dusky, sliding along down! A kind of cold shiver went through me [...] there warn't much chance for anybody being alive in her.'⁷⁵ The 'Walter Scott' breaking up and borne away by the Mississippi current with its dead or dying cargo is an unsettling, even gothic image. Again, Twain evokes Scott's influence on the South as embedded in everyday objects and things, yet the 'Walter Scott' is no longer transporting Southern travellers but splitting apart and becoming increasingly submerged in a downward current.

Huck finds the thieves have salvaged several books from the wreck about 'kings, and dukes, and earls, and such, and how gaudy they dressed and how much style they put on', and Scott is yet again associated with outdated rank and exaggerated style and pageantry.⁷⁶ Yet the most obvious signalling of the dangers of the Scottish Romantic tradition in *Huckleberry Finn* is the episode of the feud between the Grangerfords and Shepherdsons. Both families attend a Presbyterian church where Huck struggles to grasp the doctrine of 'preforeordination', combining ideas of predestination and foreordination, followed by a dry discussion of salvation through grace and faith.⁷⁷ The hypocrisy of the two aristocratic families, who carry guns to church and continuing a bloody feud, creates parallels with Hogg's depiction of extreme, frontier-style religion in the *Confessions*.

⁷⁵ Ibid, p.70.

⁷⁶ Ibid, p.71.

⁷⁷ Ibid, p.101.

The classic Scott theme of civilization versus savagery is played out in the figures of both Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn, and for the latter especially, the performance of civilized behaviour is almost impossible, 'he had to talk properly that speech was become insipid in his mouth; whithersoever he turned, the bars and shackles of civilisation shut him in and bound him hand and foot.'⁷⁸ Out of his natural wild and primitive condition Huck has lost what made him 'picturesque' much like the aestheticization of the primitive in Scott's savages such as Rob Roy MacGregor. Huck Finn's famous intention to 'light out for the Territory' to escape 'sivilizing' forces recalls Scott's frontiers between civilization and savagery, as when Jeanie Deans' son, known as the Whistler, escapes civil society to join up with his Indian counterparts.⁷⁹

Huckleberry Finn continues Twain's diatribe against affected Southern sentimentality from *Life on the Mississippi*, most strikingly in the form of the two fraudsters, the king and the duke. When the fraudsters infiltrate the Wilks family as long-lost uncles they are greeted with communal hysterical emotion:

Then one of them got on one side of the coffin, and t'other on t'other side, and they kneeled down and rested their foreheads on the coffin, and let on to pray all to theirselves [...] it worked the crowd like you never see anything like it, and so everyone broke down and went sobbing right out loud [...] I never see anything so disgusting.⁸⁰

The physical theatricality of the King and the Duke, their ability to 'work the crowd', is depicted in deeply negative terms in this scene, but this exact

⁷⁸ Ibid, p.199.

⁷⁹ Ibid, p.262.

⁸⁰ Ibid, pp.149-50.

theatrical quality is a positive, if ambivalent feature in Twainian protagonists such as Hank Morgan or even Huck Finn himself, as in the scene where he pretends Jim has merely dreamt that he became separated from him in the fog. The ability to manipulate and direct attention, energy and emotion (the very qualities necessary for a literary work), is also here a practice of fraudulent illusion.

In this chapter, I have taken the Scottish Romantic literary influence deeper into the nineteenth-century South. I have moved from arguing for Edgar Allan Poe's generic and stylistic links with the Scottish Romantic tradition, to showing some of the many ways in which Mark Twain signals a rhetorical rejection of Walter Scott and his influence on Southern culture. However, this rejection itself feeds into Twain's construction of the Postbellum South as problematically plural and fostering many different disjunctive and in his view un-American temporalities. In *Life on the Mississippi*, Scottish Romanticism is the source of this conflicted historical moment which intrudes through the material properties of the objects Twain unearths in his critique of Southern upper-class life, and in the performances of Mardi Gras and Southern medievalism. These concerns are replicated in much of his fiction, which cannot, however, escape the powerful imprint of Scott on the form of the historical novel and the Scottish influence on American dialect fiction more generally. By the later nineteenth century, we can see through Twain's writings the beginning of Scottish Romantic forms and aesthetics as a shorthand or cultural currency, which Twain is employing to begin a conversation about Southern culture and identity. The next two chapters argue that this phenomenon of signalling 'Southernness' through Scottish Romantic

references continues in the work of William Faulkner and Cormac McCarthy. Twain's image of the reactionary Sir Walter conjuring Southern anachronisms proves to be an enduring image for those Southern writers who came after him. However, within the context of Faulkner's Modernism, the drive to wholeheartedly reject Romantic-era culture was no longer critical, and because of this he was able to offer a clearer thematic debt to Scott in his work, and a more ambivalent perspective on the Scottish writer's legacy in the South.

Chapter 4: 'From Culloden to Carolina': William Faulkner and Scottish Romanticism

In 1945 William Faulkner wrote an appendix to *The Sound and the Fury* (1929) titled 'Appendix/Compson, 1699-1945'. He wished the title to read simply 'Compson' with the following dates, as the Appendix was to be 'an obituary, not a segregation.'¹ Perhaps with a consciousness of how the term segregation operates in the context of the South, Faulkner seeks not to use the history of the Compsons to set them apart, but to emphasize their obsolescence. He stressed the importance of the Appendix as a complement to the novel, stating that it was 'the key to the whole book'.² He saw the details of the Compsons's ancestry as essential to a proper understanding of the novel, which is deeply concerned with both inheritance and dispossession. The Compson lineage is not merely attributed by Faulkner to their ancestors in blood, but also to those who paved the way for their elite status. The first was a Chickasaw 'dispossessed King', Ikkemotubbe, a fictional historical figure who appears elsewhere in Faulkner's oeuvre as the original owner of much of the land in Yoknapatawpha County. Ikkemotubbe 'granted out of his vast lost domain a solid square mile [...] to the grandson of a Scottish refugee who had lost his own birth right by casting his lot with a king who himself had been

¹ William Faulkner, 'Appendix', *The Sound and the Fury*, ed. by David Minter (New York: Norton, 1994), pp.200-12, (p.204).

² Ibid, p.204.

dispossessed.’³ This addition of a native ancestry for his Scottish planter family emphasizes Faulkner’s typical depiction of Scottish heritage as always already problematically mixed, as we will see later in the figure of Lucas Beauchamp. Andrew Jackson is also credited in the appendix as laying the foundations for the Compsons and he is associated with Mark Twain’s ‘Walter Scott disease’. Of Scots-Irish descent and a famous duellist, Jackson is described as a ‘Great White Father with a sword’, as though he is the embodiment of the original antiquated Southern patriarch. Jackson’s presidency oversaw the Indian Removal Act, which saw Ikkemotubbe’s real counterparts give up their lands in Mississippi in return for safe passage to Indian Territory in Oklahoma. Scottish writing and Scottish emigrants proved to be central in the construction of what would become the American South and its vision of itself, as much as the Scottish diaspora in America affected popular images of Scotland.

The Scottish refugee whom Ikkemotubbe makes way for is Quentin Maclachlan, who flees to America following the Jacobite defeat at Culloden Moor, ‘with a claymore and the tartan he wore by day and slept under by night.’⁴ In this manner Faulkner places the origins of the Compson family firmly within the classic setting of Scottish Romantic writing, the 1745 Jacobite uprising and its aftermath. Quentin then flees again during the Revolutionary war, ‘having fought once against an English king and lost, he would not make that mistake twice.’⁵ His son, the unfortunately named Charles Stuart, is himself involved in another revolutionary plot, one to secede

³ Ibid, p.203.

⁴ Ibid, p.204.

⁵ Ibid, p.204.

the Mississippi Valley to Spain. On the failure of this he is forced to flee 'running true to family tradition, with his son and the old claymore and the tartan.'⁶ The grandson, Jason Lycurgus (reflecting his father's image of himself as a Classicist), founds the Compson estate with 'slavequarters and stables and kitchengardens and the formal lawns and promenades' as the increasingly white town of Jefferson grows around it, and the native population recedes.⁷ The estate is grand enough 'to breed princes [...] to avenge the dispossessed Compsons from Culloden and Carolina and Kentucky.'⁸ Jason Compson, who narrates the third section of the novel, is described by his author as 'The first sane Compson since before Culloden and (a childless bachelor) hence the last.'⁹ If the lineage of the Compsons has its origins in Scottish forbears this tells us something crucial about Faulkner's fiction itself and its Scottish antecedents, as it signals a thematic debt to the traditional literary terrain of Walter Scott. Joseph Blotner in his biography of Faulkner describes his preoccupation with the history of the Highlands, and his friend David C. Yalden Thomson is quoted as saying that 'Faulkner saw himself as a Highlander living in exile in Mississippi.'¹⁰

In the Appendix, the coming of the early Compsons is marked by Indian removal and slave ownership and is associated with both an anachronistic Romanticism and irrationality in the 'insanity' of the Compsons, as well as a gothic sense of decay and degeneration. In Faulkner's fictional South, Culloden seems to function as the original rebellion, a problematic origin myth

⁶ Ibid, p.205

⁷ Ibid, p.206

⁸ Ibid, p.206

⁹ Ibid, p.212

¹⁰ Joseph Blotner, *Faulkner: A Biography* (New York: Vintage, 1991), p.686.

and the benchmark for all subsequent failed uprisings and revolutions. This idea is analysed in Colin G. Calloway's work on the relationship between Highland Scots and Native Americans:

Patterns, practices, policies and philosophies of conquest and colonization that developed in the British Isles were repeated in North America. Highland Scots, many of whom had experienced defeat and dispossession themselves, in turn took a heavy toll on American Indian life, land and culture.¹¹

Although Faulkner's Culloden refugee is 'dispossessed' himself, his descendants will go on to deprive the Chickasaw of their lands and maintain black Southerners in slavery. The narrative envisioning Culloden as the ancestor of the American Civil War appears as one of indulgent, even anachronistic whiteness, which Faulkner seems to acknowledge in the irony of his intersecting displacements and dispossessions. In this short Appendix he thus illustrates the ways in which a Scottish Romantic legacy is woven into the contexts of his fictional Mississippi. Although as a Modernist writer Faulkner's style could not be further from Scott's, I will demonstrate in this chapter that his work owes a deeper thematic debt to Scott's writing than any of the four Southern writers who are the focus of this thesis.

From Twain to Faulkner

When Mark Twain considered the legacy of Scottish Romantic-era writing in the South in *Life on the Mississippi*, he hyperbolically insisted that a Scott-originated Romantic tyranny had created a segregated, hierarchical

¹¹ Calloway, p.21.

society which could only be corrected through exposure to Northern modernity. Arguably the notion of the reactionary influence of the Scottish Romantic tradition in the Southern United States has its origins in the period of the Civil War and Reconstruction, as in Southern literary history the appropriation of the Scottish Romantic tradition is often associated with literature of the 'lost cause' and with revisionist versions of the Civil War. This is particularly true of the origins of the war (where the centrality of the slavery issue is often elided), and this 'lost causism' also connects to a nostalgia for traditionally stratified racial, class and gender roles and for an agrarian way of life unspoiled by a mechanized modernity. Faulkner himself commented on the supposed disproportionate predilection for Scott in the South in an interview recorded in 1957, where he spoke of a 'kinship' between Scott's images of the Highlands and the life 'the Southerner led after Reconstruction'.¹² Faulkner's 'southerner' here is of course a strictly white one. The central link for him was that both regions had been devastated by an army speaking the same language, 'which hasn't happened too many times'.¹³ In this manner, Faulkner gives Scottish and Southern experience a kind of exclusivity, an experience of civil conflict productive of a particularly bitter sense of dispossession and nostalgia.

Faulkner goes on to state that, despite limited funds, purchasing Scott's novels above all others was essential and became almost a trope of white Southern identity, as we witnessed in Twain's parody of the model Southern parlour. For Faulkner, Scott was read for several reasons: political

¹² 'English Department Faculty and Wives' [Interview], *Faulkner at Virginia* [online], 13 May 1957 <http://faulkner.lib.virginia.edu/display/wfaudio13#wfaudio13.3> [accessed 22/10/2015].

¹³ *Ibid.*

identification with the continuing legacy of civil conflict and tensions with a more dominant neighbour, the kinship of a clichéd sense of failure characterizing both the Confederate and Jacobite causes, and also because possession of Scott's lengthy and learned texts signalled a cultured household at little financial cost. Faulkner's analysis in this interview absorbs Scottish Romanticism, particularly Scott, into a Southern cultural context of bitter failure, lost cause revisionism and reactionary nostalgia, seeming to substantiate Twain's case that Scott could be held responsible for the Civil War. In this narrative, as with Twain's depiction, Scott's influence is a broad cultural phenomenon rather than confined to the strictly literary – the connotation of a Scott novel on a Southern bookshelf being as important as the content of his writing. Yet I will argue that Scott and Scottish Romantic preoccupations also make appearances in Faulkner's work outside of the narrative of the 'lost cause', and that issues of temporality, primitivism and the Gothic also connect his fiction with similar patterns and structures in Scottish Romantic writing.

The theme of uneven historical transition, which I have argued is central to the Scottish Romantic enterprise in Scott, Hogg and Macpherson, is also a crucial structuring principle in Faulkner. The passage of the South into modernity in his work involves little in the way of social progression, although he dramatizes the decline of many destructive Southern institutions such as slavery. However, in the transition to a new South much is lost, particularly the rolling back of the Mississippi wilderness, with 'no scream of panther but instead the long hooting of locomotives', which marks the coming of new

patterns of land exploitation in contrast to the feudal, agrarian structures of the nineteenth-century South.¹⁴

Faulkner has been central in recent developments in Southern studies which seek to pay closer attention to political and economic factors in the history of the American South, presenting similarities between that region and Latin America and the Caribbean. This global approach to Faulkner's work cites the importance of language and history in the Southern Americas, and the shared impacts of slavery, racism and imperialism.¹⁵ In *Global Faulkner* (2009) Annette Trefzer, Ann J. Abadie and their contributors discuss the implications of exploring Faulkner's Yoknapatowpha as 'a local landscape in a global network.'¹⁶ Yet the idea of Faulkner's fictional Mississippi as expressed in his Yoknapatawpha County being part of a network including Scottish Romantic-era culture has not been explored. This is true both in terms of literary influences and the ways in which his work gestures to regional connections between Yoknapatowpha and the fictionalization of the Scottish Highlands in Romantic-era work. Alongside this globalist appropriation runs the familiar thread of uneven and problematic encounters with modernization and 'improvement' in rural geographies which I have demonstrated is such a central theme in Scottish Romantic writing, and which is in many ways filtered into the American tradition through Fenimore Cooper's appropriations of Scott's historical themes. Through a reading of Faulkner's fiction, I will illustrate some of these connections, particularly the influence of Scott on

¹⁴ William Faulkner, 'Delta Autumn', *Go Down, Moses and Other Stories* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1974), p.241.

¹⁵ See Richard H. King, 'Allegories of Imperialism', 14-158.

¹⁶ Trefzer and Abadie, *Global Faulkner*, p.ix.

Faulkner's imagining of Southern identity and historical experience. Using Ian Duncan's conception of Scottish Gothic as revealing the haunted temporal breaks within the Scottish nation, I will show how Faulkner draws on this technique of temporalizing spaces and cultures.

Dafydd Moore picks up on the Scottish Romantic leanings in Faulkner's work in his comparison of the Southern writer with James Macpherson, in terms of what he sees as a shared 'sensitivity of defeat'. Referring to the already familiar and problematic comparisons between the last stand of the Jacobites and the defeat of the Confederacy, Moore glosses this shared sensitivity in literary terms as a fantasy of 'inherited defeat':

By inherited defeat I mean a state of affairs where a living and sustaining idiom and culture of the defeated, one which had offered an active and vibrant mode of expression for resistance to the current *status quo*, is giving way to an ossified, stultifying and generally self-destructive adherence to a world of the past.¹⁷

This analysis certainly feels familiar from Twain's dust-laden parlour objects and their relationship to a white Southern identity perennially stuck in the past. However, as I argued in the previous chapter, the apparently deadened material traces of the past can be more intrusive and carry more of a 'modern' sensitivity than one might imagine. The same can also be said of Faulkner's recurrent histories as I will suggest in my readings of his fiction. As Moore analyses this shared structure of 'inherited defeat' in Macpherson and

¹⁷ Dafydd Moore, 'James Macpherson and William Faulkner: A Sensibility of Defeat', in *From Gaelic to Romantic: Ossianic Translations*, ed. by Fiona Stafford and Howard Gaskill, (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 1998), pp.183-215 (p.184).

Faulkner, he demonstrates how both authors depict a ‘flattening’ and deadening of time and history, where a circular time is forever infected with the tragic experiences of the past.¹⁸ Ossian’s invocation of former times appears throughout the poems as a vague and indefinite haunting:

I look unto the times of old, but they seem dim to Ossian’s eyes, like reflected moonbeams on a distant lake. Here rise the red beams of war! There, silent, dwells a feeble race! They mark no years with their deeds, as slow they pass along.¹⁹

This kind of evocation of an attenuated heritage, where the past loses energy and significance and appears without force or content, can certainly be compared with some of Faulkner’s depictions of the Southern historical predicament in his fiction.

As we will see in Cormac McCarthy’s work, the notion of ‘recurrent history’, which Moore argues is presented in disquieting terms in both Macpherson and Faulkner, is essential to the way in which Southern literature, especially in the Gothic mode, deals with the idea of a Scottish heritage. This recurrent history also relates to the concept of national haunting, which Ian Duncan identifies in his analysis of Scottish Gothic as ‘the uncanny reversion of an ancestral identity alienated from modern life.’²⁰ Duncan proposes that it is the very modernizing and improving impulse of Enlightenment thought

¹⁸ For treatments of Faulkner looking specifically at this aspect of Spectrality or Hauntology see Krister Friday, ‘Miscegenated Time: The Spectral Body, Race and Temporality in “Light in August”’, *The Faulkner Journal*, 16 (2000), 41-63, and Christopher Peterson, ‘The Haunted House of Kinship: Miscegenation, Homosexuality and Faulkner’s Absalom, Absalom!’, *The New Centennial Review*, 4 (2004), 227-265.

¹⁹ James Macpherson, ‘Cath-Loda’, *The Poems of Ossian Translated by James Macpherson Esq.* (Leipzig: Bernhard Tauchnitz, 1847), p.134.

²⁰ Duncan, ‘Walter Scott, James Hogg and Scottish Gothic’, p.70.

which reproduces the culturally and temporally ‘other’ as an organic tradition to be revived. Scottish Gothic then emerges as a dark parody of such a revival, where the return of a primitive, ancestral past is figured as both disturbing and alienating.²¹

With Faulkner and Macpherson, according to Moore, this recurrent ancestral history is expressed stylistically, as both writers employ narrative styles which continually loop backward, taking a heavy toll on the youthful Celtic warriors of Ossian, and Faulkner’s younger generations, who are robbed of individuality and agency and caught in a repetitive space defined by the past.²² Both Macpherson and Faulkner are in the business of ‘interrogating and constructing regional myths’, and the latter’s work exhibits anxieties about a loss of regional difference in the service of national assimilation, which was also a pressing concern in late eighteenth-century Scotland.²³ For Faulkner this is the ‘ravaged fatherland still prone and panting from its etherless operation,’ similar to the way in which many of the Waverley novels explored the impacts of historical rupture on the national and regional body-politic.²⁴ Faulkner’s image of lost energy and integrity is also essential to the way in which he treats notions of racial heritage, which often converge around a Scottish inheritance and its associations of racial purity and antiquity. However, Moore makes no mention of Faulkner’s treatment of characters with a Scottish heritage in his novels and stories, or his personal identification with

²¹ See Colin Davis, ‘Hauntology, Spectres and Phantoms’, *French Studies*, 59, (2005), 373-379.

²² While past Faulkner criticism has read his nonlinear plotting as a Modernist aesthetic, more recent work has interpreted this aspect of his style in terms of a more postcolonial historicism, see Hosam Abou-Ela, *Other-South: Faulkner, Coloniality and the Mariategui Tradition* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2007).

²³ Moore, p.203.

²⁴ Faulkner, ‘The Bear’, *Go Down, Moses*, p.212.

a Scottish Highland lineage, aspects which are crucial to the project of his writing and which make his debt to Scottish Romantic work less surprising.

Faulkner both intervenes in Mark Twain's narrative of the reactionary and problematic influence of Scott on Southern culture and, as I will demonstrate, paradoxically enforces its presence in certain respects. His attachment to the Scottish Romantic tradition is an ambivalent but fascinated one, not merely in terms of the literary aspects of a Scottish heritage in the South but also the Scottish immigrant legacy and the contributions of those immigrants to his literary spaces and conflicting Southern temporalities. In his 1957 interview at the University of Virginia Faulkner plays down the idea that the character of Quentin in his early novel *The Sound and the Fury* (1929) somehow represents Twain's 'modern and medieval mixed' Southerner, whose failed romantic worldview can be traced back to Scott. Yet he then goes on to explain the connection between Scott and the South in terms of the Civil War, connecting the devastation of the Highlands after Culloden to the sense of loss and defeat in the South during Reconstruction.²⁵ A humorous critique of Scott's ubiquitous body of work is expressed in a letter to Sherwood Anderson, where Faulkner writes concerning their collaboration on a fictional lineage for Andrew Jackson, in particular one Herman Jackson who died from convulsions after reading the complete works of Walter Scott in twelve and a half days.²⁶

Faulkner's ambivalence toward Scott is also clear in his references in both interviews and in his fiction to Scott's verbose and outdated style, as well

²⁵ 'English Department Faculty and Wives', [interview], *Faulkner at Virginia* [online].

²⁶ Blotner, p.134.

as in his conflicted treatment of the heritage of Scottish Romanticism in the South and its continued tragic and problematic effects on politics, spaces and bodies. I argue in this chapter that Faulkner's work builds on Twain's narrative of the problem of Walter Scott in the South and links it to lines of movement, heritage, degeneration and temporality, thereby demonstrating the Scottish Romantic contribution to particularly 'Southern' conceptions of regional history.

In Faulkner's late work *The Town* (1957) he narrates through lawyer Gavin Stevens the spatial and cultural coordinates of Jefferson and its outlying towns, where a Scottish (and Scottish Romantic) heritage provides vectors of spatial and cultural direction, from Scots among the planter families to the lower-class inhabitants of the hill country:

Sutpen and Sartoris and Compson and Edmonds and McCaslin and Beauchamp and Grenier and Habersham and Holston and Stevens and De Spain, generals and governors and judges, soldiers [...] and statesman failed or not, and simple politicians and over-reachers and just simple failures, who snatched and grabbed and passed and vanished [...] Then the roadless, almost pathless perpendicular hill-country of McCallum and Gowrie and Frazer and Muir translate intact with their pot stills and speaking only the Gaelic and not much of that, from Culloden to Carolina, then from Carolina to Yoknapatowpha still intact and not speaking much of anything except that they now called

the pots 'kettles' though the drink (even I can remember this) was still
usquebaugh.²⁷

Stevens begins with the highest social strata, those planter and upper-class Jefferson families who embody the Mississippi land grab and the fall associated with this overreaching, usually represented in the Faulknerian universe by the devastation of the Civil War. The Scots Highlanders who originally settled in North Carolina not only do not speak English but speak little of anything, living apart in a more temporally backward, wild and isolated space. The lack of roads, the refusal to enter American linguistic modernity and the almost impassable hill country they inhabit, recall many of Scott's representations of Highlanders. Faulkner's Highlanders 'translate intact' their earlier culture and stubbornly cling to it in the midst of a new continent and society. What he presents is an unsettling and static image of Scottish Highland culture transplanted onto American soil.

This image of the Highland Scottish upland dwellers is preceded by another description by Charles 'Chick' Mallison in the earlier novel *Intruder in the Dust* (1948). The Scottish cultural legacy which Faulkner depicts in the inhabitants of Beat Four in this novel is perhaps the closest of his descriptions to the narrative of Scottish heritage embodied in the Celtic-Southern thesis, where a 'Celtic' traditional culture of hard-drinking, truculent and freedom-starved communities comes to define the cultural development of the American South. The term 'Celtic-Southern Thesis' refers to a controversial hypothesis in the field of Southern history which has produced some contentious scholarly texts. What this thesis maintains is that the Northern

²⁷ William Faulkner, *The Town* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1965), p.272-273.

United States was settled largely by immigrants from the English lowlands, later joined by a high volume of German immigrants, and between them, they established a shared ‘Anglo-Saxon’ culture. In contrast, the Southern United States was initially settled by immigrants from the British peripheries, from Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Cornwall and Northern England. The culture of these groups is described as Celtic or Anglo-Celtic, and the Celtic Southern thesis argues that it is the culture of these groups which defines the American South. Stemming from the supposed dominance of Celtic culture in the colonial South, even non-Celts in the region became steadily Celticized in cultural terms, and subsequent generations of these Southern Celts became known disparagingly as crackers, rednecks or hillbillies. This concept is provocatively expressed in Grady McWhiney’s *Cracker Culture: Celtic Ways in the Old South* (1988), a book which argues for a reconception of Southern identity, and the contexts of the Civil War, through a reconsideration of the South’s ethnic and cultural constitution.²⁸ Although the Celtic-Southern Thesis has been articulated in other published historical and literary studies, I will be using McWhiney’s book in my own analysis as the classic historical study of this hypothesis.

Faulkner alludes in ambivalent ways to this notion of Celtic heritage in his fictional Mississippi. In one scene from *Intruder in the Dust*, Chick is driven toward Beat Four by his uncle Gavin Stevens, who describes the Scottish legacy in the hamlet as they approach it:

²⁸ Grady McWhiney, *Cracker Culture: Celtic Ways in the Old South* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1988). For an earlier study see Frank Laurence Owsley, *Plain Folk of the Old South* (1949; repr. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2008). For a more recent analysis in support of the Celtic-Southern Thesis see James Cantrell, *How Celtic Culture Invented Southern Literature* (Gretna LA: Pelican Publishing, 2005).

the long lift of the first pine ridge standing across half the horizon and beyond it a sense a feel of others, the mass of them seeming not to stand rush abruptly up out of the plateau as to hang suspended over it as his uncle had told him the Scottish Highlands did except for this sharpness and colour [...] ‘Which is why the people who chose by preference to live on them [...] are people named Gowrie and McCallum and Fraser and Ingrum that used to be Ingraham and Workitt that used to be Urquhart only the one that brought it to America and then Mississippi couldn’t spell it either, who love brawling and fear God and believe in hell.’²⁹

The landscape of Beat Four with its pine forests and hills resembles the Highlands but with more ‘sharpness and colour’, a Highlands which is hyper-real and more strangely unsettling than the original landscape.

Faulkner’s Highland forest seems to hover over the plateau, rather than rising naturally and progressively from it. In *Rob Roy*, Frank Osbaldistone gives a Highland forest in Stirlingshire, a contrasting appraisal:

The valley, down which the Forth wandered on its easterly course, surrounding the beautiful detached hill, with all its garland of woods [...] high hills, rocks and banks, waving with natural forests of birch and oak [...] gave to the depth of solitude a sort of life and vivacity.³⁰

While for Osbaldistone the entry to the Highlands is aesthetically beautiful, with a ‘natural’ appearance and spatial gradation, Faulkner’s pine ridge appears alien and superimposed, creating strange sensations of depth and

²⁹ William Faulkner, *Intruder in the Dust* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1962), p.148.

³⁰ Scott, *Rob Roy*, p.343.

distance. This spatial alienation is, as Stevens describes, also a cultural and linguistic one, which nevertheless provides a critical part of Faulkner's conception of Mississippi culture and identity. Scott is often accused of creating a romantic and marketable version of the Highlands for consumption by the rest of Britain, at the very time that the Highlands were losing their traditional culture and much of their population. As Duncan writes, Scott demonstrates 'a distinctly modern kind of national subjectivity, in which the knowledge of our alienation from "authentic" cultural identities accompanies our privileged repossession of those lost identities as aesthetic effects.'³¹ We can apply this idea to Faulkner's descriptions, where a version of clichéd lost Highland identity becomes a unsettling part of the fabric of his Mississippi landscape.

The fact that the Scottish immigrants to Beat Four are represented as too illiterate to spell their own names, paints an image of a frontier populated by those who, as the Celtic-Southern thesis maintains, were bent on escaping the modernization of their homelands. In descriptions such as these, Faulkner approaches more fully than Twain the evocation of Scott's uneven temporalities in material and cultural landscapes, with these Mississippi Scots an emblem of resistance to modernity. Faulkner's Mississippi Highlands create disconcerting spatial and temporal effects, transplanting Old World aesthetics and practices onto a new continent. Yoknapatowpha itself is characterized by this temporal disjunction, a region where persons clinging to a past condition conjure social worlds with a powerful backward momentum. This trope is visible in the typical Faulknerian descriptions of movement, such

³¹ Duncan, 'Introduction', in Scott, *Rob Roy*, p.ix.

as the Bundrens' journey in *As I Lay Dying*, 'a motion so soporific, so dreamlike as to be uninferant of progress, as though time and not space were decreasing between us and it.'³² What appears here as perhaps a classically Modernist disruption of the linear also recalls Scott's coeval historical stages and the problematic nature of discourses of improvement and progressive history, as we saw with Twain in *Life on the Mississippi*. The problematic relationship in Faulkner's style between a Modernist break with the past and its inevitable recurrence has been treated by Faulkner critics such as Patrick O'Donnell and Richard C. Moreland, who attempt to disentangle Faulkner's dynamics of nostalgia and critique. As O'Donnell suggests, 'There is a tension or contradiction in Faulkner's work between a recognition of historical and subjective processes and a desire to halt their progression, a yearning after the atemporality and stasis of origins', which in turns signals a 'struggle in Faulkner between modernity and postmodernity.'³³ Yet in terms of my project, the Faulknerian yearning for an old order in the midst of the incursions of the new is the classic problem associated with Walter Scott's treatment of history, since, as we have seen, he endorses a new British paradigm after the Jacobite incursions of the eighteenth century, while simultaneously valorizing those who resist this teleological British modernity.

In recent Faulkner criticism the tensions in Faulkner's depiction of Southern history have been linked to the emerging concept of the Anthropocene, as a new periodization which challenges the teleological nature

³² William Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying* (New York: Norton 2010), p.62.

³³ Patrick O'Donnell, 'Faulkner and Postmodernism', *The Cambridge Companion to William Faulkner*, ed. by Philip M. Weinstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp.31-50 (p.32). In the same volume see also Richard C. Moreland, 'Faulkner and Modernism', pp.17-30.

of historical narratives in modernity. In this line of criticism, Ramon Saldivar and Sylvan Goldberg argue for ‘the need to attend to Faulkner’s formal strategies for registering modes of historical knowledge that contest the linearity and progressive teleology of Western history.’³⁴ This critique of teleological history also relates to an aesthetics of haunting, as we have seen in the disjunctive temporalities of Scott, Hogg and Macpherson.³⁵ In Faulkner this disturbance is expressed in Ossianic style as a present haunted by the form of past ancestors, for as he writes in *The Town*, ‘They are all here, supine beneath you, stratified and superposed, osseous and durable with the frail dust and the phantoms – the rich alluvial river-bottom land of old Issetibbeha, the wild Chickasaw King.’³⁶ On one level, this image of historical experience as strata and sediment appears as the violent supersession of the past by the present, where temporal progress is figured as trampling over a passive layer of the dead. Yet, as we saw in Twain’s South, these apparently ossified sediments of human habitation persist beyond their time and help to compose what is fertile, loose and dynamic in the landscape.

This palimpsestic vision of history embedded in the landscape is given a further dimension by Faulkner: rather than the usual vision of a palimpsest as a process of inscription and erasure, he gives us an image of the past ‘growing

³⁴ Ramon Saldivar and Sylvan Goldberg, ‘The Faulknerian Anthropocene: Scales of Time and History in *The Wild Palms* and *Go Down, Moses*’, *The New Cambridge Companion to William Faulkner*, ed. by John T. Mathews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp.185-203 (p.185).

³⁵ ‘Haunting can be seen as intrinsically resistant to the contraction and homogenization of time and space. It happens when a place is stained by time, or when a particular place becomes the site for an encounter with broken time.’ Mark Fisher, ‘What is Hauntology?’, *Film Quarterly*, 66 (2012), 16-24 (p.19).

³⁶ Faulkner, *The Town*, p.272.

over' the inscriptions of the present.³⁷ This idea is reiterated by McCaslin Edmonds to young Isaac in 'The Old People':

And the earth is shallow; there is not a great deal of it before you come to the rock. And the earth don't want to just keep things, hoard them; it want to use them again. Look at the seed, the acorns, at what happens even to carrion when you try to bury it: it refuses too, seethes and struggles too until it reaches light and air again, hunting the sun still.³⁸

Faulkner's expression of time here operates within the imagery of material process, and the notion of what is dead working its way back to the surface provides a classic image for the Faulknerian conception of the past. By drawing on the imagery of natural cycles of growth and breakdown he finds a fitting metaphor for his cyclical version of Southern history. Yet this natural imagery of a porous earth recycling the old and bringing forth the new is in these terms a disquieting image, as the dead also return through this 'shallow' Mississippi earth. The substrates of the soil do not remain in place, pressing the past deeper into obscurity; rather the recycling of natural materials causes the past to recur into the present. Faulkner's imagery returns us again to Tim Ingold's thinking on landscape and the earth's crust, which in his terms is 'not a given substrate, awaiting the imprint of activities that may be conducted upon it, but is itself a congelation of past activity.'³⁹ In Faulkner the surface of the earth becomes a zone of intersecting histories, where the temporal unfolds in numerous different directions. He uses the image of human sediment

³⁷ For a history of the Palimpsest see Sarah Dillon, *The Palimpsest: Literature, Criticism, Theory* (London: Continuum, 2007).

³⁸ William Faulkner, 'The Old People', *Go Down, Moses*, pp.117-134 (p.133-4).

³⁹ Tim Ingold, *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill* (London: Routledge, 2000), p.53.

layering the landscape almost as the triumph of the earth over the remains of human striving and history-making, a version of the Anthropocene where human and geological histories are revealed as one process. This is not an Anthropocene of sudden formative human impacts on a passive substrate of earth; instead Faulkner's image is one where every impact, indentation and burial returns compulsively, where a human past is paradoxically imprinted in the earth and effaced by it. Like Ossian's vision of the return of tribal ancestors, the ghosts of the Faulknerian past are neither fully metaphysically present or past.

The Scottish Romantic Legacy in Faulkner's Planter Dynasties

I have explored the image of working-class Southern Scots and their settlement in Yoknapatawpha county, but Faulkner also embodies a problematic Scottish heritage in the histories of his upper-class planter dynasties. For this other dimension, we can turn again to his 1929 experimental novel *The Sound and the Fury*, which presents the downfall of a once distinguished Southern family, the Compsons, and alludes to a Scottish heritage beyond its titular reference to the 'Scottish play'.

Jason Compson, whose bachelorhood marks the end of the Compson dynasty, lacks the intense and tragic personalities of his brother Quentin and sister Caddy and is set wholly on financial self-interest; he steals money sent from his sister to his illegitimate niece and has his disabled brother castrated and eventually committed to an asylum. Faulkner's emphasis on Jason as 'the only sane Compson since Culloden', figured as a progression in the Compson family, is clearly ironic. As regards the oppositions inherent in the Celtic-

Southern thesis between Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Celtic cultures, Jason and Quentin seem to stand almost as caricatures of these two identities. While the Compsons in general appear to embody the Celtic traits of alcoholism, degeneracy, sexual promiscuity and an obsession with familial honour, Jason's individualism, pragmatism and self-serving financial competence paints him as an Anglo-Saxon in the Celtic South.

Despite Faulkner's denial of the connection in his 1957 interview, it is indeed the character of Quentin Compson (named for his Culloden grandfather) whose failed attempts at playing the role of chivalric Southern gentleman lead to a direct reference to Walter Scott in his section of the novel:

Mr and Mrs Jason Richmond Compson announce the marriage of their daughter Candace to Mr. Sydney Herbert Head on the twenty-fifth of April one thousand nine hundred and ten at Jefferson Mississippi [...] *Mr and Mrs Jason Richmond Compson* Young Lochinvar rode out of the west a little too soon, didn't he?

I'm from the South. You're funny, aren't you?⁴⁰

Lochinvar is the protagonist of a song embedded in Scott's *Marmion* (1808), which was often anthologized separately as a poem beginning with the line 'O, young Lochinvar is come out of the west.'⁴¹ The knight Lochinvar comes to the wedding feast of Ellen, whose parents denied consent to her marriage with him, and who is now about to be married to 'a laggard in love and a dastard in war.'⁴² While dancing with the bride, Lochinvar whisks her onto his horse and

⁴⁰ Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury*, p.59.

⁴¹ Walter Scott, *Marmion: A Tale of Flodden Field*, ed. by Ainsley McIntosh (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), 5. l.506.

⁴² Ibid, 5. l.516.

carries her off. The simplicity of the story, the passivity of Ellen and Lochinvar's textbook daring and masculine agency, possess a deep irony in the context of Quentin's consciousness. The latter's situation appears more like a parody of a medieval romance structure: with no control over his sister Caddy's sexuality and recalling his earlier failure to take revenge on her lover Dalton Ames, he is completely unable to rescue her or assert his notion of the family honour.

The status of *Marmion* as a text where Scott chronicles the decline of the culture of chivalry has implications for Faulkner's narration of a crisis within white upper-class Southern masculinity. Again, the focus on historical transition and its effect on masculinities is translated by Faulkner from Scott's writing to the twentieth-century South, so that we can read the use of *Marmion* as a careful and considered reference by Faulkner. The confusion of direction from west to south in Quentin's appropriation of Scott bridges the Scottish Borders with the Southern United States, but in the manner of an ironic inversion and a general loss of spatial coordinates and the social values attached to them. As critics such as Robert N. Duvall have highlighted, Quentin also struggles to fully embody Southern 'whiteness', especially while at Harvard University, where to Northern ears his accent resembles those heard in minstrel shows.⁴³ In the figure of Quentin, and as we will see later with Isaac McCaslin and Lucas Beauchamp, both race and masculinity are revealed as problematic performances, and Faulkner engages references to Scott and Scottish Romanticism to further ironize their ambivalent positions.

⁴³ Robert N. Duvall, *Race and White Identity in Southern Fiction* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 17-61.

Scott's influence on white Southern upper-class values and masculinity, apparent in Quentin's section of the novel, seems to echo Mark Twain's account; for as we have seen the Walter Scott disease 'sets the world in love with dreams and phantoms [...] with decayed and degraded systems of government; with the sillinesses and emptinesses [...] of a brainless, worthless, long vanished society.'⁴⁴ Where Faulkner moves away from Twain's rhetoric is in the latter's notion of the anti-American nature of Scott's work. In Faulkner's vision, the Scottish Romantic consciousness appears at the very foundation of 'Southern' identity, with themes of self-delusion, failure, loss, dispossession, and displacement forming a distinctly Southern American narrative; this vision includes even those Southerners whom Twain does not mention – Native peoples and African Americans. The reference to the Culloden grandfather with claymore and tartan in the Appendix returns us to the comparison between Confederate forces and Jacobites which Faulkner makes in his 1957 interview. It is not easy to say that Quentin is another Waverley, for he faces the collapse of his romantic fantasy and responds with suicide rather than with the new and more pragmatic worldview of Scott's protagonist. As Quentin's Harvard friend Spode expresses it, there is something absurd but also violent and monstrous about the Walter Scott disease and its expression in chivalry, 'the champion of dames, Bud, you excite not only admiration, but horror.'⁴⁵ Quentin's behaviour echoes Hogg's gothic treatment of chivalry in the *Three Perils of Man*, where Musgrove's inability to save Jane Howard by giving up Roxburgh Castle also results in insanity and suicide. This subversion of the typical pattern of medieval romance masculinity proves to be as

⁴⁴ Twain, *Life*, pp.303-4.

⁴⁵ Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury*, p.106.

significant for Faulkner as it was for Scott and Hogg, representing a violent loss of ideals, purpose and identity.

Absalom Absalom! (1936) returns to the Compson family, but this time as mediators in the story of Thomas Sutpen, whose dramatic social and economic rise and fall enacts the decline of Southern plantation culture. The story is mediated and embellished by a series of narrators chronicling Sutpen's first arrival in Jefferson, Mississippi, with his goal to build the most impressive mansion house in the county and to establish a new dynasty.

Absalom, Absalom! also makes a direct reference to Scott's work, as Sutpen rides off to the Civil War with Colonel Sartoris 'on the black stallion named out of Scott.'⁴⁶ Though the actual name is never given, this reference to it demonstrates Sutpen's reading of Scott and that author's associations with an inverted chivalrous Romantic masculinity. In many ways Sutpen himself is a dark Quixotic figure, 'a madman who creates within his very coffin walls his fabulous immeasurable Camelots and Carcasonnes.'⁴⁷

As with the Compson family, it is revealed later in the novel that Sutpen is descended from settlers from the Scottish Highlands. His mother was 'a mountain woman' from the Highlands and a Gaelic speaker, the possible source of his stubborn 'self-reliance'.⁴⁸ His mother's humble origins and inability to learn English place Highland culture as part of the raw, primitive force of the frontier experience and echo Faulkner's other representations of rough upland Scots in *The Town* and *Intruder in the Dust*. After the mother's death the Sutpen family, led by its alcoholic patriarch, leaves the family cabin

⁴⁶ William Faulkner, *Absalom, Absalom!* (London: Vintage, 1995), p.80.

⁴⁷ Ibid, p.160.

⁴⁸ Ibid, p.241.

and travels South. Their journey down from the mountains of West Virginia condenses the classic narrative of American settlement and historical progress, with the slow arrival of civilization, in terms of social demarcation, roads and other infrastructure, a movement from a primitive state into a world of racial and social hierarchies. Yet this moving line is not figured as any kind of linear progression:

[they] slid back down out of the mountains, skating in a kind of accelerating and sloven and inert coherence like a useless collection of flotsam on a flooded river, moving by some perverse automotivation such as inanimate objects sometimes show, backward against the very current of the stream.⁴⁹

The family's movement lacks direction to the extent that the progress is object-like, a movement without volition, like the passive collecting of materials in a current. The distinctions between time and environment are collapsed as their spatial motion becomes a movement in time and across a continent, 'they overtook and passed in slow succession the seasons as they descended, or whether it was the descent itself that did it, and they not progressing parallel in time but descending perpendicularly through temperature and climate.'⁵⁰ Here temporality is a product of the relative speed of movement in space, again emphasizing Faulkner's disrupted and spatialized chronologies, where movement 'forward' in time is paradoxically a matter of moving 'back down the mountain' and from top to bottom. This trajectory appears as the reverse of the journey of the typical Scott protagonist, except perhaps in the case of

⁴⁹ Ibid, p.223.

⁵⁰ Ibid, p.224.

Jeanie Deans, where the movement is from the uncivilized periphery into metropolitan and industrialized spaces.

When settled with his family in Virginia, the young Sutpen initially possesses Huck Finn's innocence of social stratification and civilized life, 'he didn't even know there was a country all divided and fixed and neat with a people living on it all divided and fixed and neat.'⁵¹ Like Huck, Sutpen appears to have inhabited a prelapsarian state without jealousy or comparison, one which is suddenly shattered when he delivers a message from his father to the plantation owner: he arrives at the front door only to be told by a house slave that he must enter at the back. This experience galvanizes him to establish his plantation dynasty and to embody the ideal of white Southern masculinity unsuccessfully attempted by so many Faulknerian protagonists such as Quentin Compson and Isaac McCaslin.

On Sutpen's arrival in Mississippi he immediately sets about establishing his dynasty. The building of his plantation echoes the founding of the Compson estate in *The Sound and the Fury*. Sutpen gains one hundred miles of land in Yoknapatawpha county, 'land which he took from a tribe of ignorant Indians, nobody knows how, and a house the size of a courthouse where he lived for three years without a window or door or bedstead in it and called it Sutpen's Hundred as if it had been a king's grant in unbroken perpetuity.'⁵² The smooth temporality of patriarchal lineage and heredity lends a legitimacy to the narrative of Sutpen's colonial usurpation of land and use of slaves to erect his ideal estate. Unlike Twain's Southern mansion house,

⁵¹ Ibid, p.221.

⁵² Ibid, p.16.

Sutpen's Hundred is revealed to be merely a fleeting moment of vain endeavour which, after the family's decline, is soon overtaken by the swamp from which it was raised. The formation of the house takes place in a primal encounter between Sutpen's violent will and an apparently malleable raw material of earth, 'carried plank by plank and brick by brick out of the swamp where the clay and timber waited – the bearded white man and the twenty black ones and all stark naked beneath the croaching and pervading mud.'⁵³

Sutpen's Hundred (reduced to only one mile after the Civil War) eventually begins to return to the mud it was raised from, 'with its sagging portico and scaling walls, its sagging blinds and plank shuttered windows.'⁵⁴ The old slave quarters becomes 'a jungle of sumach and persimmon and briars and honeysuckle, and the rotting piles of what had once been log walls and stone chimneys and shingle roofs among the undergrowth.'⁵⁵ Instead of the imposing monument of Twain's Southern family mansion, the Sutpen home is an ephemeral structure which undergoes rapid material degeneration, 'the dead furnace-breath of air in which they moved seemed to reek in slow and protracted violence with a smell of desolation and decay as if the wood of which it was built were flesh.'⁵⁶ Faulkner's text emphasizes the house as a living entity, a flux of forces of formation and decay, in contrast to Twain's inert, eternal monument to Southern upper-class values. The fate of Sutpen's Hundred echoes the wartime destruction of the mansion house of Tully Veolen in *Waverley*, although by the close of that novel the house is reconstituted,

⁵³ Ibid, p.37.

⁵⁴ Ibid, p.213.

⁵⁵ Ibid, p.214.

⁵⁶ Ibid, p.366.

signalling a new British era of integration symbolized by the marriage of Edward Waverley and Rose Bradwardine. The image of the decaying mansion inevitably also recalls Poe's House of Usher. In the image of the Sutpen mansion and the other crumbling Scottish planter estates in his fiction, Faulkner bridges the trope of Scottish heritage with what is now seen as the classic imagery of Southern Gothic, a link which reiterates the critical emphasis in his work on narratives of regression and decline in familial, racial and natural histories.

Absalom, Absalom! is another text in Faulkner's oeuvre which appropriates Scott's uneven temporal stages and the shock of colonial-style encounters with perceived primitivism. The background to Sutpen's failure to build the civilized monument of Sutpen's Hundred is his time in the West Indies, a place to which 'poor men went in ships and became rich.'⁵⁷ Sutpen is instrumental in brutally suppressing a slave revolt, a historical anachronism as, in fact, slavery had been abolished for some time in Haiti before Sutpen apparently arrives in the 1830s. However, this journey into Caribbean space has been regarded by Faulkner critics as a moment where Yoknapatawpha becomes situated in its hemispheric political and economic context.⁵⁸ It also ties Sutpen's fantasy-driven, Scott-informed masculinity into a colonial narrative of exploitation and extreme violence. He brings with him to Mississippi a group of slaves from Haiti who enable him to carve his mansion

⁵⁷ Ibid, p.242.

⁵⁸ See Jenna Grace Sciuto, 'Postcolonial Palimpsests: Entwined Colonialisms and the Conflicted Representation of Charles Bon in William Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!*', *ariel: A Review of International English Literature*, 47 (2016), 1-23.

house out of the wilderness, as the omniscient narrator describes in the first section of the novel:

Out of quiet thunderclap he would abrupt (man-horse-demon) upon a scene as peaceful and decorous as a schoolprize water color, faint sulphur-reek still in hair clothes and beard, with grouped behind him his band of wild niggers like beasts half-tamed to walk upright like men, in attitudes wild and reposed.⁵⁹

The slaves are wordless primitives and Faulkner's language displays the problematic temporalizing of race more flamboyantly than Scott's temporalizing of 'savage' behaviour and practices. Sutpen works alongside the Haitians in building the house, labouring stark naked save for a coating of mud to deter the mosquitoes. He himself is a severe and manipulative figure, and like Scott's gothic anti-hero Hugh Redgauntlet, he hunts in primitive style in the backwoods, where he 'would take stand beside a game trail with the pistols and send the negroes in to drive the swamp like a pack of hounds.'⁶⁰ Sutpen's Haitian slaves are frequently compared to animals as occupying an early stage of evolutionary history rather than the barbarous historical stage of Scott's 'savages'.

The tame and civilized image of Jefferson in the simile of the naïve school watercolour contrasts strongly with Sutpen's demonic presence. Yet it is at least the appearance of the very stale, conservative space of Twain's Southern home which Sutpen strives for when he marries a local girl from a

⁵⁹ Faulkner, *Absalom, Absalom!*, p.8.

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, p.36.

staunch Methodist family and fathers two children, the conventional family image captured in the 'lifeless decorum' of the Sutpen family photograph.⁶¹ Yet he remains in many ways in a half savage state, almost never attending church and participating in bloody fights with his male slaves in brutal displays of violence which his son Henry is forced to watch. This primitivism/civilization dynamic is played out again in the visit to the Sutpen home of New Orleanian cosmopolitan Charles Bon (who is revealed later to be Sutpen's son from an earlier marriage to a woman of mixed race); he had been sent to the same university as Sutpen's son Henry by the machinations of an ambitious lawyer who is aware of Bon's parentage.

The contrast between the fashionable Bon and the Sutpen family from provincial Mississippi is expressed in imperial terms, as Bon observes them 'with an air of sardonic and indolent detachment like that of a youthful Roman consul making the Grand Tour of his day among the barbarian hordes.'⁶² Bon's potential engagement to Sutpen's daughter Judith is obstructed when Sutpen reveals Bon's identity to Henry. Over the period of the Civil War, Bon tests Henry's attachment to him in pushing for the marriage to Judith to take place, as a strategy for forcing Sutpen to acknowledge him as his son. For the jaded and worldly Bon, 'Sutpen's action and Henry's reaction [were] a fetish-ridden moral blundering which did not deserve to be called thinking.'⁶³ These primal reactions to issues of miscegenation and incest are mixed with that ultimate encounter with bare life in the experience of the Civil War which Faulkner presents not as a progressive watershed in Southern society but as an event

⁶¹ Ibid, p.20.

⁶² Ibid, p.93.

⁶³ Ibid, p.93.

which precipitates that society further into the past and even into prehistory. Henry Sutpen expresses this as a return to a precivilized state, where the trappings of Southern chivalrous masculinity and honour are peeled back to reveal the ‘old mindless meat that don’t even care if it was defeat or victory, that won’t even die, that will be out in the woods grubbing up roots and weeds’.⁶⁴ *Absalom, Absalom!* dramatizes the push and pull of different temporal stages in an uncomfortably plural and gothic South, one which stretches the contexts of Yoknapatowpha into cosmopolitan New Orleans and into the legacy of slavery and anti-colonial struggle in Haiti. As the novel connects these conflicting spaces it also temporalizes them and reveals the incursions of the legacies of the past into the present as a movement through these diverse ‘Southern’ spaces.

My final example of Faulkner’s treatment of Scottish Romantic themes comes in the form of the Scottish dynasty of the McCaslins. His 1942 short story collection *Go Down, Moses* is perhaps the text which draws most deeply on the themes of the Scottish Romantic novel in the mode of Scott. Telling the story of the McCaslin dynasty – with the figure of Isaac McCaslin connecting the various tales into a whole – the collection is often regarded as a novel. In this text, Lucas Beauchamp appears as a minor figure before his more significant role in *Intruder in the Dust*. Lucas not only has a Scottish Highland heritage, as the grandson of the first Carothers McCaslin (Lucius Quintus) and a young slave woman named Tomey, but also embodies themes which I have identified as having in many ways a Scottish Romantic provenance, particularly uneven temporality, material objects and anxieties around racial

⁶⁴ Ibid, p.354.

and cultural purity. Lucas is a figure of great ambivalence to his white McCaslin relatives, standing as 'both heir and prototype simultaneously of all the geography and climate and biology which sired old Carothers and all the rest of us and our kind.'⁶⁵ He is the embodiment of so many anxieties regarding pure patrimony and adulterating miscegenation, anxieties familiar from Fenimore Cooper's treatment of the mixing of Scottish and Afro-Caribbean blood in *The Last of the Mohicans*.

The purity of Lucas's McCaslin inheritance also relates to masculinity, as he is a McCaslin through the male line rather than the female, expressing the illegitimacy which is attached to women in this patrilineal narrative. These anxieties are bound up in Lucas's 'impenetrable face with its definite strain of white blood', which is so frequently alluded to in 'The Fire and the Hearth.'⁶⁶ His presence also suggests another theme which I have argued connects Faulkner's work with Scottish Romanticism – that of the generational decline of feudal power and status. As the representative of a paradoxical 'pure' McCaslin blood, Lucas looks with contempt at his relations in whom, despite their whiteness, that ancient blood is diluted.

Lucas is aware of his unsettling racial status and fails to give due reverence to the other McCaslin males, encouraged by his title as 'the oldest living McCaslin descendent still living on the hereditary land [...] almost as old as Isaac , who [...] had turned apostate to his name and lineage by weakly relinquishing the land which was rightfully his.'⁶⁷ The connection of hereditary right with land ownership and use extends back from Faulkner through

⁶⁵ William Faulkner, 'The Fire and the Hearth', *Go Down, Moses*, pp.27-98 (p.88).

⁶⁶ Ibid, p.54.

⁶⁷ Ibid, p.31.

Cooper to Scott. This idea of an essential inheritance tied to the land which confers authority, so central in Waverley novels such as *Redgauntlet* and *The Bride of Lammermoor*, also features in Faulkner's portrayal of the contrast between Lucas and Isaac. However, despite this tie to the antiquated McCaslin lineage, Lucas is not prone to the neurosis, guilt and alienation which infects his white relations:

it was not that Lucas made capital of his white or even his McCaslin blood, but the contrary. It was as if he were not only impervious to that blood, he was indifferent to it. He didn't even need to strive with it. He didn't even have to bother to defy it. He resisted it simply by being a composite of the two races which made him, simply by possessing it. Instead of being at once the battle-ground and victim of the two strains, he was a vessel, durable, ancestryless, non-conductive, in which the toxin and its anti stalemated one another.⁶⁸

Lucas is not haunted by this heritage; at times he performs the privilege associated with his white background but without being burdened by it. As John Duvall argues, Lucas is a 'trickster figure', who 'when the need arises, can manipulate threats from the white world' and who 'masks his intelligence' in the 'impenetrability' which so many of the white McCaslin's describe with such ambivalence.⁶⁹ Duvall sees Lucas as separating essential racial characteristics from racial performance, in the same way that many of Faulkner's Caucasian characters are not entirely 'white' in a South that 'wishes to absolutize all racial difference.'⁷⁰ The addition of a specifically Scottish 'white' heritage, with its

⁶⁸ Ibid, p.78.

⁶⁹ Duvall, p.17.

⁷⁰ Ibid, p.17.

trappings of antiquity, failure and dispossession, adds another dimension to Lucas's intersecting racial performances.

Lucas refuses to fully enact his designated status as a secondary, black McCaslin, and instead often feels compelled to perform the trappings of 'white' masculinity as his right. This is clear in his confrontation with his cousin Zack Edmonds when Lucas's wife Molly and baby son have been staying in Edmond's house, after the latter loses his own wife in childbirth. Lucas's feeling that the white man has claimed his wife convinces him that the honourable act is to kill Edmonds. What outrages him most is Edmonds's assumption that due to his colour, Lucas will naturally accept the situation rather than confronting his cousin:

You knowed I wasn't afraid, because you knowed I was a McCaslin too and a man-made one. And you never thought that, because I am a McCaslin too, I wouldn't. You never even thought that, because I am a nigger too, I wouldn't dare. No, you thought that because I am a nigger, I wouldn't even mind.⁷¹

Here the addition of the specific McCaslin heritage with its associated rights and honours complicates this picture of racial dynamics. Again, the issue of masculinity conferring legitimacy is highlighted, and Lucas plays this to his full advantage. The fact that Edmonds fails to assume an outraged masculine honour on the part of Lucas reveals the assumption that his slave heritage has trumped his distinguished McCaslin provenance.

⁷¹ Faulkner, 'The Fire and the Hearth', p.41.

Lucas also has a curious relationship with time, appearing strangely ageless yet embodying the earliest origins of McCaslin lineage in Mississippi by farming his land 'in the same clumsy old fashion which Carothers McCaslin himself had probably followed, declining advice, refusing to use improved implements.'⁷² Lucas's relationship with the land is thus part of his antiquated McCaslin heritage and he therefore relates to a previous epoch in Yoknapatowpha. This regression is further illustrated in 'The Fire and the Hearth' when he accidentally excavates an Indian burial mound:

a squat, flat-topped, almost symmetrical mound rising without reason from the floor-like flatness of the valley. The white people called it an Indian mound. One day five or six years ago a group of white men, including two women, most of them wearing spectacles and all wearing khaki clothes which had patently lay folded on a store shelf twenty-four hours ago, came with pick and shovels and jars and phials of insect repellent and spent a day digging about it while most of the people, men women and children, came at some time during the day and looked quietly on; later [...] he was to remember with almost horrified amazement the cold and contemptuous curiosity with which he himself had watched them.⁷³

Regional culture here is objectified in the historicizing practices of the archaeologists, white, metropolitan figures for whom Lucas has only disdain. This dynamic is familiar from the antiquarian emphasis in Scottish Romantic writing, with the figure of the rustic local confused by the archaeological

⁷² Ibid, p.87.

⁷³ Ibid, p.30.

impulse in Hogg's *Confessions*, or the bumbling excavations of Scott's eponymous *Antiquary*.

Being able to historicize the landscape is a matter of moving from top to bottom to discover the sediments of the past, yet this is a past which Lucas soon finds refuses to be passively excavated. In a later scene, on attempting to bury his whisky still in the outskirts of the mound Lucas causes a cave-in, and he is struck in the face by what seems to be a clod of earth:

His hand found the object which had struck him and learned it in the blind dark – a fragment of an earthenware vessel [...] which even as he lifted it crumbled again and deposited in his palm, as though it had been handed to him, a single coin.⁷⁴

Lucas experiences this archaeological object as agential, the blow from the churn constituting 'a sort of final admonitory pat from [...] the old earth, perhaps the old ancestors themselves.'⁷⁵ Instead of the careful peeling back of layers of historical deposits by the archaeologists, Lucas's digging violently unearths active and lively materials.

If history can be excavated as a downward movement into the earth, here for Lucas it quite literally shoots back up into the present. As Tim Ingold argues:

For an entity of any kind to become part of the archaeological record, it must hold fast to a point of origin, receding ever further from the horizon of the present as the rest of the world moves on. Conversely,

⁷⁴ Ibid, pp.30-31.

⁷⁵ Ibid, p.30.

things that carry on, that undergo continuous generation, or, in a word, that *grow* cannot be part of the record.⁷⁶

The mound which rises from the 'floor-like' Mississippi valley is a site where the earth rises above the perceived passivity of its surface. As we saw with Faulkner's palimpsestic vision of ancestry as sedimentation and deposit, just as those forbears intrude into the destiny of his present characters so the very earth of his fictional Mississippi resists historicizing practices by continually growing over, breaking down and encroaching into the present.

The other stories in *Go Down, Moses*, such as 'The Old People' and 'The Bear', relate to the youth of Isaac McCaslin and again return to the McCaslins' relationship with the plantation land they claimed. These narratives revolve around the image of the hunt on ancestral land, as Isaac recalls his childhood trips to the family hunting lodge. The aestheticization of the hunt and its relationship to masculinity is stressed by Faulkner in a mode which we can trace back to Scott in novels such as *The Bride of Lammermoor*, *Waverley* and *Redgauntlet*. The significance of stories such as 'The Bear' and 'The Old People' for my purposes is their portrayal of a nostalgia for the traditional hunt as primal, masculine, and related to ancestral history and heredity. 'The Bear' narrates more of the young Isaac's hunting experiences, this time in the quest to kill Old Ben, a legendary bear which has always eluded its hunters.

We see different environmental practices among the different racial groups in 'The Bear', with the figure of Sam Fathers who embodies Native American and slave heritages having the deepest connection to the woods and

⁷⁶ Ingold, *Making*, p.81.

initiating Isaac McCaslin into its mysteries. It is this early initiation which leads Isaac to question his title to the McCaslin lands and indeed the right of any man to own land. The eventual killing of Old Ben is linked to the death of Sam Fathers, as both these symbols of an ancient, wild heritage finally disappear from the land. Faulkner embodies in these changing environmental practices and ways of being in the land his conception of historical transition, as Isaac describes his feelings as he realizes that soon Old Ben will be killed, 'It seemed to him that something, he didn't know what, was beginning; had already begun. It was like the last act on a set stage. It was the beginning of the end of something.'⁷⁷ There is no clear distinction between the beginning and the end here, and yet the pushing back of the Mississippi wilderness and its inhabitants marks another repetition of white settler exploitation of the land, as Faulkner makes so explicit in the histories of the Sutpens and Compsons as well as the McCaslin family. Ultimately, with his early experiences in mind, Isaac relinquishes his rights to McCaslin land, rejecting the Scottish dynasty and its performance of ownership through hunting and development.

'The Bear' ends with a long discussion between Isaac and his cousin McCaslin Edmonds over the former's decision to relinquish these rights to McCaslin land. This exchange in turn becomes a meditation on the history of the dynasty, intertwined as it is with those slaves who were in many cases McCaslins also. Isaac recalls the lives of the McCaslin slaves recorded in the plantations' ledger book and discovers a history of exploitation and incest from the very beginnings of the dynasty. This knowledge drives Isaac's decision to have Edmonds take over the plantation rather than himself, since

⁷⁷ Faulkner, 'The Bear', *Go Down, Moses*, p.160.

he feels that the McCaslin legacy of ownership and exploitation represents a wider malaise in Southern society:

This whole land, the whole South is cursed, and all of us who derive from it, whom it ever suckled, white and black both [...] Granted that my people brought the curse onto the land: maybe for that reason their descendants alone can – not resist it, not combat it – maybe just endure and outlast it until the curse is lifted.⁷⁸

The gothic trope of the deterministic curse in Southern experience will be taken up by Cormac McCarthy, and this sense of transgression is linked by Faulkner to the legacies of Scottish emigrants to the South more than to any other white group.

In this chapter I have demonstrated how Faulkner not only makes strategic local references to Walter Scott in his fiction, but also draws on familiar temporalizing tropes from Scottish Romantic work. As with Scott's project in the Waverley novels, Faulkner seems intent on memorializing the passing of one historical moment and the beginning of another yet, just as in Scott, these moments are irreversibly tangled and there is no clean temporal break or progression. Indeed, Faulkner's version of Southern history appears as one of constant decline and backsliding, a trope which is taken up by Cormac McCarthy, as the following chapter will discuss. Like McCarthy's cowboys and backwoodsman, many of Faulkner's characters find that modernity is only a matter of digging up or reencountering the past in myriad new ways. This traumatic encounter is expressed most fully in his images of

⁷⁸ Ibid, p.198.

material breakdown and resurgence, from rotting mansions to bones and artefacts working their way back up through the earth, demonstrating an ambivalence toward the idea of symmetrical, progressive regional history, familiar from much Scottish Romantic writing.

Chapter 5: Reimagining the Frontier: Scottish Romanticism and the Fiction of Cormac McCarthy

Throughout this thesis, I have emphasized the interconnected treatments of regional history in the Scottish Romantic and Southern traditions. My narrative of literary treatments of uneven, regressive or recurrent histories continues in the work of the most contemporary writer in this thesis, Cormac McCarthy. The influence of Faulkner on his fiction is clearly visible in McCarthy's lyrical and portentous prose, his mingling of linguistic different registers, use of archaisms and his rendering of Southern dialect speech patterns. The two writers also share an ambivalence toward many of the developments associated with modernization in the regions of the Southern United States.¹ In his early South-East fiction, McCarthy draws on the familiar aesthetics of Faulkner's Southern Gothic, that of lingering societal decay in a humid, oppressive climate, which is in marked contrast with his later novels depicting the bleached and arid vistas of the South-West and the Mexican Borderlands.

As we saw with Faulkner, principally in *Go Down, Moses*, the hunting motif so prominent in Scott continues to be central in Southern writing and is reiterated by McCarthy and fused with the myth of the cowboy and a nostalgic evocation of ranch life; both writers also dramatize a sense of loss and

¹ For a detailed comparison of Faulkner and McCarthy's epistemological positions see Robert Rudnicki, 'Turtles All the Way Down: Foundation, Edifice and Ruin in Faulkner and McCarthy', *Faulkner Journal*, 25 (2010), 23-52.

nostalgia in the experience of historical transition. McCarthy's work demonstrates the ways in which Scottish Romantic themes are drawn into a consciously postmodern representation of regional history, which is apparent in his pessimistic historical vision and the many ways in which his historical novels insist on the inaccessibility of historical truth and the partial and 'literary' nature of historical representation.² This more postmodern approach to historical fiction is accompanied by a rejection of the dominant metanarrative of American history and national progress expressed in classic analyses of historical exceptionalism such as Frederick Jackson Turner's 'Frontier Thesis'. Yet debates over the inherent fictionality of historical representation, the idea of history as a discourse of multiple and incomplete perspectives, and the failure of acts of excavation and dating to determine historical verity, have in fact been central in the Scottish Romantic tradition from the time of the Ossian controversy to the historical fictions of Scott and Hogg, rather than being a critique solely provided by late twentieth-century postmodern thought.

McCarthy's explicit engagement with the Scottish Romantic tradition begins with his very first published work – a short story titled 'Wake for Susan' which was published in 1959. This story includes an epigraph from 'Proud Maisie', a lyric sung by Madge Wildfire on her deathbed in the *Heart of Midlothian* (1818):

² 'Simplifying to the extreme, I define *postmodern* as incredulity toward metanarratives [...] the narrative function is losing its functors, its great hero, its great dangers, its great voyages, its great goal.' Jean-François Lyotard, 'The Postmodern Condition', *The Postmodern History Reader*, ed. by Keith Jenkins (London: Routledge, 1997), pp.36-8 (pp.36-7). See also Robert Young, *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West*, 2nd edn (1990; repr. London: Routledge, 2004). Also, Elizabeth Ermath, *Sequel to History: Postmodernism and the Crisis of Representational Time* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

“Who makes the bridal bed,
Birdie, say truly?”

“The grey headed Sexton
That delves the grave duly”³

The pattern of images connecting sexuality, birth, and death in a nonlinear temporal order is typical of the gothic Romanticism of writers such as Scott and Hogg which is continued in the haunted and regressive temporalities of Faulkner’s *Mississippi*. In McCarthy’s story a young boy, Wes, while hunting squirrels in the Tennessee woods, wanders through a burial ground and constructs an imaginative narrative around the inscription on a gravestone. McCarthy’s story reflects many of the themes and motifs through which I have traced Scottish Romantic influence in Southern writing: an uneven or disjunctive historicism embodied in acts of excavation and disrupted historical dating, the instability of fictions about the past, and the hunting motif. Wes finds a rusted rifle ball and stops to wonder about its provenance, ‘who had fired it, and at what, or whom? Perhaps some early settler or explorer had aimed it at a menacing Indian [...] Perhaps it had been fired only thirty or forty years ago.’⁴ As Wes ponders the numerous historical possibilities awakened by the artefact, he is in good company with Scott’s *Antiquary* and the editor of Hogg’s *Confessions*, whose Southern successors include Mark Twain’s inventory of material culture in *Life on the Mississippi* and Faulkner’s Lucas Beauchamp excavating the Indian burial mound in *Go Down, Moses*. The

³ Cormac McCarthy, ‘Wake for Susan’, (Knoxville: The Phoenix, The University of Tennessee Magazine, 1959), in *Biblioklept* [online], <https://biblioklept.org/2011/02/02/wake-for-susan-cormac-mccarthy/> [accessed: 30/7/18].

⁴ Ibid.

focus on acts of excavation and historical classification is thus a recurrent motif for figuring history in Scottish and Southern texts, and gestures towards the eccentricities of 'regional' temporalities within the more teleological narratives of nation-state progress and integration.

The critical importance of fashioning imaginative histories is also present in this story, as in the graveyard Wes describes 'the bearded stones' which appear to him to be 'arrested in that transitory state of decay which still recalls the familiar, which pauses in the descent into antiquities unrecognizable and barely guessable as to origin.'⁵ The temporal quality of these artefacts rests on the natural processes through which they pass; they are at this moment in a state of decay but still able to reference a familiar past, a still-present history in comparison to antiquarian artefacts estranged from the present by their far-distant origins. Wes sees this falling back into history as a 'descent', with the present imagined as an upward movement and the past as behind or beneath; yet with his musings on the rifle ball and his desire to reimagine past lives he also seeks out ruptures and inconsistencies in this line of historical descent. With its Scott epigraph and its emphasis on temporality, artefacts, and the tension between 'literary' constructions and reality, 'Wake for Susan' is not merely responding to or revising Scott but demonstrates the strength of his generic influence in McCarthy's early work. The imaginative 'wake' which Wes holds for the deceased also ties into the theme of the reanimation of the dead, and the motifs of digging and excavation of artefacts construct strong links between Scottish and Southern versions of the Gothic.

⁵ Ibid.

In *Cormac McCarthy and the Myth of American Exceptionalism*

(2013), John Cant analyses the inclusion of the Walter Scott quotation in this early story. He is the only critic to have investigated the presence of Scott in McCarthy's work, and in this instance, his analysis is focused solely on this early story where an overt intertextual connection is made by the novelist himself.⁶ Regarding the quotation from *Midlothian* as an attempt by McCarthy to invert Scott's Romanticism, just as his major work will later invert and revise the Western genre and ideologies of American expansion, Cant argues that Scott's Romanticism 'informed America's image of the Western hero, the cowboy. It is this mythology that McCarthy deconstructs in his Border Trilogy.'⁷ Yet even the word 'Border' as used to describe the trio of *All the Pretty Horses* (1992), *The Crossing* (1994) and *Cities of the Plain* (1998) speaks to the presence of Scott's central motif in McCarthy's work, indicating a more complex engagement than a simple inverted Romanticism.

While Scott's Romantic nationalism, rough and heroic borderers and adventure narratives may have informed the mythology of the frontier and the West, his protagonists, like McCarthy's, are often forced to yield up their political and romantic ideals when faced with the liminality and violence of the border. The description of the typical McCarthy protagonist which Cant offers could certainly also accommodate Edward Waverley, Francis Osbaldistone, and Darsie Latimer, 'heroes that America sends into life informed by a myth, a story rendered false by the elision of the true nature of the world and of the

⁶ The influence of Scott is also omitted by Michael Lynn Crews in his recent study, *Books are Made Out of Books: A Guide to Cormac McCarthy's Literary Influences* (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 2017).

⁷ John Cant, *Cormac McCarthy and the Myth of American Exceptionalism* (Routledge: Taylor and Francis, 2013), p.50.

people in it.’⁸ In this way, Waverley’s imaginative innocence and sentimentality are continued in the figure of Wes in ‘Wake for Susan’, as well as in some of the protagonists of McCarthy’s Western fiction. The more disturbing aspect of what Scott portrays as the deceptive and superficial nature of the literary imagination is transformed by McCarthy into a more overt and politicized critique of the colonial mindset. In Scott, this Quixotic worldview is expressed as a cult of heroic masculinity structured around the kind of adventure narratives which have formed Edward Waverley’s unsound education:

Waverley could not help starting at a story which bore so much resemblance to one of his own day dreams [...] such a scene as he had used to conjure up in his imagination, as only occurring in ancient times. He might have said with Malvolio, ‘I do not now fool myself, to let imagination jade me.’ I am actually in the land of military and Romantic adventures, and it only remains to be seen what will be my own share in them.⁹

Within Waverley’s Quixotic imagination, imperialism, adventure, and daydreams merge in unsettling ways, and Scott signals his hero’s eventual painful encounter with reality in the reference to Malvolio.

McCarthy follows Scott in making explicit references to *Don Quixote* to make clear the reality-versus-imagination tension, as when Don Hector warns John Grady Cole in *All the Pretty Horses* (1992), ‘Beware gentle knight. There

⁸ Ibid, p.51.

⁹ Scott, *Waverley*, p.77.

is no greater monster than reason [...] but even Cervantes could not envision such a country as Mexico.’¹⁰ To be sceptical of a purely rational approach to reality is well enough, but across the border there come encounters which the idealistic protagonist will be truly unprepared for. Although Cant acknowledges that the contrast of images in McCarthy’s *Midlothian* quotation represent naïve optimism undercut by an incongruous awareness of death signalled by the gothic Sexton, he attributes this failure of youthful optimism to McCarthy’s revision of Scott, not to Scott’s work itself where the quotation originates. Given my reading of Scott as an ambivalent and complex writer, it is too simple to envision his work as something which ‘perfectly expressed the escapism of the myth of the Old South’, taking Mark Twain’s critique too literally, and more fruitful to instead look in detail at McCarthy’s strategic use of Scott.¹¹ For the generic tropes which the two writers share in their use of the historical novel form – dialect, depictions of primitivism and the motif of the artefact– are also significant and complicate any explanation of their intertextual relationship in terms of simple subversion or revision, although these aspects are certainly present in McCarthy’s response to Scott.

For John Cant, Twain and McCarthy are mythoclasts while Scott is a myth-maker. However, I will illustrate through a reading of McCarthy’s work that Scott’s writing also provides generic models for excavating and questioning national and colonial myths. Cant argues that McCarthy’s writing, in general, represents a present culture ‘created from the language and artefacts of the past and carrying myths that may prove to be both beguiling

¹⁰ Cormac McCarthy, *All the Pretty Horses* (London: Picador, 1992), p.146.

¹¹ Cant, p.50.

and destructive at the same time.’¹² In fact, however, in both McCarthy and Scott the artefacts of the past are used to problematize historical narratives of nation-state development and cohesion, and in turn emphasize unsettling and even regressive regional histories. The tension between Southern regional histories and wider American national histories also impinges on classically American contradictions between Union and independence, melting-pot integration and ambivalence toward political centralization, and these dichotomies are powerfully depicted in McCarthy’s *Child of God* (1973) as well as running through the narratives of *The Border Trilogy* (1992-8).

Understanding McCarthy’s work as a whole as violently mythoclastic, John Cant reads texts such as *Blood Meridian* (1985) as embodying a powerful critique of American myth-making. Yet it is the very epic nature of *Blood Meridian* – its themes of male adventure, a false ‘literary’ view of the world, its motifs of primitivism and the scrambling of temporal markers – which invite a reading alongside Scott’s work. Referring temporal and spatial relationships in McCarthy’s work, Cant writes, ‘In the arid country on either side of the Rio Grande and at the high tide of Imperialistic expansion McCarthy finds his American chronotope.’¹³ Indeed, the layers of temporality which McCarthy builds are strongly reminiscent of Scott, and, as with the earlier writer, he spatializes time in landscape, as Cant’s reference to Bakhtin’s chronotope suggests. For Bakhtin, as we saw in chapter one, Scott is a significant figure who perfectly exemplifies the function of the chronotope in his historical fiction. Scott and McCarthy are also both concerned with the temporality of

¹² Ibid, p.54.

¹³ Ibid, p.158.

the landscape and with temporalized cultural comparisons. The picaresque aspect of Scott's Waverley novels is vividly present in McCarthy's work, a narrative movement which allows him to build temporal and spatial depth in his depiction of the cultural and historical sediments layering the landscape. While Scott's protagonists follow wider colonial movements in their journeys to the British peripheries, where frontier-style encounters with primitivism are staged, as well as an ultimate, if uneven, integration of centre and periphery, McCarthy's novels recast this movement as a violent, colonial, and masculine appropriation of space, a disordered search for identification and origin on the other side of the border. In this chapter, I will discuss how McCarthy builds on Faulkner's translation of Scottish Romantic themes into Southern fiction, while at the same time revising these same tropes into a postmodern perspective on historical change and transition, where the reliability of dominant narratives of national history and identity is troubled by their fictional equivalents. I will demonstrate this process first with an example from McCarthy's early South-Eastern fiction before moving into a fuller analysis of *Blood Meridian* and *The Border Trilogy*.

Faulkner's Legacy: The Celtic-Southern Thesis and *Child of God*

McCarthy's earlier fiction of the South East can be read in many ways as a continuation of Faulkner's vision of a South of disjointed temporal and cultural spaces which are often produced by Scottish ethnic and cultural legacies. Faulkner's descriptions of the Scottish emigrant legacy in Yoknapatowpha County are always characterized by temporal disruption and

repetition, and he also stresses the cultural importance of the Scottish and Scottish Romantic legacy in the South. In McCarthy's early South-Eastern fiction there are similar currents at work, but there is also a more explicit criticism of the reactionary aspects of Faulkner's Scottish-Southern legacy, one which feeds into McCarthy's own subversion of linear and progressive conceptions of the historical.

This critique of Scottish legacies in the South is clear in McCarthy's 1973 novel *Child of God*, which I will be reading as a gothic subversion of the rhetoric of the Celtic-Southern Thesis which we encountered in the previous chapter, a thesis which exaggerates the 'Celtic' (Scottish, Irish, Welsh and Northern English) contributions to Southern history and culture. Among the criticisms this argument has received are that it oversimplifies the South in the colonial period, that it obscures the cultural contributions of minorities (particularly African Americans and Native Americans), and that it feeds into revisionist histories of the Civil War and of North-South relations.¹⁴ The lack of differentiation made between Celtic groups by this Thesis, particularly in terms of religious affiliation, ultimately produces the image of a homogenous Celtic culture transplanted intact into the New World. This homogeneity is indeed typical of many of Faulkner's depictions of Scots in Yoknapatowpha, who despite inhabiting a different continent still speak 'only the Gaelic and not much of that' and who 'love brawling and fear God and believe in hell.'¹⁵

McCarthy draws on Faulkner's characterization of Southern Celts in *Child of*

¹⁴ For a rebuttal of McWhiney's arguments see Rowland Berthoff, 'Celtic Mist Over the South', *The Journal of Southern History*, 52 (1986), 523-546. For a critique of the Thesis in its more recent incarnations, see Bryan Gienza, 'Do Not Go Gentle into that Celtic Twilight', *Mississippi Quarterly*, 6 (2007), 415-420.

¹⁵ Faulkner, *The Town*, p.272-273. Faulkner, *Intruder in the Dust*, p.148.

God but also extends it into more extreme directions as a critique of the historical vision of the Celtic-Southern Thesis.

With its setting in 1960s Appalachian Tennessee, *Child of God* narrates the crimes of its protagonist Lester Ballard, a backwoodsman who descends slowly into madness and serial murder. The presence of the familiar discourse of the Celtic-Southern Thesis is signalled in the very first scene of the novel, where the townspeople arrive for the auction of Ballard's land and he is described to the reader as he emerges to watch the trucks pull up outside:

To watch these things issuing from the otherwise mute pastoral morning is a man at the barn door. He is small, unclean, unshaven. He moves in the dry chaff among the dust and slats of sunlight with a constrained truculence. Saxon and Celtic bloods. A child of God much like yourself perhaps.¹⁶

It is significant that the novel's title is mentioned here alongside the description of Ballard's ancestral heritage. The 'Celtic' addition is the extra term which marks him as culturally and racially 'Southern' American in the language of the narrator. The ironic description of Ballard as a 'child of God', has real referents in terms of his subsequent rough living, almost in a state of nature, but it also reflects the sense of an exceptional status which the Celtic-Southern Thesis associates with 'Saxon and Celtic bloods'. Following in the footsteps of Scottish and Irish settlers whose loss of land forced them into the wilderness of the new world, after the loss of his property Ballard begins his journey into the backwoods in a darkly ironic narrative of ancestral return. His

¹⁶ McCarthy, *Child of God* (London: Picador, 1989), p.4.

living conditions deteriorate in a parody of historical progression, as he moves from the farm on his own land to squatting in an abandoned hut, before eventually setting up home in a cave. The Celtic-Southern Thesis envisions Celtic traditional culture and ancestral traits as noble and legitimate, a view which *Child of God* parodies in the image of its grubby, sullen protagonist and in its narration of his descent into primitivism.

As an exemplary text on the Celtic-Southern Thesis, I have used Grady McWhiney's *Cracker Culture: Celtic Ways in the Old South* published in 1988, although the roots of the thesis in academia go back to at least the 1940s, with Frank Lawrence Owsley's *Plain Folk of the Old South* (1949). One of the Southern Agrarians at Vanderbilt University, Owsley laid the foundation of an intellectual tradition which sought to rehabilitate the reputation of Southern yeoman farmers, arguing that they had a greater role in Southern society and history than had previously been allowed. The romantic impulse of the Southern Agrarians to promote a positive and worthy image of the yeoman farmer is heavily satirized in McCarthy's novel.¹⁷ I will, therefore, be reading *Child of God* as subverting many of the characteristics and behaviours associated with so-called Celtic groups in the South in its depiction of the inhabitants of Appalachian Tennessee. McWhiney's *Cracker Culture* is certainly a problematic work, but it contains some suggestive rhetoric which illuminates the kind of historical narrative which McCarthy is constructing in *Child of God* and helps to clarify the connections between the novel's gothic and parodic elements. In this novel McCarthy depicts the return of Celtic

¹⁷ For a classic study of the Southern Agrarians, see Paul Keith Conkin, *The Southern Agrarians* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1988).

ancestral traits as monstrous and transgressive, but ultimately his vision of a regressive human history is not so far from the conservatism of the Celtic-Southern Thesis.

Cracker Culture seeks to map its version of Celtic culture from a moment of origin and to identify those traits which it argues would be transferred to the culture of the American South. In the prologue Forrest McDonald evocatively describes the ancient Celts as a primal ancestor race:

A race who ‘came out of the darkness’ and appeared in central Europe between the sixth and eighth centuries B.C. [...] The society of the Celts was tribal, rural and pastoral [...] Yet the Celts, like many other primitive peoples, disdained the art of farming: men were loath to work the fields, leaving tillage to women or slaves. The free males were pastoralists who held great herds of cattle and hogs in common [...] Above all, they were fierce warriors.¹⁸

This description perhaps says less about ancient Celtic culture than it does about revisionist versions of the Old South, and it is typical of *Cracker Culture*'s rhetoric – evoking a patriarchal society where women are second-class citizens and where slavery is legitimized as part of a certain ‘authentic’ way of life. Perhaps unwittingly, the very structural arguments of the Celtic Southern Thesis display gothic traits, in that they produce the image of a Celtic culture essentially unchanged over centuries, functioning outside of time in a state of repetition and regression.

¹⁸ Forrest McDonald, ‘Prologue’, in Grady McWhiney, *Cracker Culture*, pp.xxi-xlii (p.xxiv).

This trope of a Celtic retreat from modernity is reflected in *Child of God*, where McCarthy depicts rural Sevier county as a site of de-industrialization, of modernity in a state of decay, peeling back to reveal a primordial environment. The novel describes a disused quarry where great masses of stone stand like ‘toppled monoliths among the trees and vines like traces of an older race of man.’¹⁹ The forests of ancient Europe are replicated in the woods of Appalachian Tennessee and the very environment is returning to a premodern state, ‘At one time in the world there were woods that no-one owned and these were like them.’²⁰ When Ballard’s land is being auctioned off, ‘In the pines the voices chanted a lost litany. Then they stopped’; and in the woods can be seen ‘the fairy tracks of birds and deermice’.²¹ In language like this, *Child of God* approaches *Cracker Culture*’s rhetoric of a semi-mythic pastoral heritage, a melancholy landscape filled with echoing winds and scattered with the relics of an ancestral past. This Ossianic, ‘Celtic Twilight’ aesthetic outstrips even Faulkner in its heavy-handedness, and McCarthy invests this language with a dark irony. His version of this aesthetic forms a clichéd Celticizing of the Southern upland landscape, one that is ultimately subverted into something much more disturbing. Shades of Macpherson’s poetics can be read into McCarthy’s rendering of landscape in *Child of God*, with its aesthetics of otherworldly echoes and lost voices recalling the incantatory rhythms of the Ossian poems, ‘lovely are the songs of wo that are heard on Albion’s rocks, when the noise of the chase is past, and the streams of Cona answer to the voice of Ossian.’²² Yet in evoking Ossian, although perhaps

¹⁹ McCarthy, *Child of God*, p.25.

²⁰ Ibid, p.127.

²¹ Ibid, p.6, p.127.

²² Macpherson, ‘Fingal’, *Poems of Ossian*, b.1, p.225.

with some irony, McCarthy treads a fine line between subverting the nostalgia of *Cracker Culture* and reiterating it.

One of the key links between McCarthy's depiction of the inhabitants of upland Tennessee and *Cracker Culture's* Southern Celt is their pastoral existence. As McWhiney's text argues, the Celtic pastoral way of life was preserved by the migration of these peoples to the wilderness of the American South, where they could continue their practices of open-range herding as their ancestors had since antiquity. Ballard does genuinely live off the land, but he subverts the nobility of life in the state of nature by living mostly on a diet of stolen corn and vermin, a parody of the notion of a race with an intrinsic connection with the land. Another central motif linking Ballard with a Celtic heritage is hunting. Like the Southern Celts of *Cracker Culture*, he is an excellent marksman, but apart from executing his human victims, his skill is mostly displayed in shooting frogs and rats and winning stuffed animals at the county fair. As a pastoralist robbed of his ancestral land and able only to parody the hunting skills of the famed Southern Celt, he voyeuristically clings to the remnants of these practices, as when he watches hunting dogs track and bring down a wild boar:

Ballard watched this ballet tilt and swirl and churn mud up through the snow and watched the lovely blood welter there in its holograph of battle, spray burst from a ruptured lung, the dark heart's blood [...] until shots rang out and all was done.²³

²³ McCarthy, *Child of God*, p.69.

Ballard has a deep aesthetic appreciation of this primal encounter but lives at one remove from such traditional pursuits, which he can only enact in transgressive and parodic forms, hunting human beings and literally dragging his female victims back to his cave-dwelling in the latter part of the novel.

This constrained feudal masculinity relates to the problematic representation of women in *Child of God*, who generally occupy passive and sexualized roles, just as their experiences are marginalized in the narrative of the Celtic-Southern Thesis. The trope of the loss of ancestral land and the attendant forfeiture of hunting rights echoes back through Faulkner to Fenimore Cooper and ultimately to Scott, in the experience of protagonists such as Edgar Ravenswood, who finds that his horse cannot even keep up with the hunt on what was once his family's hereditary land and whose 'poverty excluded him from the favourite recreation of his forefathers.'²⁴ This trope is also evident in Hugh Redgauntlet's invective against industrial fishing and the loss of ancestral hunting practices and land rights in *Redgauntlet*, and, as we saw in the previous chapter, hunting rights and land ownership are deeply connected in Faulkner's *Go Down, Moses*, providing a more recent Southern model for McCarthy's iteration of this theme.

McWhiney's *Cracker Culture* controversially enforces stereotypes of Southerners in general as lazy and work-shy, arguing that this fact is present in historical accounts of Celtic groups. In *Child of God*, Ballard is referred to ironically as a 'Man of leisure', as his lifestyle makes a mockery of the image of the comfortable pastoralist enjoying the fruits of the land. In his representation of Sevier County, McCarthy references every imaginable cliché

²⁴ Scott, *The Bride of Lammermoor*, p.107.

about Celtic heritage in the Southern uplands: hard drinking, fiddle-playing, reel-dancing, fighting, blood sports, metal-working, and woodwork. In one scene, as the county sheriff descends from the courthouse, the narrator describes an adjacent green where ‘the Sevier county pocketknife society had convened there to whittle and mutter and spit.’²⁵ Moments like this demonstrate McCarthy’s treatment of traditional culture as primitive and repetitive, but also with elements of the absurd. The formal structure of the novel focuses on the voices of the local community, often in ways that continue to subvert elements of the Celtic-Southern Thesis. The story is told by an omniscient narrator and various unnamed first-person narrators who give their personal accounts of Ballard. The familiar, anecdotal style of these individual narrators emphasizes the qualities of oral narrative and dramatic story-telling favoured in traditional Celtic culture. Yet where Faulkner’s use of dialect intends fidelity to Mississippi voices and adds linguistic texture and interest, McCarthy’s use of it is often clichéd and repetitive, sometimes almost without content, as in the following exchange between Ballard and Kirby over the whereabouts of some illegal whisky:

I cain’t find it, he said

Cain’t find it?

No.

Well shit fire.

I’ll hunt some more later on. I think I was drunk when I hid it.

Where’d ye hide it at?

²⁵ McCarthy, *Child of God*, p.48.

I don't know. I thought I could go straight to it but I must not have put it where I thought it was.

Well goddam.²⁶

The repetition of curses and stock phrases adds to the sardonic representation of the inhabitants of Sevier County, who often simply resort to emphatic spitting as a mode of conversation. This use of dialect contributes to the portrayal of Appalachia in *Child of God* as a primitive space, where although an oral story-telling tradition is still central, the famed Celtic garrulousness has all but vanished.

McCarthy has been accused of reproducing Appalachian stereotypes in *Child of God*, but when we approach the text as a subversion of the Celtic-Southern Thesis the use of these clichés can be read as part of the novel's wider project of gothicizing the narrative of a 'pure' Celtic ancestral heritage. Ballard's instinctive violent responses reference one of the popular pastimes of Southern Celts according to *Cracker Culture* – casual violence. McWhiney argues that violence was a cultural tradition of the Celts which they implanted in the South and which had been integral to traditional Celtic communities. Ballard's sexual deviance is also encompassed by the Celtic-Southern Thesis, as *Cracker Culture* includes historical accounts of the uninhibited Southern Celt, whose communities were rife with adultery, incest, and general loose morals. Yet in McCarthy's depiction of Ballard, this problematic liberated sexuality is displaced to another gothic extreme in the form of murder and necrophilia. Ballard's sexuality, like his fascination with the traditional hunt, is

²⁶ Ibid, pp.11-12.

initially voyeuristic and thus subverts the image of the free-living, violent and vital Celt into a grotesque form.

This interpretation of *Child of God* stems from my readings of Scottish texts from of the Romantic period, where the preservation or revival of elements of traditional Scottish culture is often treated in a gothic register. As Ian Duncan argues, Scottish Gothic acts as a parody of the project of reviving ancient and organic cultural forms and modes of community. Such fiction:

Narrates a parody or critique of the late Enlightenment project of romance revival, in which the reanimation of traditional forms is botched or transgressive. Instead of restoring a familiar way of life, romance desire evokes only the dead, wraiths without life or substance, or else demonic forces expelled from the modern order of nature, whose return threatens a reverse colonization – rendering the present alien, unnatural, fatal, exposing its metaphysical emptiness.²⁷

A similar dynamic is visible in McCarthy's novel, where the return of ancestral Celtic culture is distorted, and this perverse return underlies its critique of the Celtic-Southern Thesis. *Child of God* employs gothic tropes to draw out that argument's contradictions and its white supremacist undertones. The Celtic-Southern Thesis represents more broadly a disturbing relationship with the dead, in its attempts to preserve and revive a lost organic culture. This metaphor is mirrored in Ballard's own sinister relationship with his victims and his frequent attempts to alternately preserve and reanimate their remains. He can be read as possessing a disturbing version of the antiquarian impulse,

²⁷ Duncan, 'Walter Scott, James Hogg and Scottish Gothic', *A Companion to the Gothic*, p.71.

trawling his network of caves at the end of the novel and picking over the bones of long-dead animals. When his ‘mausoleum’ of victims is eventually discovered beneath the earth, they are slowly drawn upwards by rope, ‘the first of the dead sat up on the cave floor, the hands that hauled the rope above sorting the shadows like puppeteers’, a simile which serves as a final haunting image of the unnatural reanimation of a buried community.²⁸ In contrast to Ballard’s ironic proud entrance at the opening of the novel, the text’s latter pages refer to his ‘wrong blood’ rather than his distinguished lineage, and all the clichés of a worthy Celtic heritage have by now been twisted beyond recognition.

Yet despite McCarthy’s critique of the Celtic-Southern Thesis, *Cracker Culture* and *Child of God* share a similar vision of history. In McCarthy’s novel, the return of an ancestral Celtic culture causes a rupture in time, as when Ballard walks through the woods in the early spring where ‘the snow reveals in palimpsest old buried wanderings, struggles, scenes of death [...] like time turned back upon itself.’²⁹ A parallel temporal inversion is present in *Cracker Culture*’s historical arguments, where the long history of the Celts is related as merely a preparation for the full expression of their culture in the open spaces of the South-Eastern United States, for it is only there that the golden age of their culture could truly begin. As Forrest McDonald argues in his prologue, ‘the [...] frontier provided what Europe could not: places where people could, by choice, live with like-minded people in isolation from others.’³⁰ In this narrative, migration causes a hostile strengthening of

²⁸ McCarthy, *Child of God*, p.196.

²⁹ Ibid, p.138.

³⁰ McDonald, ‘Prologue’, in McWhiney, *Cracker Culture*, p.xli.

ancestral traits rather than their dilution. This is a historical vision which *Child of God* shares with the Celtic-Southern Thesis, one characterized by a pessimistic view of humanity and a lack of belief in progress or improvement. Both works offer a problematic alternative to the conventional narrative of an American identity made confident, expansive and democratic by the presence of the frontier and its melting pot of cultures. What this counter-narrative offers instead is a frontier which is essentially insular, regressive and anti-modern, and which in McCarthy's novel is gothicized in the violent resurgence of ancestral traits. Ty Hawkins highlights the ways in which McCarthy produces characters who resist or are excluded from narratives of social progress, arguing that he 'repeatedly foregrounds the abject, or 'modernity's remainder' [...] those aspects of human beings and human societies modernity has yet to assimilate.'³¹ McCarthy's pessimistic literary vision emphasizes an underlying historical stasis, one which subverts narratives of social progress. As an elderly townsman comments in *Child of God*, 'I think people are the same from the day God first made one.'³² For all its subversion of the reactionary politics of the Celtic-Southern Thesis, *Child of God* simultaneously replicates its conservative, long view of history. Yet it is not merely *Child of God* in McCarthy's oeuvre which offers this vision of historical backsliding and a bleak view of human progress; his 1985 novel *Blood Meridian* continues these preoccupations in the context of the nineteenth-century South-West, where it is the Scott-originated motif of the border, rather than ancestral return, which is highlighted.

³¹ Ty Hawkins, 'The Eruption of the Sordid: Cormac McCarthy's Resistance to Modern Ideology', *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*, 55 (2014), 437-451 (p.438).

³² McCarthy, *Child of God*, p.168.

Blood Meridian, the Frontier and the Strata of History

Blood Meridian is largely faithful to the history of the Glanton Gang as described in its source text, Samuel Chamberlain's *My Confession: Recollections of a Rogue*, which details his exploits with the infamous gang of scalp hunters in the Mexican Borderlands in the aftermath of the Mexican War. In his memoir Chamberlain enthuses over his first discovery of Walter Scott's work:

What a glorious new world opened before me, how I devoured their pages and oh how I longed to emulate his heroes! I took pride in all athletic exercises and was anxious for a chance to use my strength and skill in defence of oppressed beauty.³³

Although his somewhat adolescent reading of Scott raises questions about the links between masculine identity, sexual politics, and colonial violence, he in fact mentions Scott in the context of straying from the upright path of religious instruction. It is clear in the following passages that Chamberlain is both satirizing Scott and similar adventure narratives, and puncturing the absurd enthusiasm of his adolescent self, as is made obvious when he attacks the Church singing master, 'Ivanhoe, Don Quixote, inspire me to meet this shameless oppressor [...] all the long pent-up knight errantry and the Seven Champions of Christendom, consolidated in me, burst,' and he leaves his victim 'prostrate, bleeding, almost annihilated.'³⁴ The scene is both disturbing and absurd, and it is significant that Chamberlain himself draws attention to

³³ Samuel Chamberlain, *My Confession: Recollections of a Rogue* (New York: 1956; repr. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), pp.7-8. The memoir was first published posthumously in *Time* magazine in 1956.

³⁴ *Ibid*, p.9.

the violence which can pertain to a false and 'literary' conception of reality. Yet both *Ivanhoe* and Cervantes' novel contain within them a critique of chivalry. Ivanhoe himself has not been duped by the reading of too many chivalrous romances as is the case with Waverley or Don Quixote, but he is still forced to defend knight errantry against Rebecca's astute criticisms during the siege of Torquilstone.³⁵

Blood Meridian seems a particularly pertinent example of the production of both exuberantly and problematically fictive versions of history, as its characters such as Judge Holden and Glanton himself are already literary characters from Chamberlain's text. Such literary reflexivity allows McCarthy to speculate, as Scott does in his metafictional frames and authorial commentaries, on the relationship between representation and historical truth, as in the tableau of landscape imagery described early in the novel beneath a 'paper skyline'³⁶ – signalling that the novel's vistas are already contrived and literary. The novel also contains its own antiquarian and geologist in the figure of Judge Holden, whose discursive lectures and pronouncements on anthropology and natural history suggest a disturbing version of the impulse toward historical comparison and classification in Walter Scott's writing. Through the figure of the Judge and his excessive descriptions of the geological formations of the Mexican Borderlands, McCarthy stresses the connection between human and natural histories. In so doing, the novel links with both Scottish Enlightenment historicism and geological science, and with the imagery of classic formulations of American

³⁵ Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p.316.

³⁶ McCarthy, *Blood Meridian or the Evening Redness in the West* (New York: Vintage, 1992), p.4.

history such as Frederick Jackson Turner's 'Frontier Thesis'. In this way, *Blood Meridian* draws on Scottish Romantic and Enlightenment works in order to mount a critique of the teleological narrative of American expansion.

The novel can be aligned with texts such as *Waverley* and *Rob Roy* in the epic nature of its form and in the themes of national construction and national mythologies. Tackling such epic concerns, McCarthy situates himself within the tradition of the national tale, as Mark A. Eaton argues, 'McCarthy analyses how national identities emerge out of specific conditions and discourses whereby people come to know themselves as citizens, and in creating a novel about America's past, he might be said to construct a national narrative.'³⁷ Yet Eaton ultimately reads *Blood Meridian* as a postnational narrative, one which actively seeks to deconstruct accounts of pure national and racial origin and the coherence of myths of nation-making. Donald Pease sees the bedrock of American national narrative as emerging from the Enlightenment, where the particularity of the nation-state was produced from universal norms which naturalized the nation-state function:

The image repertoire productive of the U.S. national community can be ascertained through a recitation of the key terms in the national meta-narrative commonly understood to be descriptive of that community. Those images interconnect an exceptional national subject (American Adam) with a representative national scene (Virgin Land) and an exemplary national motive (errand into the wilderness). The composite

³⁷ Mark A. Eaton, 'Dis(re)membered Bodies: Cormac McCarthy's Border Fiction', *Modern Fiction Studies*, 49 (2003), 155-180, (p.162).

result of the interaction of these images was the mythological entity – Nature’s Nation.³⁸

While Scott’s peripheries are not virgin, and his protagonists usually bring a degree of prejudice to their encounters at the border (usually a mild Whig sensibility), their drive to explore and describe the boundaries of the nation leads them further and further into unknown and primitive territory, which aligns Scott himself with a similar mythic national narrative.

The archetypal Scott narrative of masculine vitality called forth at the border to an unsettled periphery is disturbingly restaged in McCarthy’s novel, where it is translated into brutal, continual and often indiscriminate violence. Many critics have approached *Blood Meridian* as a critique of the ideology of manifest destiny as expressed in works such as Frederick Jackson Turner’s ‘Frontier Thesis’ (Turner thesis). In his essay ‘The Significance of the Frontier in American History’ (1893), Turner narrates the foundation of American democracy and national character through the catalyst of Westward expansion and the frontier experience.³⁹ While the frontier has distinct and specific meanings in American literature, the historical American frontier has much in common with Scott’s border: a porous line expanding into new territory, an apparent demarcation between civilization and savagery, a border not between two nations but between a nation-state and a supposedly stateless or disordered nation, and a process of expansion and improvement as well as

³⁸ Donald E. Pease, ed., ‘National Identities, Postmodern Artifacts, and Postnational Narratives’, in *National Identities and Post-Americanist Narratives* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), pp.1-13 (pp.3-4).

³⁹ Frederick Jackson Turner, ‘The Significance of the Frontier in American History’, *Rereading Frederick Jackson Turner: ‘The Significance of the Frontier in American History’ and Other Essays* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), pp.31-60.

integration. Yet as James Belich argues, the narrative of the frontier as the instrument of defining exclusively American national traits is questionable, as it 'does not actually help [...] in explaining Anglophone or even solely American divergence. As Turner's aberrant disciple, Walter Prescott Webb pointed out, all settler societies have frontiers, and the frontier thesis would apply "had the United States never existed".'⁴⁰ As I demonstrated with Scott's border narratives, frontier sites can emerge even within the enclosure of the nation-state, as spaces where we confront the costs of increasing national unity and those who refuse to be integrated.

Like Scott's borders, Turner's frontier is characterized by independence from civil government, the persistence of outlawed practices and the presence of untamed nature, 'The tendency is anti-social. It produces antipathy to control and particularly to any direct control'.⁴¹ Turner's frontier expresses itself in a rejection of the modern and promotes a traditional settler life as constituting freedom from civic restraint, anticipating McWhiney's evocation of the colonial South in *Cracker Culture*. For Turner, colonization is the process which reveals the successive stages of historical development, since 'colonial settlement is for economic science what the mountain is for geology, bringing to light primitive stratifications.'⁴² The frontier is the colonial incision revealing layers of strata which suggest a temporal narrative of human development. Geologic strata occur when particles come to rest against a barrier and solidify. While 'stratum' simply signifies a layer or deposit, the

⁴⁰ Belich, p.6.

⁴¹ Turner, p.53.

⁴² Ibid, p.38.

term 'stratification' implies an act of arranging and delineating discrete forms. In this sense, strata appear as a colonial form, as so many temporal borders.

For Turner, the stratifying line of Westward expansion is as natural as the layering of fissures and grains in rock, demonstrating the inevitable course of events in a natural order:

Thus civilization in America has followed the arteries made by geology, pouring an ever richer tide through them, until at last the slender paths of aboriginal intercourse have been broadened and interwoven into the complex mazes of modern commercial lines; the wilderness has been interpenetrated by lines of civilization growing ever more numerous. It is like the steady growth of a complex nervous system for the originally simple, inert continent [...] In this progress from savage conditions lie topics for the evolutionist.⁴³

The earth's recesses flow with civilized life, an image challenged by *Blood Meridian* where American expansion is followed by destruction and desolation in an arid, hostile landscape. Yet McCarthy's novel frequently figures time in terms of geological processes, emphasizing stone and mineral formations, and describing the Borderlands as furnished with a 'lake of gypsum', 'marle and terracotta', 'rifts of copper shale' and 'sandstone cities'.⁴⁴ For Turner, civilization enlivens and awakens the American continent with evolutionary force, his reference to Darwinism perhaps also suggesting the struggle for existence which reveals the 'fitness' of the settler over Native groups. Here his perspective relies on a more conservative and static understanding of

⁴³ Ibid, p.41.

⁴⁴ McCarthy, *Blood Meridian*, pp.111-3.

Enlightenment Stadial history (the conception of history as a progression through temporal stages) than can be found in Scott's writing. Indeed, Turner's presentation of Enlightenment historical thought is visible in a more naïve and problematic form. Scott's native lines are also initially slim and follow the contours of the environment rather than marking it, like the Highlanders in *Waverley* who travel in 'single or Indian file', lines which also thicken and coalesce into the Jacobite army, only to be dispersed and broken.⁴⁵ Although Turner speaks of a constant reversion to primitivism in settler life, his frontier lines are ultimately progressive, linear and teleological. We have seen the image of history as sediment problematized in Faulkner's writing, where the layers of the earth are porous and admit past forbears to rise to the surface and the present.

Turner's image of the development of social history in geological form is an interesting one in terms of contemporary thinking on geologic history and the concept of the Anthropocene, which denotes a new phase of geological change characterized by human effects on the environment. Tim Ingold objects to the notion of temporality which is implied in much discourse on the Anthropocene: an image of successive stages of geological change each superseding each other and forming a hardened surface through which we can measure our most recent history of industrialization and exploitation of the earth's resources. For Ingold, this understanding of geological temporality conflicts with his concepts of time and materials as dynamically moving along together. As he does with many linear models, Ingold suggests that we turn the image of geological strata on its side, where instead of each stage preceding

⁴⁵ Scott, *Waverley*, p.194.

the next in a hierarchically layered effect, we see the strata moving along together on one level. Each geological era then runs parallel to the other, and these phenomena are certainly not obsolete but can be found in conjunction with our present reality.⁴⁶ This is a reading of the Anthropocene which is applicable to the argument of my thesis, as again we have a conception of history which is materialized in processes of deposition and sedimentation, but which is also nonlinear, flowing and open-ended.⁴⁷

This Ingoldian model contrasts with Turner's depiction of the strata of American history, which he visualizes as a temporal parade reminiscent of Scottish Enlightenment Stadial history, one which depicts the inscription of passing eras:

It begins with the Indian and the hunter; it goes on to tell of the disintegration of savagery by the entrance of the trader, the pathfinder of civilization; we read the annals of the pastoral stage in ranch life; the exploitation of the soil by the raising of unrotated crops of corn and wheat [...] the intensive culture of the denser farm settlement; and finally the manufacturing organisation with city and factory system.⁴⁸

Each stage is figured as successive lines of trails and paths across the landscape, and the physical practices which constitute the settler's relationship with the land become stratified historical annals. These trails and lines are also processes of development, of intensification and integration, which

⁴⁶ Tim Ingold, 'Workshop: Solid Fluids in the Anthropocene', Department of Anthropology, University Catolica de Chile, 23 June 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7L5GQdtnGZI> [accessed 25/9/17].

⁴⁷ On the Anthropocene in *Blood Meridian* see Louise Squire, 'Death and the Anthropocene: Cormac McCarthy's World of Unliving', *Oxford Literary Review*, 34 (2012), 211-228.

⁴⁸ Turner, p.38.

inscribe the landscape and transform the soil. The presence of Native peoples is obscured by the procession of Stadia history, where different levels of human development supersede each other effortlessly in the fullness of time. This emphasis on historical distance and the naturalizing of expansion is in keeping with what Mark A. Eaton describes as the 'overly sanitized rhetoric of manifest destiny.'⁴⁹

Yet this linear, teleological narrative of American colonial history undergoes a powerful critique in *Blood Meridian*. When the filibuster mission encounters the Comanches early in the novel the latter cause the same temporal disruption and scrambling of historical markers as Scott's savages. At first sight, they are a 'fabled horde of mounted lancers', and their appearance references multiple periods and cultures:

A legion of horrors, hundreds in number, half naked or clad in costumes attic or biblical or wardrobed out of a fevered dream with the skins of animals and silk finery and pieces of uniform still tracked with the blood of prior owners, coats of slain dragoons [...] one with an umbrella and one in white stockings and a blood-stained wedding veil and some in headgear of crane feathers or rawhide helmets that bore the horns of bull or buffalo [...] and one in the armor of a Spanish conquistador, the breastplate and pauldrons deeply dented with old blows of mace or sabre done in another country by men whose very bones were dust.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Eaton, p.160.

⁵⁰ McCarthy, *Blood Meridian*, p.52.

The Comanches stand as an emblem of McCarthy's heterogeneous literary references which bear great resemblance to Scott's in their diverse temporal allusions. This scene might also be a dark restaging of the approach of the imaginary army in *Don Quixote*, made up of diverse races and warriors of all stripes. The effect of historical 'dress up' and pageantry also recalls the displays of Mardi Gras Indians and that pageant's medieval and heritage themes. As we have seen, Scott's work foregrounds the unevenness of historical progression, with Highlanders occupying a primitive stage alongside Native Americans and other peoples encountered in the practice of European Imperialism. This primitive time, for example in the mobile figure of Rob Roy, can appear at the very heart of the civilized world. As Ian Duncan writes, 'a recognition of "the same" cultural stage existing at different times also necessitates the recognition of different cultural stages – different temporalities – inhabiting and alienating, "the same" historical moment.'⁵¹ McCarthy dramatized the notion of a recurrent primitivism which draws history back into a regressive past in *Child of God*, but it is in *Blood Meridian* where this idea is most clearly and violently portrayed.

The imagery of geological time is central in McCarthy's evocation of the nineteenth-century Mexican Borderlands, with images of violent erosion and fracture providing the setting for his disturbing and violent historical narrative:

They rode through regions of parti-coloured stone upthrust in ragged kerfs and shelves of traprock reared in faults and anticlines curved back upon themselves and broken off like stumps of great stone treeboles

⁵¹ Duncan, *Scott's Shadow*, p.102.

and stones the lightning had clove open [...] trapdykes of brown rock running down the narrow chines of the ridges and onto the plain like the ruins of old walls, such auguries everywhere of the hand of man before man was or any living thing.⁵²

McCarthy's portentous portrayal of time in the novel seeks out the most primitive origins in the environment, but often his images of ancient time signal defacement, erasure, and destruction. The natural imagery here encompasses the destruction of man-made objects and the collapse of civilizations. McCarthy's elaborate scientific descriptions, which reference not simply geology in 'traprocks' and 'anticlines' but also geography (chines) and botany (treeboles), saturate this passage with an excess of disciplinary references. This over-abundance of pedantic description conjures a sense of a sophisticated omniscient narrator, in contrast to the novel's terse protagonist, but also envisions the Mexican borderlands as a violently misshapen landscape, one which expresses the ruptures and breakdowns of non-human history.

Blood Meridian teems with artefacts and remnants of historical and present cultures, 'old bones and broken shapes of painted pottery [...] pictographs of horse and cougar and turtle and mounted Spaniards helmeted and bucklered and contemptuous of stone and silence and time itself.'⁵³ Here the annals of different historical stages are present in the form of artefacts, but the objects are so scrambled, broken and divorced from context that the histories they signal are similarly disrupted. In the same way, the Judge's

⁵² McCarthy, *Blood Meridian*, p.50.

⁵³ Ibid, p.139.

fascination with artefacts appears as a disturbing inversion of the antiquarian mode:

In his lap he held the leather ledgerbook and he took up each piece, flint or potsherd or tool of bone, and deftly sketched it into the book [...] the judge sketched in profile and in perspective, citing the dimensions in his neat script, making marginal notes.⁵⁴

The very act of recording and note-taking denotes a discursive practice of cultural relativism as in *The Antiquary*. All these objects the Judge then casts into the fire and states that his intention by taking notes and sketches is to 'expunge them from the memory of man'.⁵⁵ He cites the ancient culture of the Anasazi when the gang camp among their stone ruins, and his version of Stadial history is one of racial and cultural backsliding, 'All progressions from a higher to a lower order are marked by ruins and mystery and a residue of nameless rage.'⁵⁶ What the Judge understands as cultural and historical progression is the trace left in the environment of the drive to fashion or shape the world. Like Turner, he privileges cultures which leave a trace on the landscape, but even that he himself defaces. It seems that for the Judge, history is endless primitivism and regression.⁵⁷

This disturbing perspective could not be further from the fond pedantry of Scott's eponymous *Antiquary*. While Oldbuck, like the Editor of Hogg's *Confessions*, seeks presence, authenticity, and material proof in the artefact,

⁵⁴ Ibid, p.140.

⁵⁵ Ibid, p.140.

⁵⁶ Ibid, p.146.

⁵⁷ For an extended analysis of the Judge's relationship to American historical narratives see Lauren Brown, 'Existing Without Consent: American History and the Judge in Cormac McCarthy's *Blood Meridian*', *The Cormac McCarthy Journal*, 16 (2018), 73-94.

the Judge seeks to replace them with the supplement of scriptive representation. He combines in himself both the intellectual and the savage. If the Scottish Romantic revival sought to reconstruct national consciousness in the artefact, the Judge seeks to violently elide any foreign national presence and translate it into private knowledge and control. His relationship with the foreign and primitive is demonstrated in his continual sexual violation, murder, and scalping of the 'others' he encounters and, as in the final scene with the kid represents a horrific incorporation and annihilation. The Judge's very person is both horrifically expansive and yet violently destructive of what he cannot contain. The substance of the earth and its natural resources is a cause of speculation and a source of wealth, as well as an object and source of knowledge, as we see when the Judge breaks ore samples, 'native nuggets in whose organic lobations he purported to read news of the world's origins, holding an extemporary lecture in geology to a small gathering who nodded and spat.'⁵⁸ Here again, natural forms become matter for analysis, as resources of essential or original knowledge much like the strata of Turner. Yet the Judge's hypothesizing is undercut by the savage ignorance of his audience, who are incapable of forming even a verbal response.

McCarthy writes the landscape of the Mexican Borderlands as a site where geological history is reasserting itself and effacing the trace of human civilization on the landscape. This is another way in which the image of a primitive and non-human history insinuates itself into the present. As Manuel Delanda writes, 'geology, far from having been left behind as a primitive stage

⁵⁸ McCarthy, *Blood Meridian*, p.116.

of the earth's evolution' in fact has always 'co-existed with the soft, gelatinous newcomers' of the animal and plant worlds.⁵⁹ In Scott, rocks, caves, and caverns are most often the haunts of characters in a primitive or extra-judicial state, such as the retreat of Donald Bean Lean in *Waverley* or of Donacha Dhu in *Midlothian*, where rock stands on the side of the primitive against civilization.

McCarthy's emphasis on mineral composition is expanded in the scene where Judge Holden manufactures gunpowder from charcoal, nitre, and sulphur, an incident related by the ex-priest.⁶⁰ This episode returns us to the problem of materiality and its relationship to nation-building and colonial enterprise, for as Tim Ingold writes, 'in the notion of materiality the world is presented both as the very bedrock of existence and as an externality that is open to comprehension and appropriation by a transcendent humanity.'⁶¹ The conversion of materiality into colonial purpose – the transformation of the environment, the making of gunpowder and the destruction of the traces of traditional cultures – has lost its 'improving' and moral necessity in *Blood Meridian*. The formation of the earth and its substance is related in McCarthy's text to the formation of humanity. Judge Holden signals an intellectual tradition of thinking race and primitivism which often references the universalism and eclecticism of Scottish Enlightenment tradition:

He adduced for their consideration references to the children of Ham, the lost tribes of Israelites, certain passages from the Greek poets, anthropological speculations as to the propagation of the races in their

⁵⁹ Ibid, p.27.

⁶⁰ Ibid, p.131.

⁶¹ Ingold, *Making*, p.27.

dispersion and isolation through the agency of geological cataclysm and an assessment of traits with respect to climatic and geographical influences.⁶²

Here the Judge describes how the earth itself creates racial distinctions through the stratifying powers of climate and geography, and his discourse in many ways mimics the eclectic references made by the omniscient narrator, as though the Judge himself could be the author of the novel in which he appears. On one level, this naturalizing rhetoric echoes Turner's emphasis on the spontaneous expansion of the colonial settlement and the contraction of the Native population, but the Judge's language also reiterates the role of natural processes in organizing political and national spaces.

We also find McCarthy engaging with Scott in *Blood Meridian* through the motif of cultural and physical primitivism. His savages, like Scott's, are not always genuine Native people as the Glanton gang are savages – or perhaps barbarians – created by the border culture of opportunistic and brutal colonial violence. When the kid first sees the Glanton gang through the bars of the jail they appear as 'a pack of vicious-looking humans':

Bearded, barbarous, clad in the skins of animals stitched up with thews and armed with weapons of every description, revolvers of enormous weight and bowieknives the size of claymores and short twobarreled rifles [...] the trappings of their horses fashioned out of human skin and their bridles woven up from human hair and decorated with human

⁶² McCarthy, *Blood Meridian*, p.84.

teeth and the riders wearing scapulars or necklaces of dried and blackened human ears.⁶³

The motif of the artefact and the fetish appear here as connected with the past and with savagery in a passage demonstrating McCarthy's referential exuberance. The Scottish Romantic presence is clearly signalled in the comparison of the knives to 'claymores', weapons of Highland origin associated with retro-Jacobite imagery and bloody border disputes. Scott's armies are similarly primal and heterogeneous, as in the vanguard of the Highland army in *Waverley* where 'there were found individuals of an inferior description' who wear 'the livery of extreme penury, being indifferently accoutred, and worse armed, half naked, stunted in growth, and miserable in aspect.'⁶⁴ Scott details the savage and sparse weaponry, 'Here was a pole-axe, there a sword without a scabbard; here a gun without a lock, there a scythe set straight upon a pole; and some had only their dirks, and bludgeons or stakes pulled out of hedges.'⁶⁵ Within a single army Scott seeks to portray the heterogeneity of the Highlands and its people, whose more 'primitive' characteristics contrast with the backdrop of Edinburgh at the beginning of the Enlightenment.

McCarthy also employs descriptive terms which reference scientific and philosophical discourses of prehistoric temporality: Toadvine and the kid appear as 'forms excavated from a bog', the prisoners in the jail 'picked themselves like apes', and the Chiricahuas are 'stoneage savages daubed with

⁶³ Ibid, p.78.

⁶⁴ Scott, *Waverley*, p.228.

⁶⁵ Ibid, p.229.

clay paints.’⁶⁶ These descriptions are used to portray not only the Native peoples in the novel but the Glanton gang itself and to depict a world of recurrent primitivism. Within the context of Scottish Enlightenment thought from which Scott’s work emerges, the concept of distinct historical stages – savage, barbarous, pastoral and commercial – rest on accounts of contemporary peoples deemed to be occupying them. Native Americans are used often in Ferguson’s *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767) as exemplary of the savage stage, their primitivism signifying the promise of an understanding of human developmental and historical origins: ‘If, in advanced years, we would form a just notion of our progress from the cradle, we must have recourse to the nursery, and from the example of those who are still in the period of life we mean to describe, take our representation of past manners, that cannot, in any other way, be recalled.’⁶⁷

McCarthy’s Native ‘savages’ are glimpsed in motion or from a moving point, emphasizing the temporal disjuncture that their image creates and their inability to occupy the present moment, of which the white settler has taken possession. Such disjunction is evident in John Cole’s vision of the Comanche at the beginning of *All the Pretty Horses*, ‘nation and ghost of nation passing in a soft chorale across that mineral waste to darkness bearing lost to all history [...] like a grail the sum of their secular and transitory and violent lives.’⁶⁸ That a culture could become a grail – not merely an artefact bearing the essence of an entire culture but the object of the ultimate quest – is

⁶⁶ McCarthy, *Blood Meridian*, p.12., p.74., p.228.

⁶⁷ Adam Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p.80.

⁶⁸ McCarthy, *All the Pretty Horses*, p.5.

revealing of the image of the primitive as a resource for the desire to know essential origins. As Johannes Fabian remarks regarding this drive in anthropology, 'Distance is the prerequisite for generality as the study of human society is the road toward uncovering the universal structures of the human mind.'⁶⁹ McCarthy problematizes this recourse to the primitive for intellectual and political nourishment in *Blood Meridian*, where a universal culture of extreme violence replaces any sense of the mythic nobility or innocence of Native peoples, and where there is also no meaningful moral transformation to be had in the return to a primal state. The ultimate outcome of Turner's frontier, like Scott's, is integration and increasing national unity, 'a people composed of heterogeneous materials, with diverse and conflicting ideals and social interests [...] are being fused into national unity.'⁷⁰ This ideal is ultimately what is figured in the form of Turner's strata, and the unity formed through the frontier experience is one based on Anglo-Saxon and Scots-Irish ethnic identity, to the exclusion of Mexicans or Native Americans, and the latter are dismissed as temporally prior, taxonomized in their earlier stage of civilization.

Walter Scott is not the only Romantic literary presence felt in *Blood Meridian*. The opening lines of the novel paraphrase Wordsworth's 'My heart leaps up when I behold' (1807) in the description of the childhood and development of the kid, 'He watches, pale and unwashed. He can neither read nor write and in him broods already a taste for mindless violence. All history

⁶⁹ Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), p.68.

⁷⁰ Turner, p.75.

present in that visage, the child the father of the man.’⁷¹ McCarthy’s is clearly a very different definition of the nature of childhood than is typical of Romanticism, with the inversion here signifying that life does not begin with innocence but is instead determined by the sins of the father, and that this repetition is the very nature of ‘all history’. Although by the end of the novel ‘the kid’ becomes ‘the man’ and has taken to carrying a Bible he is unable to read, this change in behaviour does not relate to a moral transformation or development, and McCarthy thereby subverts the conventionally linear form of the Bildungsroman. In *Blood Meridian*, as in *Child of God*, he presents human experience in terms of a powerful backward momentum with its expression in primitive violence.

The Border Trilogy

The shift in McCarthy’s literary territory from the South-East to the South-West marks a break from his continuation of Faulkner’s aesthetics of lush and decaying Southern spaces, choosing instead the unforgiving aridity of New Mexico, Texas and the Mexican borderlands. His trilogy of novels of the South-West conform broadly to the structure of a Scott narrative: a naïve and romantic young protagonist journeys across the Mexican border, leading to an encounter with violence, poverty, corruption and thus to eventual disillusionment and loss. The spatial movement of border crossing is associated with the Bildungsroman aspect of these texts, as it is in Scott’s work, and all three novels of the trilogy can be described as coming of age

⁷¹ McCarthy, *Blood Meridian*, p.34.

narratives.⁷² In *All the Pretty Horses*, John Grady Cole's compassion for young thief Blevins, and his doomed attachment to the upper-class daughter of his employer, Alejandra, lead to his brutal imprisonment in a Mexican jail. *All the Pretty Horses* sets a provisional romantic and mythical tone for the trilogy, as Cole and Rawlins catch their first glimpse of the oasis region Coahuila:

The grasslands lay in a deep violet haze and to the West thin flights of waterfowl were moving north before the sunset in the deep red galleries under the cloudbanks like schoolfish in a burning sea and on the foreland they saw vaqueros driving cattle before them through a gauze of golden dust.⁷³

The romantic appeal of pastoral life is emphasized from the outset, and this passage seems conscious of its own potent nostalgia in the image of the golden haze which envelops the paradisiacal natural landscape. Ranch life is depicted as an instinctive existence in a natural idyll which is fast disappearing.

This romantic yearning is, however, undercut by its association with a colonial worldview which is expressed by Perez, a privileged prisoner jailed with Cole and Rawlins, 'the mind of the anglo is closed in this rare way [...] It is that his picture of the world is incomplete [...] he looks only where he wishes to see.'⁷⁴ When Cole reappears in the final text *Cities of the Plain*, his romantic outlook has still not diminished, and he embarks on an affair with teenage prostitute Magdalena. This failure to relinquish this worldview leads to his death. It is his killer, the pimp Eduardo, who makes explicit the link between

⁷² For a classic analysis of the Bildungsroman, see Franco Moretti, *The Way of the World: The Bildungsroman in European Culture* (London: Verso, 2000).

⁷³ McCarthy, *All the Pretty Horses*, p.93.

⁷⁴ Ibid, p.192.

the romantic outlook and a colonial mentality, as he describes the American male's attraction to Mexico:

They drift down out of your leprous paradise seeking a thing now extinct among them [...] by now of course longing has clouded their minds [...] But the Mexican world is a world of adornment only and underneath it is very plain indeed. While your world [...] totters upon an unspoken labyrinth of questions. And we will devour you, my friend. You and all your pale empire.⁷⁵

The longing of the American male to experience Mexico is here described as a desire to move back in time to an earlier way of life which is disappearing from the American South-West, not unlike the motives of many of Scott's protagonists in their journeys across the border. The *Border Trilogy* consistently associates a newly demarcated and still porous Mexico with the wild and primitive, framed as an unexplored and temporally static region depicted in the map in *All the Pretty Horses* where there are 'roads and rivers and towns on the American side of the map as far South as the Rio Grande and beyond that all was white.'⁷⁶ The motif of Mexican national underdevelopment is apparent in all three texts, and the familiar motif of the border as a demarcation between civilization and savagery – familiar from both Scott and Cooper – is strongly maintained. The blankness of the map suggests that Mexico fails to offer any recognizable or coherent national image, in contrast to its apparently integrated and civilized neighbour.

⁷⁵ Cormac McCarthy, *Cities of the Plain* (London: Picador, 2011), pp.250-4.

⁷⁶ McCarthy, *All The Pretty Horses*, p.34.

In *The Crossing*, teenage Billy Parham's efforts to preserve the life of a pregnant wolf by attempting to return it to its wild habitat south of the border ends with it being taken from him and torn apart in a dogfight. The second crossing in the novel, where Parham and his brother Boyd attempt to track the murderer of their parents ends in Boyd's death and Billy's total isolation and bereavement. This grief is compounded later in *Cities of the Plain* where Parham loses his surrogate brother John Cole. Together *All the Pretty Horses* and *Cities of the Plain* depict the failure of the cross-cultural marriage, as both of John's attempts to marry a Mexican woman are unsuccessful. This is in contrast to Scott's depiction of the inter-racial or cross-cultural marriage as the beginning of tolerance and integration, for example in the nuptials of Edward Waverley and Rose Bradwardine in *Waverley* signifying a new era of British integration post-Culloden, or the amalgamation of Saxon and Norman culture represented in the marriage of Ivanhoe and Rowena in *Ivanhoe*. *The Border Trilogy's* failed unions suggest a more cynical and ironic view on the potential for national and international settlement.

In *The Border Trilogy*, the Mexican border functions very like the Western frontier, and it holds the same attractions for Billy and Boyd Parham in *The Crossing* as the Western Territories did for Huck Finn. Across the border the two brothers can find an escape from the law which would otherwise keep Boyd in a foster home:

Why can't the law go to Mexico? Boyd said.

Cause its American law, it ain't worth nothing in Mexico.

What about the Mexican law?

There ain't no law in Mexico its just a pack of rogues.⁷⁷

The association of Mexico with primitivism and lawlessness holds throughout the *Trilogy*, just as Scott had set up oppositions between English civil law and the poverty and unrest of the Scottish periphery. The Highland line in Scott's work partakes of this savagery/civilization binary, as does the Scotland/England border itself, where the inhabitants are the product of an 'intermixture with vagrants and criminals, who make this wild country a refuge from justice [...] objects of suspicion and dislike to their more polished neighbours.'⁷⁸ This binary does not appear in *Blood Meridian* where McCarthy depicts savagery and lawlessness pervading both the nascent United States and Mexico.

The Crossing unites the motifs of excavation and border crossing when Billy returns across the border with the disinterred corpse of his brother to have him buried in the United States. The corpse of Boyd Parham is in stark contrast to the mouldering and still moist remains of the sinner in Hogg's *Confessions*, and is instead desiccated, brittle and passive, 'lying there with his face turned up and clutching himself like some fragile being.'⁷⁹ The act of repatriating Boyd's corpse ultimately does little to address Billy's loss and dislocation at the close of the novel. The drive to return to or reconnect with a past condition through acts of border crossing becomes as problematic in the American context as in the classic Waverley novel, and in McCarthy's

⁷⁷ Cormac McCarthy, *The Crossing* (London: Picador, 1998), p.176.

⁷⁸ Scott, *Guy Mannering*, p.124.

⁷⁹ Ibid, p.395.

borderland of loss and dislocation there is no ultimate reconstruction of identity or patrimony for his protagonists.

In conclusion, then, drawing as it does so heavily on Faulkner, McCarthy's work uses Scottish Romantic references, themes, and motifs in ways which can appear incongruous and severed from any appropriate context. Yet his appropriations in fact relate to a deeper structural debt to Scott's motif of the border and to Scottish Romantic-era revisions of Enlightenment historicism. Even in his more recent fiction, McCarthy still signals the Scottish Romantic tradition in his evocations of landscape and idealized spaces of untamed nature. This debt is evident in the final passages of *The Road* (2006), which echo the romantic yearning for a return to an earlier stage of history in *The Border Trilogy*, a stage characterized by the preservation of the natural environment which has been destroyed through an unknown cataclysm in McCarthy's post-apocalyptic novel.

Once there were brook trout in the streams in the mountains. You could see them standing in the amber current where the white edges of their fins wimpled softly in the flow [...] On their backs were vermiculate patterns that were maps of the world in its becoming. Maps and mazes. Of a thing which could not be put back. Not be made right again. In the deep glens where they lived all things were older than man and they hummed of mystery.⁸⁰

'Glens' recalls the Ossianic descriptions of Appalachia in *Child of God*, but here the sense of loss is ecological rather than cultural and there can be no

⁸⁰ Cormac McCarthy, *The Road* (London: Picador, 2010), pp.306-7.

return to a previous iteration of the natural world; the loss is irremediable. This loss also connects with the final passages of *Blood Meridian* which narrate the extermination of the Buffalo on the Great Plains, 'The plains were sere and burnt-looking [...] everywhere the ragged packs of jackal wolves and the crazed and sunchalked bones of the vanished herds.'⁸¹ This vision of ecological collapse connects the loss of wilderness in both Faulkner and Fenimore Cooper, and is an important strand in how those authors figure processes of historical transition. In these final two examples from McCarthy, what we might term an Anthropocene consciousness is clear, one where he both emphasizes a breaking point in humanity's relationship with the earth but also a sense of the continuation of a non-human history which is inaccessible. This potential engagement with the concept of the Anthropocene is a significant aspect of the ways in which the non-metropolitan geographies of both Scotland and the South express links between environmental and historical change. In this chapter I have demonstrated the many ways in which McCarthy draws on Scott's border motif to reimagine versions of the American frontier, transforming the confident, unified rhetoric of official American history into a darker and more pessimistic narrative.

⁸¹ McCarthy, *Blood Meridian*, p.317.

Conclusion

My thesis has taken the unusual approach of linking literature from two geographies within different nation-states, rather than two nation-state-based traditions of writing. Yet I believe that this method is illuminating in revealing the very real dependency of some Southern writers on the themes and motifs typical of Scottish Romantic work. More broadly, this approach clarifies the ways in which sub-national geographies articulate themselves distinctly within and beyond the nation-state. This is not to deny the nationhood of Scotland, or the breadth and diversity of the Southern United States; rather, it is to confirm the networks of cultural relations and exchanges both within and across nation-state boundaries. I have avoided the term ‘transnational’ to characterize these exchanges because a preoccupation with and critique of the nation-state is pivotal in much of the writing I have discussed.¹ Instead of depicting a transnational mode of exchange which transcends the nation-state, many of my texts from Scott to McCarthy portray the nation-state as an uneven, heterogenous formation with its own internal networks, which comprise contact points with other nations and geographies. These networks and divisions within British and American identity are visible in James Belich’s description of their structure in colonial America:

¹ For a recent work of transatlantic scholarship which employs this transnational emphasis, see Arun Sood, *Robert Burns and the United States of America: Poetry, Print and Memory, 1786-1866* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

The two Anglo metropolises, the British Isles and the Atlantic United States, shared a structural triangularity. Each had an important junior partner, Scotland/New England, with a limited natural endowment but educated, enterprising and migration prone people. Each had a second 'junior partner', the South/Ireland, deeply split within itself into black/white and Catholic/Protestant, but a good source of the shock troops of settlement. Each had a wealthy and populous senior partner, England/Mid-Atlantic states, exploiting but also exploited by at least one of its junior partners, and tending to be left out of ethnic discussions because it was taken for granted [...] the Anglos begin to seem as remarkable for their hybridity as for their unity.²

One of the central aims of this thesis is to look with fresh eyes at white, anglophone canonical writing for these very internal fissures and conflicts which destabilize the supposed integrity and unity of the nation-states of Britain and America.

I have argued that a comparative method of analysis is particularly illuminating and offers much for the future of literary studies even beyond a transatlantic focus. Scottish Romanticism is becoming increasingly prominent in transatlantic studies and is currently a burgeoning area of research, as is evidenced by recent titles such as Joseph Rezek's *London and the Making of Provincial Literature: Aesthetics and the Transatlantic Book Trade* (2015), Evan Gottlieb's *Global Romanticism* (2014), Juliet Shields' *Nation and Migration: The Making of British Atlantic Literature* (2016) and Arun Sood's *Robert Burns and the United States of America: Poetry, Print and Memory*

² Belich, pp.68-70.

(2018). Yet much of the emerging scholarship on the influence of Scottish Romanticism in the United States is based on the experiences of Scottish emigrants and is often articulated within the frame of cultural memory studies. My approach has been instead to focus on the literary links between Scotland and the South, and in particular on the issue of regional versus nation-state histories. The aim in doing so is to emphasize that the influence of Scottish Romantic literature in the United States, entirely separate from issues of emigration or cultural memory, was powerful and far-reaching enough to affect the ways in which Southern writers articulated notions of their history and identity.

In my Introduction I spoke of a broadening of definitions and applications of the term 'Romanticism', allowing for a new recognition of Romantic work from Scotland, Ireland and Wales, and more inclusion of prose and other forms of non-poetic writing. I then argued alongside critics such as Evan Gottlieb and Ian Duncan for the benefits offered by a concept of 'Global Romanticism', with the notion of international cultural exchange at its heart, and how this emphasis allows for a rethinking of Romantic contexts. However, in the body of my thesis I have extended this concept by arguing that modern and contemporary writers such as Mark Twain, William Faulkner and Cormac McCarthy, even within the distinct moments of American Realism, Modernism and Postmodernism, are still engaged in an exchange with Scottish Romantic writing. In presenting this narrative I do not wish to broaden the notion of 'Romanticism' so far that it would accommodate the work of these writers, but would rather suggest that these novelists share certain thematic preoccupations with Scottish Romanticism, and that their borrowings from

those texts are embedded in the literary aims of their own time, above all the pressing issue of representing or critiquing the idea of ‘The South’.

In focusing on these two geographies and their relationship to their respective nation-states as the issue at the heart of Southern borrowings of Scottish Romantic material, I am choosing not to follow Harold Bloom’s model of literary influence.³ For it is less a personal identification with and rejection of a writer such as Scott which motivates, for example, Mark Twain’s vitriol towards him in *Life on the Mississippi*, but rather a rhetorical and theatrical critique of Southern temporalities, of which Scott has become the central cultural avatar. The multitude of ways in which these Southern writers respond to Scottish Romantic work, at turns playful, dutiful, critical, subversive and parodic, even within the work of one writer such as Poe, illustrates why I have chosen to focus on the politico-strategic nature of these borrowings, rather than analysing them within the realm of more private literary influence or genealogy.

The core argument of my thesis is that in appropriating Scottish Romantic writing, the Southern writers are offering a discourse about the history of their region and its relationship to the wider United States. This argument is constructed on the foundation of Scottish Enlightenment Conjectural history, a diverse mode of historicism originating from several Scottish thinkers which sat both alongside and in juxtaposition to Scottish Romantic-era writing. James Macpherson, Walter Scott and James Hogg all responded to this discourse which outlined a teleological, if sometimes patchy

³ See Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*, 2nd edn (1973; repr. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997) and more recently Bloom, *The Anatomy of Influence: Literature as a Way of Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012).

and uneven, progress toward modern civilization by emphasizing the tendency of history not only to exhibit irregular development but even retrograde movements. As we have seen, this uneven historicism is often spatialized or articulated through forms of gothic haunting, which I have sought to illuminate in terms of material and natural processes, in particular the dynamics of preservation and decay. It may seem as though, given the diverse subject matter of Scottish Romantic writing, my emphasis on the centrality of its critique or dramatization of Conjectural history is undue.⁴ However, when reading Scott, Hogg, and Macpherson alongside the Southern writers in this study, the most common shared preoccupation is clearly the various and conflicting past conditions of Scotland and the South, and how these temporal conflicts relate to the wider nation-states of Britain and America.

I have drawn on contemporary theories of materiality to emphasize the ways in which the objects and materials in my chosen texts are used to construct ideas of the historical but also to subvert a desire for historical clarity and distinction. Scotland and the South as geographies are often perceived as living out a different chronological time, and this temporal divergence within the nation-state is often figured in terms of materials, as, for example, in Charles Bon's final letter to Judith in *Absalom, Absalom!* which he writes on a sheet of notepaper:

with [...] the best of French watermarks dated seventy years ago,
salvaged (stolen if you will) from the gutted mansion of a ruined

⁴ For such a critique of the centrality of Stadiatism in scholarship on the Scottish Enlightenment, see Christopher Berry, 'Commerce, Stages and the Natural History of Society', in *The Idea of Commercial Society in the Scottish Enlightenment*, pp.32-65.

aristocrat; and written upon in the best of stove polish manufactured not twelve months ago in a New England factory.⁵

Here Faulkner evokes the decline of the Southern aristocracy in the Civil War, with its ties to old Europe and a past feudal order, in contrast to the industrial modernity of the North, which dominates the new narrative of American history. These materials brought into conjunction in Bon's letter signal in miniature the internal political and cultural contradictions in the Postbellum United States which Mark Twain had narrated in *Life on the Mississippi*, with a decadent and romantic South juxtaposed to a modern and prosaic North.

Through this focus on materials and environmental practices many of the novels I discuss can be seen to employ an early form of what we may refer to as ecological thought, and this aspect is critical in terms of the way in which regional or non-metropolitan sections of the nation-state articulate the experience of environmental change. In the work of Faulkner and McCarthy I have linked this dramatization of ecological decline to the concept of the Anthropocene, in terms of how these two writers link historical transition to environmental destruction, an issue which has been treated more specifically and in greater depth in recent criticism on those two writers.⁶ Where I am making a specific contribution to this debate on the Anthropocene in Southern writing is by tracing the emphasis on ecological destruction and changing environmental practices back through Fenimore Cooper to Walter Scott's

⁵ Faulkner, *Absalom, Absalom!*, p.129.

⁶ See Saldivar and Goldberg, 'The Faulknerian Anthropocene', *The New Cambridge Companion to William Faulkner*, pp.185-203. Also, Louise Squire, 'Death and the Anthropocene: Cormac McCarthy's World of Unliving'.

formative treatment of historical transition and the environmental impacts of the change from feudal to capitalist economies.

The mode of analysis employed in this thesis could be developed in several directions. It could and should be extended further to include female writers and writers of colour, where the emphasis in this thesis on masculinities could be expanded to take stock more fully of the interaction of a Scottish Romantic legacy with more diverse identities in the American South. The analysis attempted here could also be rerouted in the opposite direction, to investigate whether 'Southern' aesthetics and tropes of regionality have been an influence on modern Scottish writing. One contemporary Scottish writer who has taken great inspiration from the American South, and who can serve for a brief case study on this topic, is James Kelman. His interest in American culture began when his family emigrated to California in the early 1960s, only to return to Scotland a year later. Through his friendship with the Texan writer Mary Gray Hughes, Kelman's first short story collection was released by an American publisher in 1973 (he has spoken of his difficulty in getting his early work published in the United Kingdom due to his favouring urban working-class, Scottish protagonists). His links with the Southern literary scene were cemented when he became Professor of Creative Writing at the University of Texas at Austin in the late 1990s.

In a radio interview in 2016, Kelman reflected on his position as a Scottish dialect writer and his often hostile critical reception, particularly surrounding his controversial win of the Booker prize in 1994 for *How Late it Was, How Late*, which he felt created so much hostility around his work that it ultimately had a negative impact on his career. He argues that it is his use of

the English language which is perceived as problematic, that critics fail to understand that his experimental dialect prose is in fact a literary language, as he explains:

Why would they not notice what it is I'm doing? [...] This is part of the English language tradition. If they don't know what I'm doing, then how do they know what these other writers are doing? How do they know what maybe Zora Hurston or Faulkner or someone – do they know what they are doing? [...] what is it about society in the UK that means that any writer who operates in the way I do, or tries to use language in the way I do [...] its never seen to be artifice in a sense.⁷

Kelman's comparison of himself to two Southern writers is significant, and it is specifically their use of the English language to which he refers: it is Faulkner's fusing of stream-of-consciousness with Mississippi speech elements, and Hurston's African-American idiomatic twisting of the sounds and rhythms of standard English, which he feels to be comparable to his own style. This is not to imply that the use of dialect forms by Faulkner and Hurston have not been accompanied by controversy, but rather Kelman argues that these forms are currently more accepted in contemporary writing in the United States than in Britain. In his view, the aim of the dialect writer is not simply to represent non-standard speech patterns, but to deploy them within a wider project of destabilizing standard English narration and the elite literary politics which he

⁷ 'Meet the Writers: James Kelman', *Monocle*, episode 32, 16 July 2016, <https://monocle.com/radio/shows/meet-the-writers/32/play/> [accessed 19/12/16]. For a recent comprehensive collection of essays on Kelman's work, see Scott Hames, ed., *The Edinburgh Companion to James Kelman* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010).

feels it embodies. In this way, Kelman sees himself as following and developing the innovations of major Southern writers.

In his recent work, an American setting offers a new canvas for exploring the experience of his Scottish protagonists, first in his 2004 novel *You Have to be Careful in the Land of the Free* and more recently in *Dirt Road* (2016). In the latter novel young Murdo, a talented accordionist, becomes fascinated by the hybrid styles of Southern music, particularly Zydeco, while visiting relatives in Alabama. Kelman's novel references the influence of Scottish settlers on the broad category of Americana music and explores Scottish heritage in the region, but it also celebrates just how far many such cultural forms have strayed from their roots. Murdo encounters the pageant of Scottish heritage in the South when he attends a Highland Gathering in Alabama, observing a Scottish emphasis in everything: music, cultural references, the provenance of the Alabama flag, and even sectarian currents familiar from his own upbringing. However, he finds it difficult to connect to this sense of Scottish nostalgia, as he describes, 'Old sayings from the old days. A song about Davy Crockett, born on a mountain top in Tennessee, played the fiddle at the Alamo. Scottish background. Everything was Scottish background.'⁸ In opposition to this heritage narrative, he longs to experience a more unknown South, which for him is embodied in the rhythms and styles of Creole music.

The romantic draw of Walter Scott's depiction of Scottish culture, which Murdo evokes in Kelman's novel, is still prevalent in different forms in American popular culture. Recent iterations include Diana Gabaldon's

⁸ James Kelman, *Dirt Road* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2016), p.230.

Outlander series of books (1991-2014), produced as a television series from 2014, where an English Second World War nurse is transported back to the Scottish Highlands of 1743. Blending romanticized Highland landscapes with bloody violence and fantasy, *Outlander's* forthcoming third television series will transplant its Scottish protagonists to the United States on the eve of the American Revolution and will focus on the communities of Highland emigrants in North Carolina. Another related television offering is *Outsiders* (2016-17), a series set in Appalachian Kentucky which follows the fortunes of an insular mountain-dwelling family clan reminiscent of McCarthy's Appalachian Tennessee in *Child of God*. My thesis has touched on one central narrative of the influence of Scottish Romantic-era culture in the American South, but there is considerably more that could be explored in terms of contemporary writing and film and television media. We can therefore expect a growing body of work on the international significance of Scottish Romantic-era writing in an international context, which will demonstrate the literary-critical value of a cross-regional, comparative methodology.

Thesis Word Count: 78, 512

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