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Spectral Artifacts:
Natural Supernaturalism and Commodity Fetishism in Romantic Literature

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Natural Supernaturalism and Commodity Fetishism in Romantic Literature

By

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B.A., Vanderbilt University, 2004

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An abstract of
A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
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Abstract

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"Spectral Artifacts" investigates the status of the romantic artifact within the nexus of historicist, materialist and deconstructive scholarship. Beginning with the observation that the romantic artifact's mediation of the past and present is often represented through scenes of reification and reanimation, I draw on Jacques Derrida's reading of conjuration and spectralization in the Marxian tradition to relate this phenomenon to misunderstood and irrational absences that lingered (and linger) in concepts of material exchange. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries British antiquarianism privileged curiosities, relics and antiquities in the creation of historical knowledge, subjecting them to circulation between scholars, artists, writers, and readers. At the same time, the rise of political economy led to a wider cultural awareness of the markets in which circulation took place. In its treatment of artifacts, romantic writing explores how the overlap of an object's historical and financial values makes visible, and strange, the otherwise naturalized operations of these economies of knowledge. At the confluence of two kinds of epistemological concern, the romantic artifact becomes an alienating source of historical awareness, destabilizing the boundaries demarcating past and present, public and private, self and other. From the reversed perspective, the production of commodities which arises in the Industrial Revolution can also be seen as the production of history in the form of potential artifacts. I demonstrate that the artifact's susceptibility to reappropriation through circulation leads to the romantic treatment of historical objects as specters, at once alive and dead. My reading adds a new interpretive lens to the study of the historical novel, or the "antiquarian" novel as I re-term it in the case of Walter Scott. The circulating artifact, though, also implicates the private work of memory and mourning in William Wordsworth's interactions with the past in the context of an explicitly staged capitalist framework. Opening the scope of my investigation, I also consider the transatlantic ramifications of the romantic artifact in its deployment by Nathaniel Hawthorne and the way in which British romanticism in particular becomes an artifact *for* Hawthorne.

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On a personal note, I thank my wife, Ashley, her family, and my father for providing me with seemingly boundless love and support as I finished the final chapters.

I would like to dedicate the final product to my mother, Carolyn.

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Introduction

Artifacts, Commodities, Ghosts

Romantic Material History in its Context

This dissertation investigates how romantic culture receives and imagines historical artifacts. We now see artifacts and human remains through an archaeological lens that applies the scientific method toward turning these objects into knowledge about the past. Material history in the romantic era remained an object without a discipline, and material remains—thought of as antiquities or curiosities—were often theorized as little more than collectibles to be treasured by pedantic preservationists, such as antiquarians or museum curators. How the past instantiated itself in materiality and made itself known in romantic literature has still not been fully considered.

Material studies has become an important field over the last two decades. In anthropology in particular, collections such as Arjun Appadurai's *Social Life of Things* and Daniel Miller's *Materiality* have sought to explain the complex relationships human subjects develop with the "things" that surround them. Bill Brown notes that we are increasingly in need a "thing theory" as our focus on material objects and their power to help create the world takes on more and more disciplinary objects: such an approach is a "condition for thought, new thoughts about how inanimate objects constitute human subjects, how they move them, how they threaten them, how they facilitate or threaten their relation to other subjects" (7). While cultural anthropology has welcomed this investigation, and we can accept perhaps with ease that in our increasingly virtual world the realness of things is up for discussion, our understanding of historical materials has

remained doggedly beholden to the archaeological framework that evolved in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Trigger). Though it has become naturalized in modern thought, the concept of the historical artifact has a relatively recent historical origin. The *Oxford English Dictionary* shows that *artifact*'s first recorded English usage was not until 1644 at which point it only denoted an object that bore the touch of human labor, and it was not until 1890 in Daniel Garrison Brinton's *Races and Peoples* that the word took on its archaeological sense ("artifact"). Thus, it took over three centuries for the concept of the artifact that carries historical and anthropological meaning to rival the concepts of the *antiquity* and the *relic*.[1] The new account of the artifact removed materially-oriented history from the exclusive realms of religion or ancient civilization and placed the artifact on the same conceptual plane as present culture, so any material object could now be considered a piece of history.

In recent years scholars, such as Rosemary Sweet, David Woolf and Barrett Kalter, have begun to address the emerging ways that English intellectuals treated material history in the years between the English renaissance and romantic periods, and the effects of this new interest on the culture at large.[2] England's eighteenth century in particular saw the rise of antiquarianism as a field of study as the interest in history began to include the analysis of historical specimens in order to enlighten the darkness of the past. When the Society of Antiquaries of London received its Royal charter in 1751, the study of material history could reasonably be considered to have established itself as a new cultural force. Kalter discusses how the interest in antiquities in the years leading up to the romantic period stemmed from a larger change in the practice of historiography in the culture (4). The "Quarrel of Ancients and Moderns" in the early part of the 1600's

continued to influence the way later scholars thought about history (4-5). Part of the argument involved the proper perspective toward the past, "Ancient" historians believing that Classical history offered superior subject matter that promised great, immutable truths, as opposed to "Moderns" collecting facts and data in order to better understand the past (6). The interest in introducing science and method to historical remains was not as widely embraced as other Enlightenment fields of inquiry, such as economics or the natural sciences. Nonetheless, Sweet asserts that there was "no simple dichotomy between the enlightened world of conjectural history and the tedious pedantry of antiquarianism" (xi). Moreover, antiquarian values did seep into the public consciousness. Woolf notes that the "artefact, as a subject of scholarship, is constructed as such by the scholar" (222), but a certain way of thinking about the past and history permeated through pre-modern culture as a whole though a complex web of "social circulation," by which everyday ideas like the systemized use of dates and times passed into commonality, as well as larger concepts like national history (10-11). So thorough was the dispersion of antiquarian thought that as early as 1712 a "country farmer" could discover unidentifiable "tessellated pavements" and know enough about what they should or could represent to start a heated international scholarly dispute regarding in which historical era they originated (Woolf 219). Antiquarian values were not imposed without feedback and influence from other theoretical realms either. Sweet points out that the vogue for the picturesque in the eighteenth century helped guide a scholarly move toward collecting and illuminating Gothic antiquities, a transition that helped compel a "shift in emphasis in antiquarian studies towards the artefact and the building, rather than the written record" (318).

Following the expansive new consideration of material history in the previous centuries, the romantic period is typically ambivalent towards its Enlightenment heritage. Though antiquarianism led to an intense romantic interest in nationalist folklore and oral traditions, the field's archaeological endeavors did not share the same cultural vogue. Trigger proposes that antiquarianism's nationalist tendencies at the time led to its primary association with a conservative portion of the middle class (65), which in part explains its uneven reputation. Antiquarianism also began to fracture into a series of specialties, such as archaeology, architectural history, and philology, which began to concretize into their own disciplines during the nineteenth century (Sweet 348). However, the transition to a modern science of archaeology took time.[3] According to Malcolm Todd, the "reasons for this relatively unproductive phase are not easy to define, but among them is without doubt to be numbered a shift in aesthetic taste which affected literature, art, architecture, manners, travel and much else, including how the remoter past was viewed" (90). In literature, material history's influence remains vividly important to Walter Scott, who took seriously the reproducibility of the past in part because he could depict the appropriate castle, sword or coin for the age. The "pedantic, boorish, and fetishistically acquisitive antiquary" is a stock character in British culture because of the impact of Enlightenment antiquarianism (Kalter 8), a thematic repository that Scott, an antiquarian collector in his own right, draws from in his depiction of Jonathan Oldbuck in *The Antiquary* (1816). Even Wordsworth, who did not much care for the dry work of antiquarianism, saw fit to term his experience of the artifacts on Salisbury Plain an "antiquarian's dream" in *The Prelude* (1805) (12.349).

Besides the explicit reference to the antiquarian perspective on history, however, we could expect that the inheritance of a new way of thinking about the material dross of history would "frame" one's expectations of the experience of an artifact, in the same way that Erving Goffman's *Frame Analysis* (1975) taught us that all experience is in effect framed by previous experiences and expectations. Though antiquarianism was eventually marginalized, it still created lasting effects on the way that material history mediates our understanding of the past. If only as the butt of a joke, its values and desires would hover in the background of any subject's interaction with the material past. Even today, if one found an arrowhead in a field (or a quad), its historical aura would most likely translate immediately even as the logistical and critical constraints of investigation (Who could explain this? Is it worth my time? Is it *really* an artifact?) might lead to its idle replacement on the ground.

As even this sketch makes clear, material history by its nature needs to circulate in some form to acquire its meaning, and I argue in this dissertation that romantic literature's reaction to the antiquarian tradition was an anxious response to material history's embeddedness in circulatory systems that threatened stable knowledge-structures. The circulating artifact creates problems for the boundaries demarcating past and present, public and private, and self and other. An obvious example of such circulation is the 'curiosity' that finds its way into an antiquarian's cabinet, as what is part of the mutually shared shipwreck of history becomes the commercialized, intellectual property of a single individual. Even larger monuments and ruins become objects enmeshed in an economy of antiquarian interpretations and re-interpretations,

many of which find their way into the publications of successful antiquarian authors, such as Joseph Strutt and Francis Grose.

The "social circulation of the past" that Woolf elucidates also crossed currents with the economy of commodities that was uniting Britain in new and complicated ways and abstracting human production through the evolution of a capitalist system. Woolf writes of an "archaeological economy" existing at the time: "The objects that survive in today's museums, whether urns, or axes, fossils or coins, got there because someone over the past four centuries found them, someone else bought them, and others still studied and collected them" (255). I believe this system of accumulation did more than serve the material foundations of our archaeological knowledge, and I will argue that in the literary representations of the artifact in the romantic period, we can detect that its circulation through different registers was not a clean process. The overlapping economies of historical and financial values made visible the otherwise naturalized operations of each. At the confluence of two kinds of cultural privileging, the romantic artifact, like the product of industry, is alienated from its source as soon as it appears as such. In effect, the artifact experiences its own commodification in literary contexts as it sits alongside products of labor made to "come alive" through capitalism. From the reversed perspective, the production of commodities which arises in the Industrial Revolution can also be seen as the production of artifacts. The public's changing awareness of the historical value of things and remnants adds an interpretive dimension to materials of the present-soon-to-be-past.

The Argument

I contend that the destabilization and denaturalization of material history reveals itself through spectralization and reification in the works under consideration by Scott, Wordsworth, and Hawthorne. My title, "Spectral Artifacts: Natural Supernaturalism and Commodity Fetishism in Romantic Literature," refers to M. H. Abrams's well-known thesis from *Natural Supernaturalism* that Romanticism sought to "naturalize the supernatural and to humanize the divine" (68). I situate the ghostly effects of the artifact in relation to the broader romantic tradition of attempting, interpreting and rejecting such naturalization. In many ways Abrams's expansive account of the romantic subject's relation to the external world continues to be accepted within the critical perspective as a theme intrinsically emanating from the period's literature. Even as Jerome McGann has taken to task Abrams's reliance on Christian forms in his schematic (26), Romanticism's investment in an image of the supernatural that is bound up with the self and the mind is undeniable. McGann's larger criticism that adherents to Abrams's reading might join with the romantics in evading social and political responsibility in their celebration of romantic art's power to transcend serves as an important corrective to any tendency to overstate received notions of romantic genius (26-28). I argue, however, that the spectral and self-moving materials in romantic literature do not divert attention away from the social and political realms, but represent attempts to grapple with materials and things that are truly not as present as they once were.

By the time Nietzsche is writing in the 1870's, the spectral animation of artifacts that one finds in romanticism is already being discussed as emerging from the fetishistic desires of their collectors. In the case of the antiquarian, he writes, the "possession of

ancestral household effects takes on a different meaning, for far from the soul possessing these objects, [he] is possessed by them" (103). This possession is something that all three writers whom I examine depict. The domestic, private reality becomes, through the process of history, a matter of public consumption and circulation, whether it is the movables of a defunct baron in Scott's *Bride of Lammermoor*, a broken pot left behind as a reminder of Wordsworth's suffering Margaret, or the antiquarian collections that Hawthorne comes upon in the Old Manse he rents in the middle of 1840s. As these examples show, the subject's possession by artifacts in Romanticism does not require ancient origins. The social movement toward the collection of history transforms *all* human materials into potential artifacts, an idea that achieves its frightening effects only when placed in a context of expanding and overlapping economies that threaten the insularity of localized histories and narratives with the more public exhibition of the market. Once the artifact's spectator begins to consider the *next* spectator, the artifact becomes evocative of a less stable historical reality.

Jerome Christensen's taut analysis of Lord Byron's monumental presentation of his name captures neatly the epistemological changes effected by an age of increasing commercialism and historical curiosity. While Byron compares himself to the Italian ruins as a way to "sell" himself and his poetry, Christensen wisely notes that the "commodity is not a ruin: it is neither natural nor subject to natural processes, although it is always being naturalized" (192-193). Commodification is not simply distinct from any conception of the material past though. Byron's "ruinology" changes the way one looks at ruins, Christensen suggests, for the

> ruins of the modern age are themselves radically discontinuous with ruins in the past: their suspension between nature and culture reflects denaturalization and

> deculturation—expresses, that is, their status as commodities subject to extraction from context, whether by *force de main*, as in the case of Lord Elgin and Napoleon or, more economically by the representation of the poet. The commodity is not a ruin *in* history because the commodity form is the ruin *of* history (192)

Christensen's reading demonstrates Romanticism's characteristic and more diffuse understanding of material history and its relation to the commodity in literature. As economic realities changed, commodification, and the attendant linking of subjects through ever more connected markets, did change the nature of man's relation to the material object. Cultural upheaval in general spurred this alteration on as well. Christensen alludes to the practice of Napoleon's army stealing relics and treasures from the territories it conquered in order to display them back in France as part of its national glory. I delve into this violent reappropriation's lingering effects on the historical imagination in my first chapter's discussion of Scott's *Bride of Lammermoor*. For now, let us consider the absence, or at least threatened presence, that such actions introduce into the consideration of material history.

The artifact's value to history is largely its synecdochal relation to its context, and when its meaning becomes destabilized in the present, the value of its historical context does as well. Though Marx's idea of the commodity presents it as the effect of the social relations between laborers that are erased as soon as they are brought into existence (164-165), the artifact's circulation and re-contextualization at times worry the romantic author and spark a consciousness of negativity in material history and perhaps in materiality in general. These flashes of insight help explain why historical material in the period's literature is so often haunted by specters and revenants. The past's yearning for ghostly communication is inherent in an historical object that is never quite *there*. The age's

evolving relationship to the artifact appears as the loss of "authenticity" that Walter Benjamin considers in "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (220). The original work of art has one thing that the reproduction does not: "its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be. This unique existence of the work of art determined the history to which it was subject throughout the time of its existence" (220). My discussion does not address aesthetic objects solely, for when any object becomes an artifact, the labor and intent behind its production are displaced onto an historical context whose "touch" guarantees its authentic value. Authenticity is arguably more important to the historical artifact than the work of art, though Benjamin's argument at times appears to subsume the artifact into the category of artworks. Like a work of art, the artifact's authenticity is the "essence of all that is transmissible from its beginning, ranging from its substantive duration to its testimony to the history which it has experienced" (221). He uses the term *aura* to refer to the "eliminated element" in the age of mechanical reproduction (221), a term that could easily apply to material history, whether it is exemplified in a plank from an infamous warship, a brick from a destroyed sports stadium, or a first edition of classic literature. Reproduction is not the anxiety troubling the aura of material history *per se*, however, but rather its mis-assignment, and mis-use, in the narrative of history. The hoodwinking of an overzealous antiquarian is an understood element of the culture's caricature of the antiquarian. Scott's Oldbuck, for example, is mocked throughout the novel for his earlier purchase of a fake old coin (*WN* III.41, 42, 248). Even in a culture where the antiquarian gets what is coming to him, the anxiety of inauthentic historical markers lurks behind the joke. The commodification of the artifact amplifies such anxiety and makes way for the

contained anxieties within the community of antiquaries and scholars to infect a larger economy of subjects and products.

In the works under examination in this project, the moments of spectralization can be linked to the destabilization of an artifact that is in effect been "put on the market." Scott's novel recreates the political and economic conditions of Scotland at the turn of the eighteenth century when the feudal ties of society were giving way to an early formation of the market in which bourgeois capitalists, such as William Ashton, were able to reappropriate the effects of the more ancient Ravenswood clan. The novel's evocation of a supernatural revenge that valorizes the Ravenswoods, who have been bested in the social upheaval, incessantly originates from the circulation of treasured materials from the former social structure. The sensational, supernatural elements that arise in Wordsworth's Salisbury Plain poems present the past as realm of substitution and figuration of material objects, a realm that the poet's first "Salisbury Plain" stanzas explicitly associate with modern society's reliance upon material wealth to determine social ties. His *Ruined Cottage* project a few years later tries to represent the ghostly presence of Margaret in a ruined, rural setting that is threatened by the economies of debt and production that had become the more visible in the 1790's. Wordsworth's narrator, a pedlar by trade, participates in, and helps sustain, the marketplace that victimizes Margaret. Her ghostly absence in the poem's present (and the ghostly absences she herself sensed when alive) is figured as a lingering "debt" that the pedlar cannot discharge through a narrative enmeshed in economic realities. In *The Scarlet Letter*, Hawthorne finds the primary artifact in the introductory chapter, "The Custom-House," that he will use to unravel his tale in a setting where he monitors the flow of commodities

into the country, and the artifact is given to him by the spectral presence of a former surveyor at the custom-house.

Theoretical Considerations

My investigation of these materials that communicate with the present through specters is indebted to Jacques Derrida's reading of Marx's *Capital* in *Specters of Marx*. Marx's concept of commodity fetishism transforms the product of private labor into an animated substance that reflects the social relations between laborers even as it obscures them (Marx 164-165). These mystified social relations become seen as the objective reality of the product—its exchange value—and it is only through the demystification of this ideological framework that true social relations can be elucidated (164-167). Derrida reads Marx's privileged example of the fetishized object, the table, as revelatory of a deeper truth than mystification. He notes in Marx's rhetoric a repeated reference to the "haunted present: the furtive and ungraspable visibility of the invisible, or an invisibility of a visible X, that *non-sensuous sensuous* of which *Capital* speaks" (Derrida 7). Derrida sees a shared form between Marx's demystification and the process of conjuration itself, suggesting that to attempt to denaturalize ideology is actually to return to an act of mystification: "The point is right away to go beyond, in one fell swoop, the first glance and thus to see there where this glance is blind, to open one's eyes wide there where one does not see what one sees" (149). As a "supersensible thing" or the "sensuous non-sensuous" (151), the specter of the commodity has undergone a transformation common in romantic literature, especially in scenes of the "naturally" supernatural, and I believe the spectral commodity identifiable in the Marxian tradition has an antecedent in the

spectral historical object of the romantic period. In essence, these interactions predict Derrida's equation of the self with a specter ("Ego=ghost") (133).

When introducing *hauntology* as a discourse, Derrida is thinking of the modern breakdown in the public/private dichotomy as it is replaced by an ideological boundary that is "less assured than ever, as the limit that would permit one to identify the political" (50-51).[4] The ideological disturbance of public and private finds expression through romantic literature, and my project focuses on its instantiation in material history. Wordsworth's 1802 preface to *The Lyrical Ballads* argues against the privatization inherent in scientific inquiry, into which we can cautiously include antiquarianism:

> The knowledge both of the Poet and the man of Science is pleasure; but the knowledge of the one cleaves to us as a necessary part of our existence, our natural and unalienable inheritance; the other is a personal and individual acquisition, slow to come to us, and by no habitual and direct sympathy connecting us with our fellow-beings. The Man of Science seeks truth as a remote and unknown benefactor; he cherishes and loves it in his solitude: the Poet, singing a song in which all human beings join with him, rejoices in the presence of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion (606)

Maureen McClane acknowledges that Wordsworth is "polemically reversing what were already established fields of connotation of 'poetry' and 'science'" (5), signaling that his argument for poetry's worth is haunted by the very acquisitiveness and solitude that Wordsworth projects onto scientific knowledge. Wordsworth's reversal betrays his sense that the public and private spheres are not concretely determined in the era's production and use of knowledge. The antiquarian's private collecting and historicizing may seem removed from the culture, but the historical reality that these artifacts help piece together is shared by everyone—albeit in ways that circulate without congealing in a genuine community..

Antiquarian approaches to materials retain a troubled relation to a history, which in the romantic age becomes shared and public with the rest of humanity despite the perceived privatization of ownership. The emergence of chronological time—Benjamin's "homogenous, empty time" (261)—as opposed to a finite time of existence explainable from some Manichean or providential perspective makes history an element common to humanity. Benedict Anderson has linked the rise of the novel to the idea of simultaneity that allows subjects more effectively to conceive of time as a shared existence (a phenomenon that he also connects to the rise of nationalism) (22-36). From an anthropological perspective, the eighteenth-century innovation of the four-stage theory of human history, an idea of particular interest to the Scottish Enlightenment, encourages persons to consider the periodization of history as something shared, particularly in the case of civilization, which offers the individual partial credit in achieving a state of historic ascendency.[5] After the studies into the relation between historicism and romantic history from scholars, such as Marjorie Levinson, James Chandler, and Deborah Elise White, one speaks of the "intimate relation between Romanticism and history" only if it is approached by "understanding history as historicity, as the imbrication of history's identity and non-identity" (Wang 3), and I argue that romantic history becomes preoccupied with historicism in part because of the artifact's spectral relation to the subject.[6] The hauntological space of the artifact refuses to let history just "be." Because it is in its nature to circulate, the artifact is always about to produce a new historical framework, and another, and another.

My reading of the spectral artifact also draws on Elaine Scarry's powerful characterization of the artifact in *Bodies in Pain.* In her view, the artifact, because of its

connection to production, can be seen as a projected body, an object that assumes properties of the human labor put into it (281). The consequences of her reading of the body and its instruments can seemingly subvert and invert the subject's relationship to the material world. Projection of the body onto the artifact "calls attention to the fact that it is part of the work of creating *to deprive the external world of the privilege of being inanimate*—of, in other words, its privilege of being irresponsible to its sentient inhabitants on the basis that it is itself nonsentient. To say that the 'inanimateness' of the external world is diminished, is *almost* to say (but is *not* to say) that the external world is made animate" (285). Though her formulation may be strong (even with its internal qualifications), her schema presents a way of thinking about the materials of production that is especially pertinent to the world of early nineteenth-century England when products were just making themselves known as products as such. It is this transition that catches inanimate material acting animate, and as I will show, all the authors in this study perceive changes in the world that resituate material reality in dramatic ways.

Scarry's reading of Marx turns the production of commodities into a process that leaves its traces on the object. Though her reading has been criticized for its failure to adhere strictly to Marx's delineation of capitalist production, it can be seen as particularly pertinent to the romantic moment, still informed by Adam Smith's concept of labor value.[7] Scarry believes that Marx's figuration of the body changes in reference to the tools of later capitalism because such a relationship is inherently more politically determined (249). Similarly I argue that the romantic subject's sense of the body (as present, absent or both) is affected by its relation to commodified artifacts, which create anxieties about public and private boundaries.

For example, in his advertisement to "Guilt and Sorrow" (the third and last iteration of the Salisbury Plain poems),Wordsworth remembers the strange power of the material remains that he encountered along his crossing of the plain in 1793, in particular recalling the fatalistic pull towards the specimens of material history there, including Stonehenge:

> The monuments and traces of antiquity, scattered in abundance over that region, led me unavoidably to compare what we know or guess of those remote times with certain aspects of modern society, and with calamities, principally those consequent upon war, to which, more than other classes of men, the poor are subject. In those reflections, joined with particular facts that had come to my knowledge, the following stanzas originated (216)

Wordsworth's understanding of the artifact's relation of the past and the present does not just allow him to recall the past, but leads him "unavoidably" to do so as if by enchantment. Images throughout the earlier versions of the poems repeat this theme of looking *through* the artifact to a past that "unavoidably" wants to communicate. Even as Wordsworth reconstitutes the past as something "we know or guess," the artifact's spectral presence allows it to exist within that public space while simultaneously calling to Wordsworth as a bound subject. Louis Althusser's thesis that ideology works through its shaping of the subject's relation to the material world finds a precursor in Wordsworth's advertisement (109). History's interpellative power over the subject is not quite naturalized and finds its outlet in strange encounters like this.

As history suffuses the material world, it becomes also the outlet for a material world destabilized by the potential of commodification. In *The Order of Things*, Michel Foucault traces this phenomenon. The "newly formed positivities—an anthropology dealing with a man rendered alien to himself and an economics dealing with mechanisms exterior to human consciousness" means that "Ideology, or the Analysis of

representations, was soon to find itself reduced to being no more than psychology, whereas opposite, in opposition, and soon to dominate ideology from its full height, there was to emerge the dimension of a possible history" (26). In the case of Scott and Wordsworth, their works sometimes veer into gothic deployments of historic spaces, presenting supernatural returns as the only way to slake an overabundance of history associated with certain materials. In each case the return of the past stems from a view of artifacts as a means to "purchase" historical understanding. However, when artifacts become currency in this way, their relationship to the reality of history is troubled and suggests that what is purchased is historical misapprehension.

Additionally, my treatment of the pervasiveness of the self-moving artifact owes something to accounts of totalizing systems of commodification such as Guy Debord's concept of spectacle. In his formulation, perception in general is contaminated by the properties of the commodity, leaving a world of images rather than things (26). Human expression and activity in Debord's theory become secondary to the spectacle of reality, which works through "self-movement" and "arrogates to itself everything that in human activity exists in a fluid state so as to possess it in a congealed form" (26). The sensuous non-sensuousness of "our old enemy the commodity" permits it to replace reality and naturalize itself as simply perception (26). His argument is meant for a later stage of capitalism than we encounter in Romanticism when commodification was just beginning to take hold, but it is exactly the failure of commodification to naturalize completely in the romantic artifact that leads to the experience of spectrality. Levinson provides a Marxian fetishism more in line with the cultural moment of Romanticism. She writes, "The Marxian fetish derives from a logic of naturalization. We begin with the object,

which owes its first formal and social character (that is, its existence as an object-for-[historical]-consciousness) to the productive operations of particular, particularly conditioned human subjects. Through the mediations of exchange, this product comes to be grasped as a material transparency: a natural content as opposed to social form" (228). Commodification reproduces the object as a "vessel" whose content is "not so much invisible as *invisibilizing* (or, ideological)" (228). As shown in the example of Wordsworth's advertisement, however, the invisibilizing element of ideology does not function perfectly and transparently in the presence of the material past.

It is the *process* of the naturalization through which the subjects and objects in my dissertation become ghosts. Levinson smartly focuses on Romanticism's interaction with the commodity as a form of Freudian fetishism, in which an "inanimate object, associated with a living human ensemble or part of that ensemble, is invested with a vividness stolen from the objective totality and with the subject's own cathexis" (228). I believe that the subversive elements of Levinson's double fetishization of the romantic object are at work in a particular way in the case of the romantic historical artifact. Its denaturalization does not stem directly from subjective cathexis, but from its perseverance in a "market" of historical making that will not end. In this sense, historical materials are situated in a vexed relation to the increasing knowledge of the commodity, knowledge that at least claims stability and fixity in the value of a product. Foucault's finds that economic investigations were believed to have solved the idea of *price* for "it is the activity that has produced them and has silently lodged itself within them; it is the days and hours required for their manufacture, extraction, or transportation that constitute their proper weight, their marketable solidity, their internal law, and thus what one can

call their real price" (238). However, spectral artifacts interrupt the period's solution to the problem of market volatility. The reason they insert doubt into history in the first place is that the labor of their production comes in the projected and figural form of the past. Consumption of most products puts an end to their individual embodiment of the economic system that Foucault outlines. When economies of price are *not* offered the outlet of consumption, they can become objects of miserly hoarding, and indeed, antiquaries are often presented as little more than hoarders. Their hoarding and distorting habits, however, announce that material artifacts cannot in any context be consumed fully into the flow of history and are ever circulating and reflecting shifting historical values.

The displaced origins of the artifact's meaning guide me at times to adopt a Lacanian approach to the subject's intercourse with the artifact, especially in those moments (in Wordsworth and Hawthorne) when the artifact takes on maternal qualities. These instances often give pause to the spectator, who is briefly removed from the world of signification in the face of a sign without a proper signified. (Re)experiencing the pre-linguistic relation to the other from within the larger context of a world of language, these subjects experience what Julia Kristeva terms abjection. Kristeva argues that the subject's experience of maternal unity is actually interrupted by "semi-objects," such as nutritional needs, before even the Law of the Father creates the self though the interposition of language (32). I argue that the spectral artifact repeats for the subject the experience of these (ghostly) semi-objects, which connects the problem of the artifact even more intimately to the fraught origins of subject-creation.

Chapter Summaries

My first chapter, "The Specimens and Specie of History: Antiquarianism and Scott's *Bride of Lammermoor*," begins by demonstrating for the first time the intertextual relationship between Scott's *Bride of Lammermoor* (1819) and the work of the popular antiquarian writer Francis Grose, in particular the latter's *Antiquities of Scotland* (1791). Grose's treatment of material history through sketches of various Scottish ruins establishes the importance of the frame to the imagining of an artifactual-based idea of history. The framed historical work of art, to which Scott often compared his historical fiction, serves as a privileged artifact in the novel, specifically "The Village Wedding Feast" by the Flemish painter David Teniers the Younger, whose significance to the novel is yet unexamined by scholars but is supported by my research into the painting's provenance. Teniers's depiction of a wedding without a groom and a bride who collects coins as wedding gifts from her fellow villagers provokes a reading of Scott's novel, which ends with its bride, Lucy Ashton, likewise without a husband. Moreover, I further establish the analogous reading through an earlier episode in the novel in which Lucy is compared to a coin, an artifact that makes its way throughout the novel taking on different significance in each context. The coin's referential instability concisely captures the problem of artifacts in the novel, which are always on the verge of becoming estranged from any intended historical meaning, and their relation to commodification. Coins, key in Teniers's painting, are used as historical markers in Scott's text but were also known to Scott's audience in 1819 for their strange ability to lose economic value as soon as they changed from bullion to governmentally sanctioned specie. The bullion crisis, whose importance to romantic studies has been shown by scholars such as Kurt

Heinzelman and Matthew Rowlinson, made clear the naturalized supernatural aspects of material that is put into circulation, a phenomenon with ramifications for historical truth in Scott's novel. The gothic elements of Scott's novel thematize the impossibility of capturing historical reality fully, and his project subsumes the supernatural and superstitious within history proper rather than posing a conceptual opposition between them.

My second chapter examines the supernatural elements of Wordsworth's early poetic attempts to capture his responses to the material remains on Salisbury Plain. In my reading of "Salisbury Plain" I take seriously the poem's initial stanzas' attempt to protest the political and economic disenfranchisement of the British impoverished classes by comparing their state to that of the "prehistoric" savage that would have originally interacted with Stonehenge, the plain's central artifact. The poet's historical argument depends upon the monument's stable reference through history. As a guarantee of the speaker's conjectural historical model, however, the monument fails as the circulatory nature of the material structure is seen to depend on the same figurative inference of value that plagues modern society's unequal and unfair distribution of wealth. Interacting with material history in the poem leads time and again to a reified, "astonished" subject who only can only achieve a sense of agency through the mutual figuration of the subject and object. The ideological implications suggest not only that the subject sees what he wants to see in an artifact like Stonehenge, but that he cannot perceive, or conceive, history at all without being subjected to what I read as the violence of mutual figuration. I read this violence against the self as a behavior that mirrors the commodification of objects through the poem's main narrative and back story. So

pervasive are the spectralized objects in the poem that memory itself becomes contaminated by a circulating material that traumatically evades conscious control. In the poem's revision as "Adventures on Salisbury Plain," the trauma of materialized memory and history becomes associated with state law as the tone takes a turn to incorporate a social critique based in part on William Godwin's *Enquiry concerning Political Justice*.

"The (Ruined) Cottage Industry," the third chapter, focuses on Wordsworth's trope of the ruined cottage, which is not often enough viewed as an artifact. Whereas historicity is an explicit issue in the works read in the first two chapters, Wordsworth's poem has traditionally been discussed for its investigation of the self's relationship with nature, but the mediation of the past through the relic problematizes this reading. As in Scott's novel, money's position in Wordsworth's poem adds to the crisis of material value that undermines historical meaning. When Margaret's husband leaves for military service, his departure is abrupt, signified solely by a silent "purse of gold," whose portent she intuits in a certainty that "it was his hand that placed it there" (*RC* 264-266). I put pressure on the spectrality of the gold's appearance and its substitution for Margaret's husband, arguing that Adam Smith's invisible hand echoes in Wordsworth's lines and initiates the supernatural aspects of Margaret's story. Both Alan Liu and Geoffrey Hartman see the pedlar figure as a humanizing force counterbalancing the dehumanizing exchange of Margaret's husband for money, but I argue that the possibility of such an exchange delegitimizes any attempt to humanize the past fully. Margaret's pathological wasting away is, I believe, her response to her family's enmeshment in an economic system that sees subjects as substitutable material. Christological imagery surrounds her husband's loss, and I interpret the interposition of divine elements into his exchange for

money as the poem's hope for a materiality that is not constantly threatened with loss and debt. A materiality freed from its commodified constraints would conceivably allow the experience of proper memorials and mourning, the kind Wordsworth's poem cannot seem to achieve on its own.

My final chapter, "Scraps of Treasure: Artifacts, Style and Influence in Hawthorne," transfers focus to Nathaniel Hawthorne's deployment of material history in the context of nineteenth-century American literature. Through a close reading of Hawthorne's preface to *Mosses from an Old Manse*, I demonstrate his habit of reducing material history to its market value, to the extent that historical significance becomes an unnecessary part of the artifact. Imagining his own writing as an "heirloom" that he can will into existence allows Hawthorne the fantasy of positioning his work as historically worthy despite its novelty. I then put this strategy in the context of the transatlantic literary market at the time, in particular Hawthorne's relation to Wordsworth, whom I read as a symbol of British Romanticism's burdensome legacy to its American successors. The chapter closes by noting the intertextual relationship between Hawthorne's historical fantasy, *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), and Wordsworth's lyrical ballad "The Thorn." The unexamined relationship has led to a misunderstanding of the national literary identity that Hawthorne is helping to forge. Little critical attention has been given to secretive, untraced signs taken from Wordsworth, but I show how they heavily influence Hawthorne's famous presentation of a new nationalized and nationalistic sign, the cloth letter *A* discovered by his fictional persona in the introductory chapter of his novel. Befitting the discovery's setting in the custom house, where Hawthorne worked, the currency of the Wordsworthian text is consumed in favor of the

new American form of Hawthorne's secret appropriation, which I deem the smuggling of a literary artifact. As this project argues, such an artifact cannot be incorporated without an otherworldly interruption. Hawthorn's smuggling reimagines the literary product through the genre of romance, and the form's spectralizing nature places literary artifacts of all eras and nationalities in a common economy of half-present commodities.

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[1] *Antiquity* as a material remain entered usage in the sixteenth century ("antiquity"). *Relic* in the sense of a religious remain predates 1500, while it took on a possible secular sense in the seventeenth century ("relic").

[2] The works of Arnaldo Momigliano, such as *Studies in Historiography* (1966), merit mentioning here as an earlier twentieth-century precursor to these more recent studies of antiquarianism. His work, however, addresses itself more directly to the shaping and practicing of modern historiography.

[3] Trigger also points out that archaeological investigations, though not as well-known as those that came before or after, were still taking place in the period. In particular there was a surge in the excavation of graves and barrows (66-67)

[4] W. J. T. Mitchell's *Iconology* (1987) also addresses the spectral quality of the commodity in Marx's discussion of the *camera obscura*: "[T]he commodity is a 'fantastic form'—literally, a form produced by projected light; these forms, like the 'ideas' of ideology are both there and not there—both 'perceptible and imperceptible by the senses'" (189-90)

[5] Cf. Meek. James Chandler does great work in analyzing the overlap of history and anthropology in the four-stages theory, especially the consequences of "uneven development" (127).

[6] See Levinson (1989) and Chandler for a thorough review of Romanticism's investment in historicism. White goes even further to demonstrate the self-reflexive critique of historicism at work in romantic language and literature.

[7] For a critique of Scarry's reading of Marx, see Rowlinson (105-109). In particular, Scarry's reading contains echoes of Adam Smith's belief that exchange-value is a "material trace of the labor process" (109).

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Chapter 1

Specters, Specimens and Specie: Antiquarianism and Scott's Bride of Lammermoor

What's a ghost? Unfinished business, is what.
-*Salman Rushdie*

The Problem of the Material Artifact

Since Sir Walter Scott's writings are awash in historical realia and his famous home at Abbotsford still boasts a host of historical objects, one would think that the scholarship on Scott's use of artifacts would be more thorough than it is, but the overwhelming percentage of the scholarship on Scott's historicism focuses on his use of published materials and oral tales.[1] The paucity of scholarship partly stems from the lack of a science that we might identify as 'archaeology' in the Romantic era. As a hobby and cultural vogue, antiquarianism bleeds into gothic entertainment or nationalist propaganda rather too quickly for modern scientific standards. It lacked the methods for measuring an artifact's historical import if it was not stamped directly on it. As Ina Ferris points out in her 2002 essay, "Pedantry and the Question of Enlightenment History: Scott and the figure of the Antiquary," recent scholarship is trying to examine antiquarianism more fully and save it from its "decisive banishment from the intellectual field" (274). I follow her lead in viewing antiquarianism as a "form of scholarship" that has a place in the early nineteenth-century "epistemological debate over historical knowledge" (274). Ferris locates the problem of our understanding of antiquarianism in the "discomfort in early nineteenth-century critical discourse with liminal or mixed genres, especially when they bordered on high, learned genres" such as history proper (275). However, the impact of

this mixing on the epistemology of Romantic historical knowledge has yet to be investigated, specifically the intrusion of the material artifact into an antiquarian pseudo-discipline otherwise dependent on textual records.

This chapter focuses on the material object of history in Scott's writing, and in particular its relation to historical representation. Since our term *artifact* had no currency at the time, these material objects fall into the category of *antiquity*. I argue that *antiquity* is a troublesome category that is more than a pre-disciplinary growing pain in the scientific timeline that leads to the modern sciences of archaeology and anthropology. My argument will focus on Scott's *Bride of Lammermoor* (1819) rather than the perhaps expected novel, *The Antiquary* (1816), because, while the latter is a novel about an antiquary, *The Bride* is an antiquarian novel that approaches its subject from the perspective of an antiquarian writer, as I will show. I believe this perspective explains the book's historical complexities, unique among Scott's historical novels, which otherwise seek to imagine a Romantic tale around an historical event taken for granted by the author and his audience. The event in *The Bride* is the 1707 political union of Scotland and England, which both occurs and does not occur in the novel thanks to dating inconsistencies that never get resolved in the novel's print history. I base my argument on textual elements that have yet to be explained properly, with the help of new research into biographical details that bear on our interpretation of the novel and its relationship to history and the material object. The textual elements examined center on the status of the non-textual antiquities in the novel, such as glasses, coins, architecture and paintings. This conglomeration already suggests the odd collection of equivalent values conceptualized in antiquarian thought. While disciplinary rigor eventually breaks up the

catchall category of *antiquity*, *The Bride* explores the limits of the antiquarian episteme at the time.

The plastic arts play a large part in the discussion because of their unique role in antiquarian thought as relics that require explanation while claiming to capture historical moments in their fullness. Written documents exist in a similar dual state as well, for they are material artifacts themselves. Yet in the antiquarian works that bear on Scott's composition of *The Bride*, written documents lack the Benjaminian aura of the non-textual artifact, and the reproducibility of a written composition is taken for granted unlike in the plastic arts, where meaning still relies on physical context. For example, in Francis Grose's collection of the antiquities of Scotland, which is critical to interpreting *The Bride*, the author dates each sketch of a ruin, but his use of older written sources does not require any information regarding the setting at the time of his interaction with them. As one can see in the example of Grose's work, written sources seem to exist outside the frame of the material artifact. Scott's novel, by comparison, demonstrates a growing distrust of framing, and language's external position (a position empowered by authorial explication) is compromised.

The chapter addresses the novel from the outside in and begins with an explication of the novel's first framing device, the title page, in particular its reference to Francis Grose in the epigraph. The position of plastic historical representations in Grose's work then leads to a re-examination of the famous debate in the introductory chapter between the book's narrator, Peter Pattieson, and his painter friend, Dick Tinto. I argue that their debate over the representational value of dialogue versus that of description is a debate about the status of material history in antiquarianism. In the third

section, the issues of materiality and history are examined within the novel, especially in its use of artifacts in a certain scene in which the Marquis of A----, the representative of the old feudal structure, stays in the house of John Girder, a wealthy cooper, who has taken advantage of the upward mobility possible in a new capitalist era. In a Scott novel, no scene can be more allegorical as the incarnations of the competing historical within the novel are thrust together. This section focuses on the parallel relationship of the artifacts in the room and the narration's troubled deployment of their materialization of history. Of sustained focus will be a reference to a painting of the Flemish painter David Teniers the Younger—a reference not yet fully elucidated in the scholarship—which carries special significance in Scott's biography. In a fourth section, I connect the problems of historical representation and historical framing, made evident in the Teniers painting, to England's bullion crisis in the early nineteenth century. That financial crisis reveals the strange and supernatural to be something other than superstition, but a rational surplus in the understanding of material history. The prospect that money, itself a historical material, might be constituted by a ghostly surplus that takes on value outside of attempts to frame it leads to the final act of the chapter, in which I show the strange surplus's implications for material history in Scott's novel and identify the novel's historical understanding as commodity fetishism. I examine the widespread reference to money in the novel and argue for its place as a master metaphor in the constellation of antiquarian objects.

The Antiquarian Frame

Romantic antiquarians struggled with the status of historical artifacts that were *supposed* to communicate the past, though that communication tended to be little more than conjecture on the antiquarian's part. An amateur antiquarian himself, Scott knew the assumptions and practices of the hobby well, and his library at Abbotsford contains a large number of works by more famous antiquaries, such as William Hone, Francis Douce, and Francis Grose. The influence of Grose's work on *The Bride* will receive particular attention in this chapter since the novel's epigraph is from a Burns poem about Grose's work in Scotland. One of the problems antiquities offer is the uneasy substitutions that can be made in their name. For example, Grose wrote *The Antiquities of England and Wales* (1773) and *The Antiquities of Scotland* (1789-91), both illustrating and describing the ruined structures that litter the landscape of the United Kingdom, but he also wrote *Military Antiquities Respecting a History of the English Army from the Conquest to the Present Time* (1778), which provides a written account of the evolution of the army with interspersed plates showing the armor and weaponry under discussion. On the one hand, nothing can be clearer than the subdivisions of an intellectual specialty. In the field of modern literary criticism, one scholar may study wedding rituals in Early Modern drama while another investigates the military rituals. These scholars share, however, a common understanding of what constitutes a ritual, and their definitions of the broader category would almost certainly contain the same references to previous works on the subject. Lacking a disciplinary structure, antiquarianism dealt with specific *antiquities* without focusing on the broader definition of the term. It is doubtful that shown the plate of a ruined castle from Grose's *Antiquities of Scotland*, one would define

a military antiquity in the manner of *Military Antiquities*. Increased specificity rather takes us further away from a clear theory of the antiquity. I will argue that Grose's work, in particular *The Antiquities of Scotland*, served as a model for *The Bride*'s treatment of material artifacts and that because of this influence the paradoxes of the antiquarian approach to historical materials affect the narrative sense of history.

In the centuries leading up to the Romantic period, European antiquarians were finding, collecting, and describing artifacts all the time; the problem was what to make of them. In his *History of Archaeological Thought* (1989), Bruce G. Trigger discusses the problem with widely discovered stone tools in pre-Enlightenment Western Europe, namely their evolutionary relation to later metal tools.[2] Stone tools were still in use in the contemporary world, and pre-Enlightenment antiquarians also knew that the Bible mentions iron working. Thus, there was no need to derive an historical narrative from the artifacts (Trigger 54). It was only during the Enlightenment that the idea developed that cultures evolve progressively throughout history and, thus, artifacts needed to be used as historical evidence in demonstrating this progression (Trigger 55-56). The use of artifacts as evidence of this or that historical narrative was well entrenched in the antiquarian community by Scott's time. However, antiquarians had little recourse in deciphering historical truths from the artifacts directly without first comparing them to earlier related textual records. The Royal Society of London, established in 1660 by Charles II, fully embraced the modern scientific values, "observation, classification, and experimentation," espoused by such thinkers as René Descartes and Francis Bacon, but its antiquarian members often still sought verification in classical works (Trigger 61-62). For example, William Stukeley (1687-1765) scientifically categorized British monuments

and was one of the first to theorize a "lengthy pre-Roman occupation, during which distinctive types of prehistoric monuments might have been constructed at different times and different peoples might have successively occupied southern England," but the theory also borrowed support from Julius Caesar's description of a Belgic invasion of England before the Roman conquest (Trigger 1962).

Scientific antiquarianism did not progress much beyond this point in England until the 1850s, and there is little evidence that Scott was aware of even the modest steps of someone like Stukeley. His experience was in a popular antiquarianism that fully celebrated the nationalistic and gothic potential of relics but still respected their ability to connect one to things as they were. One of the more popular works of antiquarianism at the time was Grose's *Antiquities of Scotland* (1789-1791), a copy of which is located in Scott's library at Abbotsford. Scott's title page for *The Bride* bears an epigraph from Robert Burns's poem "On the late Captain Grose's Peregrinations thro' Scotland, collecting the Antiquities of that Kingdom," a poem that grew out of the friendship formed when Grose sought out Burns's aid in putting together the Scottish collection. While most critics have analyzed the novel's introductory chapter and its framing value to the novel, the title page with its reference to Grose determines how we should read that first chapter, focusing on the role of the antiquary.

Throughout, Grose's work reads like a crib sheet for gothic detail.[3] It is well known that Grose's research led to Burns's composition of "Tam o'Shanter" after the antiquary requested an account of a witch's meeting at Aloway Church near Ayr. The poem first appeared in the second volume of *The Antiquities of Scotland* as a footnote demonstrating the gothic tales often connected to the structure, but the work inspires a

gothic historical narrative in a more direct way. In his introduction to *The Antiquities of Scotland*, Grose announces that the work "is chiefly meant to illustrate and describe the ancient castles and monasteries of Scotland" and offers a prefatory analysis of the types of antiquities in the region, categorized settings such as "Roman works….Druidical monuments of every sort…Conical Towers open in the center….Vitrified Forts.... earthen works….Tall sculptured stones, called standing stones" (i-v). While Grose's classification of the monuments exhibits the beginnings of a scientific approach to archaeology, the list easily converts from specifically dated structures to those categorized by physical description, a symptom of the pre-disciplinary nature of antiquarianism. The body of Grose's work is organized by region and subdivided into descriptions of the ruins found there. Each section begins with an engraved plate based on a drawing of the edifice, followed by a direct physical description. The first antiquity, Edinburgh Castle, for example, "stands on a rock whose whole area measures seven acres: it is elevated 194 feet and above the level of the sea, and accessible only on the eastern side, all the others being nearly perpendicular" (1). We can also examine a tower in Berwickshire, where the story in *The Bride* is said to have taken place:

> It overlooks a deep woody glen, through which runs a small rill of water. It was undoubtedly built to defend this pass, which has now a bridge over it. The castle consists of a small but strong square tower of rough stone, having a circular staircase in its south-west angle. Adjoining to its southernmost side is a gate with a circular arch; on entering it, on the right hand are a number of vaulted buildings, all in ruins (Grose 93)

With these examples in mind, compare Scott's description of Wolf's Crag in the novel:

> On three sides the rock was precipitous; on the fourth, which was towards the land, it had been originally fenced by an artificial ditch and drawbridge, but the latter was broken down and ruinous, and the former had been in part filled up, so as to allow passage for a horseman into the narrow court-yard, encircled on two sides with low offices and stables partly ruinous, and closed on the landward front

> by a low embattled wall, while the remaining side of the quadrangle was occupied by the tower itself, which, tall and narrow, and built of a grayish stone, stood glimmering in the moonlight, like the sheeted spectre of some huge giant (59)

The passage reads as if it were written with an antiquarian work in mind. Moreover, the published engravings of the ruins in Grose's work provide the spectral quality that Scott lends to his tower because of the washed-out effect of the print.[4]

Grose's reproductions and physical descriptions are followed by the castle's role in historical events through the years. Edinburgh Castle was "[d]uring the contest for the crown between Bruce and Baliol…A. D. 1296, besieged and taken by the English, and retained in their hands near twenty years" (2). These details are corroborated often with footnotes from earlier texts, such as Burns's poem or an account of the 1689 siege of the castle "from a manuscript in the library of Thomas Astle, Esq." (4). When Grose mentions smaller artifacts, it is often to conjure the scene of their past use. In the Edinburgh Castle, for example, one can see a "great number of the arms taken in 1745; by which a notion can be formed what defence a body of men could make, armed with such, had personal courage been wanting" (25).

Grose's antiquarianism gives the reader a better perspective from which to view the title page of *The Bride* and the fake antiquarianism it espouses through the guise of Scott's pseudonym. As originally published, the title page makes no mention of *The Bride*, but gives the title *Tales of My Landlord, Third Series*, which are "Collected and Reported by Jedidiah Cleishbotham, Parish-Clerk and Schoolmaster of Gandercleugh" (1). Scott then gives the epigraph from Burns on Grose: "Hear, Land o' Cakes, and brither Scots, / Frae Maidenkirk to Johnie Groats', / If there's a hole in a' your coats, / I rede you tent it, / A chiel's amang you takin' notes, / An' faith he'll prent it" (1). Burns's

title is not given, but the quotation shows that Scott had Grose in mind in particular when putting together the text for *The Bride* and draws a parallel between Grose's antiquarian work and that of Cleishbotham. Humorously, the Burns selection counsels suspicion of the antiquarian, who is feared as a gossip instead of an historian.

The sources quoted by Grose often do amount to little more than rumor and superstitious entertainment, but suspicion is already well established in the antiquarian readership of the time, who were aware of the authenticity debates surrounding James Macpherson's *Works of Ossian* (1765) and knew the potential power of an editor over texts claiming antiquarian status. By picking Cleishbotham as his transparent sobriquet, Scott plays the role of the antiquarian with a wink, and the claim that Cleishbotham has collected *and* reported these tales only reiterates the multiple steps of representation and re-representation before the story reaches the reader.

Read more closely, the few lines from Burns portray the antiquary's job as theft, but perhaps a theft that naturally occurs when one takes to represention. In addition to signifying the act of reporting, *taking notes* also means to steal someone's written records, which is in a sense what the character of Cleishbotham is doing since the extended authorial conceit of all four series of *The Tales of My Landlord* is that he has taken these narratives from the papers of Peter Pattieson, the narrator of the action in *The Bride*, who in turn had heard the tales from the landlord of the Wallace Inn in Gandercleugh.[5] The ownership of the tales is practically incapable of being assigned thanks to the train of antiquarians who have had their hand in the composition, but the concept of possession only awkwardly fits into a discussion of texts that are going to be published, and thereby be possessed by the public at large. The poem plays out the

dangers of material reproduction when it moves from an oral appeal for his reader's aural attention—"Hear, Land o'Cakes, and brither Scots"—but ends the first stanza with an allusion to the print medium though which the poet is really communicating. The ambiguity of *takin' notes* bridges the gap of media by suggesting that the oral culture is perhaps always already in a material form because of the reproductive properties of language. And not only will Grose "prent it," but Burns, the would-be protector of the oral culture, is likely to as well. Written by the same poet who submitted "Tam o'Shanter" to *The Antiquities of Scotland*, this poem on Grose instantiates the "*Antiquarian trade*" (29), as it is called later in the poem, while claiming to describe it, for Burns is cataloguing the cataloguer, Grose.[6]

Whether one can get outside the antiquarian mode is an important question for Scott whose project is not simply to collect historical samples, but to combine these with the romantic genre to create the historical novel. The Burns quotation suggests that to oppose antiquarian methods is merely to succumb to them. The story at the center of *The Bride* comes from oral tradition, so the movement from oral culture to a written one in the Burns passage is appropriate to Scott's story. In the metaphor for Scott's project introduced by Burns's poem, however, the theft is held in suspension by the tense of the verbal phrase *is takin*', which is an occurring but never a completed act. The grammar goes further in establishing this abeyance, for the *it* being printed is, literally, the *hole* in the coats, suggesting that paradoxically the antiquarian may be printing an absence. The literalized figure is a perfect description of an antiquarian writer's job, which seeks to illustrate what is no longer there, whether it is Grose talking about ancient castles or Scott retelling an *oral* tale. In the quotation, Burns does not mention the laborious task of

sketching ruins that Grose undertook for his collection, and the verbal artifacts that the poem seems to address, such as Burns's "Tam o'Shanter" or the historical narrative found in Astle's manuscript, occur in Grose's footnotes. Burns's focus on something that serves Grose as window dressing highlights the awkward historical statement of Grose's format. What is the work's true historical or philosophical object?

Burns identification of a hole, of an absence, at the heart of Grose's antiquarianism positions their collaboration within the larger philosophical discourse of the inside/outside binary in Western philosophy. Jacque Derrida's work on frames in *The Truth in Painting* profoundly troubles exactly that binary and suggests the kinds of conceptual difficulties that Grose's work, and by extension Scott's, shares in its attempt to frame different modes of historical knowledge. In Derrida's reading of Kant, he puts pressure on the use of the word *parergon* in the third *Critique* when it describes ornamentation surrounding beautiful objects, such as frames around painting, drapery on a statue, or colonnades on a building (53). Kant is removing such things from his analysis of taste for they are outside of the composition, but for Derrida the jettisoning of these framing objects is not so simple. A *parergon*, in Derrida's words, "comes against, beside, and in addition to the *ergon*, the work done [*fait*], the fact [*le fait*], the work, but it does not fall to one side, it touches and cooperates within the operation, from a certain outside" (54). Although Kant's critique centers on beauty, Derrida expands the work of the *parergon* to being a "decisive structure of what is at stake, at the invisible limit to (between) the interiority of meaning…*and* (to) all the empiricisms of the extrinsic which, incapable of either seeing or reading, miss the question completely" (61). The interior meaning at stake in Grose's work is the historical value of the crumbling ruins across

Scotland, which he cannot make clear through the sketches, but must fill out outside of the frame. The historical *lack* in the sketch is evident in the need for a supplement, and the lack can be traced further inside the sketch and lead to other questions: Is the ruin an *antiquity* before it has been framed? What is (or is not) inside the deteriorating building that calls upon Grose to add the frame? The curious historical position of ruins is based on an absence, namely history gone by. The ruin itself is in some sense a supplementary frame needed to illustrate the past events of that spot in Scotland. Burns's fear that Grose is taking notes on holes would seem to fit into this framing of an absence.

While Derridean readings of Scott may be rare, Scott's novel acknowledges the absence inherent in ruins when it borrows from Grose's work the image of the ruin as specter. Wolfscrag's appearance as the "sheeted spectre of some huge giant" is an awkward metaphor because of the multiple imaginative layers it asks of the reader. Not only must one imagine a giant, but the ghost of a dead giant; and not only the ghost of the giant, but a ghost that is in some way *sheeted*. Naturalizing the metaphor so that the giant is the tower in its original glory before its disintegration still leaves one to puzzle over the multiple steps in the figurative language. Even though the tower has in some sense died, that death is not immediately recognizable to the viewer, but requires the intermediary of a sheet. And a specter signifies an absence that serves as a striking parallel to the hole that will be covered up in some way in the Burns poem, either by the wearer stitching it up or Grose representing it. The image of the sheeted specter deftly combines these modes of (dis)covery as it suggests the habit of reducing antiquity to sheets of paper at the heart of antiquarian studies as well as the necessity of covering an absence before it can be visible.

Figuring the absence as supernatural is not unique to Scott's poem either, for Burns does the same thing later in the unquoted part of his poem on Grose. Grose has an "unco," or strange, power in his drawing tools, his "cauk and keel," and he spends his time in ruinous churches in "some eldritch part, /Wi' deils, they say, L—d safe's! colleaguin / At some black art (11, 12, 16-18). His uncanny artistic ability is thus compared to the uncanny (*eldritch*) part of the ruins, and later he is said to be deep-read in "hell's black grammar" and to put warlocks and witches to shame with his "conjuring hammer" (21, 23). The supernatural in these scenes lies in the strangeness of the past, which is being resurrected, or conjured, by Grose, whose cauk and keel frame the scene but also participate in it. His artistic framing of the ruins captures an uncanny absence but does not quite circumscribe it fully. In this reading of Scott's use of the epigraph, we have then located an absence at the heart of material antiquity and its relation to the antiquarian, which shares common ground with the Derridean understanding of the frame and expresses itself in the novel through ghostly remnants of history that attend ancient structure.

Tinto and Pattieson: An Antiquarian Argument

Grose's conjuring hammer finds an analogue in the first chapter of *The Bride* as the painter Dick Tinto believes words and painting can "conjure up" a story equally well. One of the most often discussed part of the novel is this chapter's argument between the fictional narrator, Pattieson, and his painter friend Dick Tinto over the relative values of visual and verbal representation. Tinto has made a sketch of an "ancient hall" in which the "light, admitted from the upper part of a high casement, falls upon a female figure of

exquisite beauty, who, in an attitude of speechless terror, appears to watch the issue of an animated debate betwixt two other persons" (*Bride* 12). The sketch portrays, or is purported by Tinto to portray, the climactic scene of an historical event: in terms of the novel, it represents the moment when the scorned Edgar Ravenswood returns from abroad to reclaim his right to marry Lucy Ashton, only to be stopped by her mother. Pattieson is skeptical of the sketch's ability to relay any kind of narrative without accompanying dialogue. While Tinto's artistic profession receives most of the scholarly attention, he is also a figure for Grose, and as suggested by Tinto's belief in the conjuring power of both mediums the binary being argued in the text is actually a discussion of the antiquarian's relation to history.

While Tinto is not usually read as an antiquarian figure, there are a number of commonalities in the text between his approach to the past and an antiquarian's. The sketch about which Tinto and Pattieson argue is made during a trip "taking sketches on the coast of East Lothian and Berwickshire" (14). He was "seduced into the mountains of Lammermoor by the account…of some remains of antiquity in the district" (14). Tinto's travels sound exactly like those of Grose, whose Scotland collection did include some of the antiquities of Berwickshire.[7] Tinto's "attention was divided" between his wish to draw the old ruins in landscape, and to "represent, in a history-piece, the singular events which have taken place in it" (14)

Tinto's aestheticizing dilemma would seem to veer away from Grose's work, but taken as a whole, Grose's antiquarian subjects also form as motley a collection as the diverse types of artwork attempted by Tinto. *Antiquities of Scotland* captures ruins in landscape, but Grose's *Military Antiquities* exhibits engravings in a historicist mode,

often in a scene in which soldiers of the period are shown modeling the armor. Tinto is forced to narrow his antiquarian impulse in one direction in his re-imagination of the scene in the chamber, a direction more than similar to the one Scott has taken in writing *The Bride*, which is another iteration of the painting's subject. Still, Tinto's antiquarian curiosity was split regarding what to capture, and it is unclear what would be different in the novel had he chosen to sketch the ruins. Pattieson's objection that the intent of Tinto's sketch is incomprehensible is an argument for the verbal narrative that Grose always includes in his books regardless of the illustrations. When Tinto finally acquiesces and hands over to Pattieson the "notes of the tale" he had taken on his tour of the antiquities, they resemble a rough draft of Grose's work (*Bride* 14). More than a simple verbal outline of the tale, the notes are in fact a "parcel of loose scraps, partly scratched over with his pencil, partly with his pen, where outlines of caricatures, sketches of turrets, mills, old gables, and dove-cotes, disputed the grounds with his written memoranda" (14).[8] The importance of this final gift from Tinto has been overlooked by scholars, but it is the reincarnation of Grose taking notes among the Scots in Burns's poem. All manner of materials are placed on the same representational level, for they can be *prented*. And it is telling that Pattieson is left to "decypher the substance of the manuscript" (Bride 14), for the nature of substance, what is material history and what is not, is the philosophical problem at the center of antiquarianism.

The pictorial arts serve as the cross-over point for the antiquarian because they can capture a visible materiality within a textual medium. The physicality of pictorial art cannot be denied though, for it is on a path of destruction as surely as an ancient castle. When exploring the Holy Rood Chapel in Edinburghshire, Grose finds that the "walls of

this gallery are adorned with one hundred and twenty portraits of the kings of Scotland…all painted by a Flemish painter named De Wit, who was brought over for that purpose by King James VII. when Duke of York," and he laments, "[T]he manner in which they were defaced by the English soldiers quartered here during the rebellion of 1745, affords greater proofs of their misguided loyalty than of either their taste or discipline (30-32).[9] In the words of Lee, an artifact is "[v]alued to the extent that it crumbles or disappears" (547), and the possible ruination or defacement of a piece of art separates it from the antiquarian's textual treasures, which can be reproduced indefinitely. Art also represents an historical effort in its own right. In one building, Grose finds a "fine picture falsely attributed to Vandyck, but really painted by Mystens, representing King Charles I. and his Queen setting out on a hunting party; the figures are all whole lengths: among the attendants is a portrait of Jeffry Hudson, the celebrated dwarf" (32). Perhaps no better illustration can be found of art's dual antiquarian status than here when Grose doubts the veracity of artifact's authorship but accepts that it does represent Jeffry Hudson. The archetypal ambivalent artifact in the novel, paintings represent the past in multiple ways at once. They show what the artist saw, but they also serve as objects that circulate thanks to historical forces that sometimes leave their marks. The painting as artifact brings a new dimension to the long scholarly discussion over the Tinto-Pattieson debate. The discussion has tried to define the stakes of the dialectical tension between dialogue and description, represented in the Tinto-Pattieson debate, within the tale itself. Pattieson, in an homage to his friend Tinto, who has died prior to publication, intends the narrative to be "rather descriptive than dramatic" although his "favorite propensity" at times overcomes his narration and his "persons, like many others

in this talking world, speak now and then a great deal more than they act" (14). It is tempting, because the novel is a verbal form, to approach the novel as if Pattieson is imposing his philosophy on the tale. Daniel Butterworth views irony in the dialogic resolution of the stylistic debate. He takes the Pattieson-Tinto debate back to Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's *Laocoön* (1766) and argues for a natural affinity between dialogue and narrative. He writes, "Dialogue is more appropriate to narrative than scene painting because dialogue respects the diachronous nature of the linguistic medium" (Butterworth 4). The question, however, is less about appropriateness than it is about the mediation of a past event and the present through a relic. Tinto considered doing a landscape of the ruins, which would have offered a narrative only to the extent that it demonstrated the temporal flow of history: this building was whole, now it is not, soon enough it will be completely gone. Also, Lessing does not claim that painting has no narrative value. Gavin Edwards, too, believes that the Pattieson-Tinto debate "draws on the eighteenth-century debate on visual narrative that is normally traced back to Lessing's *Laocoön*" and that, in the "standard answer" of the time, "arrested moments of time" could tell a story "by representing 'pregnant' moments, moments in which there is visible evidence of what has led up to them and what will follow from them" (Edwards 161). Such an aesthetic philosophy does not entirely support Tinto's side regarding the sketch he *did* make because (from the perspective of Lessing's *Laocoön*) he has chosen his subject poorly. The *Laocoön* makes clear that the visual artist needs to choose his moment carefully to give "free rein of the imagination" and that a narrative climax should never be chosen as the subject for a painting or sculpture because it leads the viewer nowhere and leaves nothing to be "contemplated repeatedly and at length" (Lessing 19), which is

the desired reaction in painting and sculpture. Intended as the climax to the story, Tinto's moment is too flat temporally to offer the narrative of the bride of Lammermoor, and it is little more than characters standing around, much like those in Grose's illustrations in *Military Antiquities*. The painting is a suitable substitute for the landscape because its characters, like the castle, lack an historical narrative, but the latter can be added in writing, which Pattieson does. Tinto's effort to put the story down in note form would suggest that even he understands this. Already this argument echoes James Chandler's in *England in 1819*, which focuses on the inevitability of a caption to explain the scene of the past. He describes the irony that "[e]very point that Tinto registers in his critique of what might be called 'dramatism' is itself represented in the dramatic mode" (327). The debate in a sense can never really begin because the two sides cannot be equally represented in the oral arguments presented by each character, and of course the narration of Pattieson, who speaks in the first person in the opening chapter, can also be figured as dialogue. Chandler compares the dialectic between a scene's dialogue and its narration to that between a caricature's "word-balloon" and its caption. Thus, Tinto can be seen captioning his sketch for Pattieson, while the narration captions the scene of Tinto's captioning for the reader. The analogy launches his reading of *The Bride*: "It is as if (Scott) recognized in such a picture that the implicit subject of a conversation in a scene is always another scene, and the effort to capture a scene can always be constructed as occurring in the setting of another scene" (329-330). These scenes, however, are always verbal for Chandler, and a captured verbal scene and its verbal caption rely on the same temporal supposition. Chandler notes that "Scott and his readers would have been quite familiar with such a layout of words and images from the growing circulation of political

caricatures by George Cruikshank and others" (328), but it is unclear how the static image affects the dialectic he tries to elucidate. His larger point about British society also makes this elision: "commercial society of the sort that Scott and his readers inhabited in 1819 constituted itself in struggles of representation, signs produced at once in scenes as conversation and about scenes as captions, with the history of the past, present, and future all at stake" (340).[10] A material artifact, however, would interrupt this process, for it professes to speak for itself *and* its historical context, and even the antiquarian's caption cannot quite eliminate that radical pastness. This is the spectral absence of the artifact identified with the help of Burns's poem.

The narrative's "origin" in the odd juxtaposition of Tinto's still sketch and Pattieson's dramatic description is, of course, only a metaphor for Scott's actual reception of the story. In the note appended to the 1830 *magnum* edition of *The Bride*, Scott claims that "he *drew* the tragic subject of this history" from a number of sources (my italics), an intentional pun, I believe. Scott's late revelation of the sources after waiting until the publication of the *magnum* edition leads one to wonder how the real reception of the story is similar to Tinto's presentation of a sketch. Edwards addresses this relationship between the real and fake origins, and argues—in opposition to Butterworth and Chandler—that "Scott himself must be, to some extent, on Tinto's side" because "he himself is after all engaged in deriving an historical narrative from a combination of the written and oral sources—most of them of course *not* already known to most of his readers—of 'ordinary life' in a particular country" (166). Rather than focus on the artifacts that Tinto went looking for, Edwards focuses on the importance of the sketch as the form Tinto's representation takes. It has an intermediate position: "It points back to

the event it represents and forward to the planned painting. A sketch is always a sketch *of* something and often a sketch *for* something. By contrast, a finished painting corresponds to the finished character of the past as *histoire*: fixed, unalterable, separated from us" (169). Edwards argues that the reader is waiting for the historical certainty of the painting to arrive as the novel progresses, for the "full sense of the initial sketch, and simultaneously of the supposedly real event of which it was a sketch" (170). Certainty never arrives. He writes, "[W]hen the scene does come into view late on in the novel, it does not completely succeed in doing these things. The gap between historical events and their representation is not completely closed" (170). At the novel's conclusion, Lucy, the bride at the center of the narrative, dies in short order without uttering a word to bring about a conclusion to a story about a love triangle, or even to explain her own inability to choose between Ravenswood and Bucklaw. For Edwards, the ending is an embrace of the past's merely partial legibility, and the sketch around which the story takes place is a suitable metaphor for such a message.

The completeness of the finished painting is suspect, however, for as has been discussed, paintings are capable of defacement and alteration as they undergo new historical experiences after completion. Moreover, the possibility of captioning a painting in any way, even with a title, could signify something lacking in the painting's conception of history. It is true that Tinto says the sketch is intended for a larger painting later, but focusing on its partial completion denies the authenticity that Tinto achieved by being in the hills of Lammermoor and treating the scene as if it were an antiquity. For Grose and Tinto, the sketch is also a moment of history arrested, not merely an intermediate vision.

Teniers and the Circulation of the Frame in The Bride

The novel's treatment of art overall demonstrates the failure of a painting to capture history since paintings acquire further historical meaning through their circulation. Catherine Jones notes that "no other novel by Scott refers to quite so many paintings or shows such an interest in the efforts of artists to fix characters on a canvas for future interpretation" (221). Tinto's back story is scattered with artistic allusions. He undergoes an artistic epiphany when he sees the sketches of David Wilkie, or the "Scottish Teniers, as Wilkie has been deservedly styled" (6), and later pays his landlord by painting the man and his family in the "style of Rubens" (7). In his first few moments of dialogue, Tinto compares himself to a number of masters, including the Bolognese painter Domenico Zampieri as well as the English artists William Hogarth and George Moreland (9). In the narrative proper, Adriaen van Ostade and Teniers are mentioned as painting the kind of "Dutch drolleries" found in Ravenswood Castle (144). Already we see painting's place in a European market that allows Dutch paintings to serve as ornamentation in Scottish castles. Flemish painters like Ostade and Teniers are of particular importance to Scott's work because he identified their treatment of everyday life with his own project. Teniers, who is mentioned a third time later on, is an especially significant allusion because of his work's important role in Scott's life.

No novels carry any allusion to Teniers before *The Antiquary* (1816), and Scott's first allusion to the painter in any literary work is in "The Field of Waterloo," a poem he composed after visiting the continent in 1815 and spending time on the battlefield that saw Napoleon's reign come to an end. This trip to the Low Countries and France in the

summer of 1815, was, according to Jones, Scott's "first beyond the English Isles—as part of the new wave of 'Grand Tourism' that followed the cessation of military conflict on the Continent" (208). Setting out on 26 July 1815, Scott was heading through the region of Napoleon's last stand only a month after it had taken place. In his poem about the battlefield, the speaker contemplates the plain which so recently witnessed history and asks with an antiquarian's impulse if the location can provide clues of what took place there:

> Now, see'st thou aught in this lone scene
> Can tell of that which late hath been?—
> A stranger might reply,
> "The bare extent of stubble-plain
> Seems lately lighten'd of its grain;
> And yonder sable tracks remain
> Marks of the peasant's ponderous wain,
> When harvest-home was nigh.
> On these broad spots of trampled ground,
> Perchance the rustics danced such round
> As Teniers loved to draw;
> And where the earth seems scorch'd by flame,
> To dress the homely feast they came,
> And toil'd the kerchief'd village dame
> Around her fire of straw."
>
> So deem'st thou—so each man deem'st
> Of that which is from that which seems:
> But other harvest here
> Than that which peasant's scythe demands,
> Was gathered in by sterner hands,
> With bayonet, blade, and spear (14-29)

The form of the poem here follows the framing pattern at work in Grose's work with the stranger's remarks cut off from the text's true speaker and marked as foreign. The line before those quoted mentions the only thing to ruin the peacefulness of the landscape is perhaps "Hougomont's dismantled towers" (13), the edifices of a nearby farm involved in the battle. The towers are then captioned below by historical information, as in Grose's

work, but the stranger's analysis is all wrong because he substitutes a past imagining of the scene for the more recent one. The stranger's failure to read the scene can be seen as merely indicative of the ephemerality of human actions without writers, like Scott, to monumentalize them. Of course, the interlocutor has access to the work of Teniers and can make an enlightened guess as to the kind of folk dance that took place on the spot, so even as he aestheticizes the tragic scene, he does so within an antiquarian framework. Though Scott's poem will seek to inform the stranger, the stranger's mistaken allusion to a Teniers's drawing threatens the reader's faith in Scott's own poem, which is also based on potentially spurious antiquarian evidence. Scott is united with the stranger, for he, like every man, is conjecturing based on what "seems." Why the poem needs the stranger is a question that connects its odd historical analysis to the larger discussion of the mysterious absence in antiquities.

It creates a sense of pathos when the stranger presents a peaceful perspective that is no longer true, but it is unlikely that any such stranger to the monumental events at Waterloo could ever exist. How is the stranger more out of place than Scott who is just passing through on a tour? The stranger's desire to enliven the spot through his imagination is almost Wordsworthian, but the field's blank possibility is quickly littered with antiquities from the stranger's mind, such as Teniers's drawing. Turning away from the material evidence of Hougomont's towers, the stranger is free to communicate naively with nature, but Scott's stranger needs an antiquarian referent on which to base the communication and chooses the work of Teniers.

Reading the allusion cynically is in accordance with Scott's actual experience of the battlefield, which is only empty to the imagination because the local people have

collected all the artifacts to sell. The event of Waterloo had already seeped into the ubiquity of the marketplace: in his collected recollections of the continental trip, *Paul's Letter's to his Kinsfolk,* Scott notes the "innocent source of profit" undertaken by the Flemish peasants who sell "trinkets and arms as they collect daily from the field of battle…Almost every hamlet opens a mart of them as soon as English visitors appear (454).[11] The way Scott interprets the scene would have to be the way any modern visitor would interpret it because the significant artifacts are abundant. The stranger appears historically as well as economically out of step, but his imagining of the spot's history involves a circulating object, Teniers's artwork, that is not essentially different from those being sold by the peasants. Scott creates a strangeness outside what seem to be complete systems of relation, strangeness that seems to justify the "right" historical narrative of Waterloo. But the possibility that the stranger could be right—is right according to the evidence he uses—complicates the historical interpretation at the heart of the poem.

It makes sense that a Teniers painting would be involved in the stranger's interpretation because on the continental trip Scott's interaction with the Flemish painter's work highlighted its vulnerability to substitution. Teniers's work had been among the artwork stolen by Napoleon's army, so when Scott alludes to Teniers, it is not simply an allusion to an artist who represented the region. Donald Sultana notes that Scott had hoped to see Teniers genre painting during the journey that included a good deal of art hunting. Sultana culls from his sources that Scott was "dismayed to find that all Antwerp's art treasures…had been carried to Paris on Napoleon's orders for display in the Louvre" and notes Scott's realization upon visiting Paris that the citizens there had

come to see the stolen artworks as their "national glory" (47). In the description of Antwerp in *Paul's Letters*, Scott notes the public outrage over the loss of art from the churches of the Netherlands (481). The most galling theft from the city was Rubens's "Descent from the Cross" along with "two corresponding pictures relative to the same subject, once hung above the high altar in the magnificent church at Antwerp, where the apartments, which they once filled, remain still vacant to remind the citizens of their loss" (481). Like the antiquarian of Burns's poem, Scott is forced to give witness to an absence in what he sees. When Scott arrives in Paris, he finds his way to the collection of stolen European art that Napoleon has put on display in the Louvre and laments that, despite the opportunity he has been granted to see so many masters at once, "[e]ach picture, indeed, has its own separate history of murder, rapine, and sacrilege" (496). And he goes on to say that even some of the greatest paintings "lose, in some measure, the full impression of their own merit, by being disjointed from the local associations with a view to which they were painted" (498). Despite the vision of the painter, the painting cannot escape its missing intended context, and the absence sensed in the church at Antwerp is once again felt when looking upon the paintings themselves.

While Scott was in Paris, discussions were already ongoing for the return of the paintings, but he decries that the French had "in several notorious instances undertaken to repair, and even alter, the masterpieces which conquest and rapine had put within their power" (Kinsfolk 499). To recall Chandler, Scott's disappointed art seeking is not only re-captioned by Scott's writing about it, but the captioning keeps telling the reader that something is missing from the artistic scenes at the center of the discourse. Scott's allusions to Teniers in "The Battle of Waterloo," and later in *The Bride*, carry his

awareness of a painting's mobility and the resultant absence included in any re-framing. As we see in "The Field of Waterloo," the mere possibility of this estrangement creates something haunting in the painted artifact that makes it show up where it should not. The strangeness of the Teniers painting in the poem is not really outside the economy of artifacts at Waterloo, but helps constitute that economy that relies on the circulation of antiquities. The ramifications for antiquarian historiography are clear. The possibility that the Teniers drawing could escape its frame and detail the scene at Waterloo as well as a canon ball or military standard is uncanny. The painting's materiality means that it can be framed and re-framed with new historical settings, so that the spectator, Scott, could be as wrong as the stranger. And when he looks at the stranger, he is also looking at himself.

The stranger's use of Teniers's drawings as a reference point foreshadows a similar use of Teniers's art in *The Bride*. Teniers's role as antiquarian aid is made explicit in volume II when Scott compares a glass to a painting by the Flemish painter. Pattieson is describing an apartment being kept by the Marquis, a noble relative of Edgar Ravenswood, at the house of John Girder, a lowly, but newly wealthy, cooper. He takes time to linger over the small details, which include "a long-necked bottle of Florence wine, by which stood a glass nearly as tall, resembling in shape that which Teniers usually places in the hands of his own portrait, when he paints himself as mingling in the revels of a country village" (217). The wine is evidence of a European market that Girder's new wealth has allowed him to enter, as is the glass, presumably from the continent. Moreover, it is an artifact that testifies to the realism of Scott's novel, for Teniers's career ended just before the setting of the tale.

Exactly kind of glass Scott has in mind has not been satisfactorily answered in the scholarship to date. In his 2000 edition of the *The Bride*, J. H. Alexander annotates the passage with a reference to Plates 14 and 15 of Jane P. Davidson's *David Teniers the Younger* as possible sources for Scott's imagined scene. One finds two very different glasses in two versions of Teniers the Younger's *Smoker*, one glass without a handle and another opaque with a handle.[12] Moreover, these paintings do not represent the "revels of a country village" described by Scott. In her 1991 edition of the novel, Fiona Robertson also points to the 1643 version of the *Smoker* but notes the "sitter…is thought to have been one of his brothers, but who bears a distinct resemblance to Teniers himself" (434). In order to explain the revels, Robertson references Teniers's *Village Festival* (1649) as an "example of the pictures of revelry Scott has in mind," but she confesses a suspicion that Scott is "thinking of a general style and subject matter of genre" rather than a specific work (434).

The trouble that Scott's allusion engenders is unusual because he could be more specific as in *The Antiquary* when Mr. Oldbuck pulls out of a closet: "two long-stalked wine-glasses with bell mouths, such as are seen in Teniers' pieces" (26). The details of these glasses match them to the glass in one of Teniers's versions of *Smoker*, but considering Scott's apparent readiness to make the same reference in two different novels, his neglect to mention a bell mouth on the glass in *The Bride* is curious. Considering that Teniers's work comes up more in *The Bride* than in any novel before it, the reference is perhaps not the casual allusion that Robertson thinks it is.

In the number of Teniers paintings that Scott could have seen at the Louvre during his 1815 visit, none of them match the painting described in *The Bride*.[13] However,

Scott's opportunities to see Teniers's work would not have been limited to the 1815 journey. The Marquis of Stafford was a noted collector of artwork in England, and his collection in London contained Teniers's "Village Wedding Feast," which I consider to be the true referent behind the allusion.[14] Scott was an acquaintance of the Marquis and his wife, and in a note to an 1805 letter to the Marquis's wife, H. J. G. Grierson writes that she "in 1809 or earlier became one of Scott's friends. It is clear from this letter that she had entertained the Scotts, probably at Cleveland House, during their visit to London in the spring or early summer. The Journals bear repeated witness to their acquaintance whenever Scott was in London" (Scott *Lettters* 219 n. 208). Cleveland house is where the Teniers painting resided, so Scott's visits with the couple would have afforded him an opportunity to admire the painting. As a reference for the glass on the cooper's mantle, the painting provides only opaque glasses with handles in the hands of the partygoers, one of whom resembles Teniers's self-portraits. The painting's wedding theme is appropriate for Scott's book about a bride who never takes a bridegroom, for it falls in a category identified by Margret Klinge in her collection of Teniers paintings as the "wedding without a bridegroom" (16). The bride is withdrawn from the main action of the revelry and sits at a table in the background, a removed presence that mimics the reserve of Lucy in the novel. Nor is the painting's provenance any more peaceful than those paintings stolen by Napoleon according to James Dallaway's *Anecdotes of the Arts in England* ([1800]), for Stafford's collection—known today as the Sutherland collection, for Stafford was made Duke of Sutherland in 1833—was inherited from his uncle Francis Egerton, the 3rd Duke of Bridgewater, who acquired the collection after its previous owner, the Duke of Orléans, was guillotined in the Reign of Terror (8).[15]

By alluding to a painting that had been as violently displaced from its original context as those in Napoleon's museum, Scott jeopardizes the historical reality that supposedly serves as the backbone of his historical novel. He has moved from a misguided stranger referencing the historical power of Teniers to embedding the reference within the narration of his novels and thus inviting the stranger's removal from what would seem to be true history. Just before Scott describes the troublesome glass of Teniers, the narration lingers over "an old-fashioned mirror, in a filigree frame, part of the dispersed finery of the neighboring castle" (216-17), a different kind of glass and an artifact that literally cannot represent its pastness without a frame. Even so, the novel in antiquarian fashion must give a snapshot of the mirror before delving into its background. The proximity of the Teniers's reference leads one to question the historical status of the mirror even though Scott explicitly says that it was part of the dispersal of the Ravenswood belongings. The narrator's description of the mirror's history is necessary because "old-fashioned" with a "filigree frame" does not locate it. Its filigree frame is not an unnatural inclusion in the house of the cooper whose wealth and power have grown in the same economic modernization that has destroyed the Ravenswood wealth, so the artifact cannot invoke the past it is supposed to represent without further antiquarian detail. The mirror plays on Teniers's act of self-portraiture in "The Village Wedding Feast" where the painter and historical witness has become part of material history. Instead of capturing his presence though, Teniers has created an image of himself that relies on the framing of his painting and any changes its possessor wants to make. The threat of alteration is instantiated in the novel when Scott describes in the next room a portrait of Girder that shows the intrusive hand of a French artist that

reminds one of the French alterations to European masterpieces that Scott notes in the Louvre (or for that matter the execution of the Duke of Orléans). The painting is loyal to its subject, except insofar as the responsible "starving Frenchman" had "contrived to throw a French grace into the look and manner, so utterly inconsistent with the dogged gravity of the original, that it was impossible to look at it without laughing" (217). Merely putting an image on canvas is already to invite defacement and the deferral of meaning through a series of frames that can never quite close or fill in the absence of the 'initial' or 'original' material form.

Teniers's painting may only exist in the novel by way of objects that recall his work, but plenty of actual pictorial artifacts circulate in the narrative, and calling for further analysis into the problem of material history and its frames. Only a few pages after the scene in Girder's house, Lord Turntippet, one of the "adherents to the party who are uppermost," attempts to court favor with the Marquis as the latter's political power increases by returning some articles that were auctioned off during the decline of the Ravenswood clan (220). He sends "three family pictures lacking the frames, and six high-backed chairs, with worked Turkey cushions, having the crest of Ravenswood broidered thereon" (220). The joke here is that Turntippet would logically have no use for portraits of someone else's family besides the frames, and the chairs bearing the Ravenswood crest would merely testify to the parasitic origin of Turntippet's accumulation of wealth. Nevertheless the scavenger's evident lack of intention to return the familial possessions before the change in political climate suggests that Turntippet expected to find some value in them, perhaps as antiquities to exemplify the feudal way of life and his own assumption (and overturning) of its power. But even though these

artifacts are returned to their "original" context, materially they betray a proto-capitalist system of circulating goods as having been a part of their past. The "worked Turkey cushions" suggest that even objects of familial pride cannot appear in relation to a stable site of origin. The Ravenswood family crest, which bears the words, "I bide my time," is at thematically apt in a scene of re-instated nobility but ironic in its placement upon an object that bears witness to the displacement of material that supports such ancient claims of nobility. Taken literally, the family motto signifies a constant expectation of temporal fitness that never comes. The deferral at the heart of all this framing of material history is stamped right on the Ravenswood artifacts.

The material of the cushion manages to interrupt the strong historical statement of the Ravenswood crest, even as it is literally woven into its structure. The overt deferral of the family motto admits a temporal disjunction in the very moment of signing or engraving an artifact. Even the Ravenswood family portraits, supposedly replications of historical reality, serve as little more than currency in the political machinations of the time. In such proximity to the ornate frame of the mirror at Girder's home, the pictures' framelessness demonstrates the complex role of framing in the economy of artifacts. Chandler focuses on the frame's susceptibility to be reframed in a frame, which itself can be reframed, and so on, but in the novel's use of artifacts, the frame is also substitutable, or to put it in the terms of his reading, the caption can always be erased. Turntippet's gesture assumes that Ravenswood will supply his own frames for the portraits--perhaps frames bearing the family crest—but such frames would be removable as well. The importance of the frame seems to be negligible, since the portraits are of Ravenswood's family no matter whose frames are attached to them. However, in the novel, the very fact

that the deframed portraits portray Ravenswood's ancestors underlines the strangeness built in to all attempts to demarcate clearly temporal or narrative origins.

Since any historical problem within the novel carries significance for the historical novel as a genre, the complicated place of the painting in history complicates the novel's position as well. The historical truth that Scott is offering via the artifacts in the Marquis's room is explicitly compared to the truth offered in a Teniers painting. Jones provides a critical framework for comparing these two modes of historical narrative in "the concept of likeness" that had currency in nineteenth-century art criticism. She notes the influence of likeness on Scott's writing, especially in the way Flemish painters and the "Scottish Teniers," Wilkie, achieve likeness (212). "Generally associated with portraiture," an artist "'captures' a good likeness of a sitter," but Jones goes on to argue that the term may "also refer to other representations of particular nature, such as the village inn or the cottage interior of visual or verbal genre scenes" (212). Germane to this discussion is that both Wilkie and Scott value the "appearance of reality above artifice, or above reality itself" (213).[16] Her argument for including the value of "likeness" in Scott's understanding of his own aesthetic comes from his October 1815 review of Jane Austen's work for the *Quarterly* in which he writes that for those trying to capture ordinary life "[s]omething more than a mere sign-post likeness is…demanded" (qtd. in Jones 220).[17] Scott compares Austen's natural description to Flemish painting (cited Jones 213). Indeed, even more than Jones suggests, the comparison of Austen's writing to painting becomes an extended metaphor in the essay, one that undeniably applies to Scott's own historical novels. While the artist who "paints from *la beau idéal*…is in a great measure exempted from the difficult task of reconciling them with the

ordinary probabilities of life…he who paints a scene of common occurrence, places his composition within the extensive range of criticism which general experience offers to the reader" (Scott "Emma" 193). Thus Austen and Flemish genre painters follow the same aesthetic in Scott's mind. As an historical novelist focused on the common experience of the past, Scott, by extension, attempts to offer a likeness that goes beyond a rote reproduction of reality as well, even as his likeness must retain that past reality's foreignness. The historical novel must achieve a realistic description of life even as the *absence* of the past must also be felt by the reader. Antiquities would seem to insert an obvious difference into what otherwise might be another Austen novel. Yet realism must go beyond the sign post of likeness, according to Scott's theory, whether set in the past or present, and this second layer of (un)likeness in an historical narrative puts the antiquity in an unstable position. On the one hand, it incorporates the expected difference of the past for the reader. Glasses are not made like the one in Teniers's painting anymore, so the historical reality of the narrative is clearly different from the reader's. On the other hand, the realism of writers such as Scott and Austen requires a subtle reworking of reality to achieve the "appearance" of reality. It does not matter what a glass on a mantel in eighteenth-century Scotland actually looked like, for it only matters that the reader can believe that is what it looked like. Thus, in Scott's historical novel material artifacts serve the contradictory purposes of guaranteeing historical reality while only alluding to present reality. Scott does tell the reader that his narrative in *The Bride* is "OWER TRUE" (262), achieving a truth deeper than historical fact. The inclusion of historical materials, such as the Teniers glass, in order to recreate "the ordinary probabilities" of life in the novel conflicts with his authorial message because that kind of antiquarian

analysis is not about *ower* truth, at least it is not supposed to be. For all its flaws as a discipline, antiquarianism still assumed that material artifacts had some relation to historiographic accuracy. That is what gave the antiquity its value.

In his own antiquary writing, Scott embraces the resemblance between artifacts and art as an accurate method of recovering historical truth. He published his "Essay on Border Antiquities" in 1814 as an introduction to the larger work *Border Antiquities of England and Scotland*, and its goal is to link the historical narrative of the border region to the antiquities and artifacts found there. The smaller man-made articles—what we would call artifacts today—that happen to be found around these antiquities, he calls *specimens*.[18] Scott dates these specimens primarily according to a pattern of progress through history. Near one fortress, for example, he finds flint arrowheads but notes that "[a]t a later period, the Britons used copper and brass heads for arrows, javelins, and spears, which are found of various sizes and shapes near their habitations (618). "In like manner," he refers to other "specimens" that demonstrate "gradual improvement in the construction of battle-axes and weapons of close fight" (618). Even though antiquarianism can be criticized for its nationalism and mystery-hunting, Scott's writing here demonstrates an attempt to create a narrative of history the way it really was.

When the narrative of improvement fails him, he turns to sources that include artistic representations. In the Border districts are occasionally found "[s]hort brazen swords of a peculiar shape" that "by the common consent of antiquaries, have hitherto been termed Roman swords" (619). Scott disagrees with the dating because "[t]hey are, however, unlike in shape to those usually represented on Roman monuments, which are almost uniformly of an equal breadth from the handle, until they taper, or rather slope off

suddenly, to form a sharp and double-edged point" (619). Antiquarians had established an historical narrative around the sword that had to be changed because the swords do not correspond to another artistic artifact. The monuments in this case are judged to communicate historical reality, and Scott does not fret over the Roman artist's possible need to do exactly what Austen and Teniers do and mediate a difference between reality and the appearance of reality. By lending the Roman sword the power to recreate a true historical narrative, Scott is looking at the material artifact in the same way the narrator views the Teniers glass, and both are performing the same antiquarian task. But the second performance is fictional, and moreover it involves Teniers, who, experience has borne out in Scott's writing, may well estrange the artifact from history proper. The performance is able to produce two kinds of histories—the true and the *ower* true—and it only requires a different frame to achieve one or the other. The internal lack of equivalence in these specimens is troubling because it suggests that all material is somehow unequal to itself.

Strange Exchanges with the Historical Object

Scott's artifacts in *The Bride* are often associated with specters. We have already examined the odd spectral metaphor used to describe Wolfscrag, and what may seem like gothic ornamentation actually follows an unusual bit of logic that equates the revenants commonly said to gather in any such structure with the structure itself. The other gothic instances in the novel similarly locate a spectral *presence* or, rather, a reified absence in something that is seemingly still *there*.

Ravenswood himself is often compared to a ghost, most notably when he visits his former castle, now in the ownership of the Ashton family. Ashton's youngest son is startled at first seeing Edgar because he looks so much like his ancestor Malise, whose portrait still hangs in the castle. Henry says, "What makes him so like the picture of Sir Malise Ravenswood?...I tell you it is the picture of old Malise of Ravenswood, and he is as like it as if he had loupen out of the canvas" (147). The prospect of Malise's reanimation stems from childish superstition in this instance, for the rest of the company understands the function of the frame, which the boy flatly calls into question. Like the stranger in "The Field of Waterloo," the boy is using a material artifact without a proper historical frame. However, here, too, the necessity of the frame in order to make the past and present readable diachronically—so essential to the novel—is fundamentally threatened. In the Marquis's room, the resemblance between painting and object is lent historical credit, but the boy's use of the same technique is ridiculed even as the strangeness of what he has done resides in its logical consistency with the usual antiquarian mode.

The supernatural hidden in material history is repeated throughout the novel, including in the climactic scene foreshadowed by Tinto's sketch in the first chapter. When the scene from the sketch eventually takes place in the novel, Scott describes it as if it is peopled with haunted artifacts. Ravenswood reappears from the continent just as Lucy is signing her marriage contract with Bucklaw. As Lucy prepares for the scene, the boy Henry foreshadows Edgar's return by recalling his original confusion regarding Edgar's corporeality: "I shall never forget how frightened I was when I took him for the picture of old Sir Malise walked out of the canvass. Tell me true, are you not glad to be

fairly shot of him?" (245). When Ravenswood finally enters the chamber for the confrontation, he resembles an "[a]pparition…for Ravenswood had more the appearance of one returned from the dead, than of a living visitor" (247). The scene then morphs into the resurrected artistic production that Henry had feared all along. It becomes a dramatic tableau rather than a dialogic argument. Servants are "transfixed with surprised"; "Lucy seemed petrified to stone"; the "matted and disheveled locks of hair which escaped from under (Ravenswood's) hat, together with his fixed and unmoved posture, made his head more resemble that of a marble bust than of a living man"; and "there was a deep silence in the company for more than two minutes" (247). Pattieson's narration collapses images of static, artistic representation into haunting spectral images. Ravenswood is both like a lifeless marble bust and an undead spirit possessing a "ghastly look *communicated* by long illness" (247, my italics). Scott uses the same word to describe the contagion of stillness throughout the room: the domestics' posture "transfixed with surprise…was instantly *communicated* to the whole party" (247, my italics).

When Scott relates in the *magnum* note the original source material from which he draws the narrative, he writes that the Lord Rutherford, the original Edgar Ravenswood, in this scene "in vain conjured the daughter to declare her own opinion and feelings" regarding the choice of a groom, to which she only remained "mute, pale, and motionless as a statue" (273). In *The Bride* the scene remains the same, but the earnest entreaty of Ravenswood is now a conjuration in two ways, for it turns the room into a collection of ghostly artifacts. The frame has actually been repositioned because the author—or Pattieson the antiquary—has done the conjuring in the scene and included Ravenswood in its circle. While Tinto's decision to draw the historical scene rather than

the ruin in the hills of Lammermoor would appear to take him down a different path, this scene demonstrates that the historical novel—at least within an antiquarian understanding of history—inevitably ends up with *conjured* memorials from which the author asks for historical knowledge only to receive an incomplete and uncanny answer.

The strangeness that "The Field of Waterloo" tries to banish into the words of the stranger is in the drawing room communicated throughout the scene like a disease. Mobility seems to generate the artifactual strangeness: they escape their frames, are unmoored (like Ravenswood) from their origins and potentially roam through history bestowing meaning independently of a reasoned and fixed perspective. Mobility thus symptomatically suggests the underlying strangeness of material history.

The reverberations of Edgar's haunting confrontation with the Ashton family are felt a few scenes later when the picture of Malise Ravenswood mysteriously makes its way into the banquet room that is hosting Lucy's wedding to Bucklaw, and tellingly the supernaturally motivated revenge suggested in the episode is instantiated by a (seemingly) animated, circulated artifact. When the portrait of Malise Ravenswood is noticed at the wedding celebration, its mysteriousness is repeatedly referred to in terms of a work of substitution: it has taken the place of a picture of Lord Ashton's father through a "change," "exchange," and "transposition" (259). The supernatural effect of the painting's arrival is only apparently undercut by the presupposition that the wall has held up other pictures before in a cycle. Scott in "The Field of Waterloo" summons a stranger to undertake an artifactual analysis that he can deem incorrect, and Lady Ashton blames the mistaken placement of Malise Ravenswood's portrait on the "freak of a crazy wench who was maintained about the castle whose susceptible imagination had been observed to

be much affected by the stories which Dame Gourlay delighted to tell concerning the 'former family'" (259). But there is no way for the painting itself to bear witness to the exchange being charged. Scott humorously adds parenthetically that while "all looked up," only "those who knew the usual state of the apartment" registered any surprise (259). The other visitors, the strangers, did not read the artifact's appearance as odd in the least. The men who understood the exchange could summon anger only because, Scott writes, of what "they *deemed* an affront" (259, my italics), using the same word he uses to describe his and the stranger's differing interpretations of the field at Waterloo. The portrait of Malise Ravenswood fulfills the ghostly effect predicted by Henry, but Malise never has to leave the frame. The mobility of the portrait is mysterious enough to do the trick. The supernaturalism of the artifact's presence has been reduced to the natural occurrence of its circulation from one setting to another, but that natural occurrence denatures the experience of historical reality as mediated through material artifacts since it becomes a matter of deeming instead of knowing. In the antiquarian mode of historiography, characters (and by extension, Scott himself) constantly try – and fail – to contain the displacements of the very objects whose role it is to stabilize the scenes of legacy and inheritance.

Framing the Imagined in Art and Coin

At the time Scott is crafting the suspicion around Malise Ravenswood's portrait in *The Bride*, his letters demonstrate a preoccupation with portraiture and painting that focuses on the circulation of art as much as on its beauty and realism. Scott is trying to sell artwork for his painter friends at the time, and the commodity being sold is ultimately

their ability to recreate reality accurately yet intriguingly. He is also negotiating the terms of a portrait of himself for a benefactor, the Duke of Buccleuch. Scott's letters repeatedly return the question of art to a question of money. It is not just that everything comes down to money, but rather that historical art is a lot like money in its strange relationship to reality. Coined money, an artifact in its own right, shows up at significant moments in the novel, and its symbolic power stands out at once as undeniable and unstable along a number of registers. The novel's questioning of material history, and specifically its role in the historical novel, becomes a question of history's similarity to an economy of currency that seems to move itself.

Scott knows that a proper likeness is about hiring the right people. On 15 April 1819 he writes a response to the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensbury, Lisbon, who has previously asked Scott to sit for a suitable portrait for the duke's home. Scott objects to the suggested artist, Henry Raeburn, because he has "very much to do [and] works just now chiefly for cash poor fellow as he can have but a few years to make money and has twice made a very chowderheaded person of me" (349). Raeburn's failure to create a flattering likeness may chiefly compel Scott's petition, but Scott also seems wary of an artist too committed to economic gain. Surely one would go too far in suggesting that Scott conceptualized beautiful art in terms that were incommensurate with financial gain, but his assessment of Raeburn does exhibit an awareness of (if not a belief in) the theoretical divide between art and commodification. Scott would prefer the talent of William Allan, who "has made one or two glorious portraits though his predilection is to the historical branch of the art" (349). Paradoxically, Scott's argument for Allan centers on his ability to make money: a "hundred persons subscribed ten guineas a piece to rafle

for his fine picture of the Circassian Chief selling slaves to a Turkish Pacha" (349). So confident is he in Allan's talent, Scott says that he is taking one of his sketches to show Lord Stafford, the owner of the Teniers painting, in town (350). Allan's talent is good enough to be framed by Scott's writing, for "Constable has offerd Allan three hundred pounds to make sketches for an edition of the Tales of my Landlord and other novels of that cycle" (350). Ironically, Scott's argument for his desired painter's talent for capturing likeness devolves into an argument based on the number of monetary exchanges that Allan's paintings have been involved in. In the context of Scott's experience with the paintings of Teniers, the author's quickness to admit the possibility of circulation into a discussion of artistic production, especially after holding it against Raeburn, recalls the strangeness revealed in the artistic treasures that Napoleon or Lord Stafford have collected. Once broached, the strangeness seems perpetually there.

Elsewhere in his work, money again interrupts Scott's attempt to differentiate value in art, this time in an attempt to articulate the difference between useful and fine art. In his "Essay on Romance," first published in 1824 in the *Supplement to the Encyclopaedia Britannica*, in the middle of an analysis of the origins of Romance as a genre, Scott attempts to explain the poet's fall in stature through history—from a privileged keeper of a tribe's oral history to a dissolute figure of mediocrity—by addressing the disparate impact of the "fine arts" and the "useful arts" on culture in general. He writes of the fine arts that "excellence leads to the highest points of consideration; mediocrity, and marked inferiority, are the object of neglect and utter contempt" (563). In the useful arts there is a "great equality" among the practitioners, and "it is wealth alone which distinguishes a tradesman or a mechanic from the brethren

of his guild" (563).[19] Scott's distinction between the arts, however, does not delve further into the philosophical difference between the useful and the fine, and his argument begs the question by suggesting that poets are not respected because badly done art effectively merits no respect. But rather than take a Kantian stance that fine art should be devoid of a profit motive, Scott only notes that the reward promised for talented practitioners of the fine arts is to "attain the regard and affection of the powerful, acquire wealth, and rise to consideration" (563). (Moreover, he neglects to consider that "useful" arts can be judged on their merits rather than payment. A woven basket the immediately unravels is simply a basket badly made, no matter its price.) Despite Scott's intended distinction, both arts are ultimately measured by the money they earn—since great artists, too, "acquire wealth"—and the objects they produce are thus substitutable in a market economy. According to Scott's own theorizing, Allan's paintings, and the historical likeness they can offer, are at base completely substitutable with more seemingly prosaic manufactured goods.

Scott is contributing to eighteenth-century economic debates around the relation of *use* value and *market* value by considering them alongside *artistic* and *historic* value as well. Kurt Heinzelman points out that Adam Smith's "knottiest passages are those in which he must try to explain the dichotomy of real (natural) and market (nominal or money) value," a distinction that Engels would eventually, and exasperatedly, identify more simply as one between *value* and *price* (98). The problem was not Smith's alone. David Ricardo, too, ignored the simple solution of determining economic value solely and simply as the variable price in a market and "solved the question poetically by positing exchange value as a fiction which has the force of reality" (97). Ricardo writes

in *The Principles of Political Economy and Taxation* (1773), "To facilitate, then, the object of this inquiry, although I fully allow that money made of gold is subject to most of the variations of other things, I shall suppose it to be invariable, and therefore all alterations in price to be occasioned by some alteration in value of the commodity of which I may be speaking" (qtd. in Heinzelman 97). Heinzelman calls this kind of analysis "apparitional" because the thinkers are so concerned with the fact that the activity of the economic factors are *apparently* valuable in ways that do not admit the "real value" (98). Already one can see this approach's partial resemblance to the concept of likeness discussed by Jones in the economists' intent to create a reality effect through a papered over difference.

Scott's understanding of economic exchange value—understanding why and how the economy was based on an object's value in relation to the value of a certain amount of coin—was commensurate to his status as an educated aristocrat in the country of Adam Smith. The relation of economic theory to his work usually centers on the clash of feudal and monetary economies in the tales. Kathryn Sutherland writes, "The whole spectrum of critical opinion, from the Marxist Georg Lukács to the internally divided American school, its extremes represented by Alexander Welsh and Edgar Johnson, has engaged with Scott's fictional treatment of the opposition between a customary feudal authority and a competitive market economy, the worlds of fixed and fluid wealth" (97). Though his business ventures would obviously make him aware of the dramatic shift in economic processes since those far-off eras that are treated in his novels, Scott was cognizant of the theoretical underpinnings of the change as well. In *The Change of Currency* he assures the reader that he is "not about to enter upon the question which so

much agitates speculative writers upon the *wealth of nations*, or attempt to discuss what proportion of precious metals ought to be detained within a country; what are the best means of keeping it there; or to what extent the want of specie can be supplied by paper credit" (20, my italics), an undersell of his knowledge of the specifics of Smith's economic theories. We know, for example, that he attended classes at Edinburgh University in 1789-90 taught by Dugald Stewart, "[Adam] Smith's chief contemporary commentator and popularizer" (Sutherland 100), and that a copy of *The Wealth of Nations* sat in his library at Abbotsford (Scott *Catalogue* 256).[20]

Scott's familiarity with these issues is important in order to understand what it means when he writes about money in his letters and in *The Bride*. Sutherland's dichotomy between fixed and fluid wealth comes straight from Smith's work in economics, where the lack of fixity in contemporary macroeconomic relations is a recurrent fact that he wants to make clear. To take an example germane to this chapter, Smith writes of precious metals' economic worth: "Gold and silver…like every other commodity, vary in their value, are sometimes cheaper and sometimes dearer, sometimes of easier and sometimes of more difficult purchase" (49). Even after coinage fixed the relation of metals, their values relative to other commodities changed diachronically: "From the time of Charlemagne among the French, and from that of William the Conquerer [sic] among the English, the proportion between the pound, the shilling, and the penny, seems to have been uniformly the same as present, though the value of each has been very different" (43).

On the surface, of course, Scott's decision concerning who should paint his portrait is not (at least to him) about economic relations, but about the likeness that each

painter is capable of achieving. One has made him "chowderheaded," while the other will presumably be more flattering.[21] Money and vanity, rather than verisimilitude, seem to rule Scott's conception of the plastic arts here. But *historical* verisimilitude remains a tangential yet crucial factor since Scott sells Allan's ability to capture his appearance by lauding his ability to capture historical likenesses. Throughout an investigation into Scott's historicism, one repeatedly comes upon a precipitous point at which Scott's attitude appears ready to jettison the burden of real history for the sake of a livelier art, but historical events always return in the paradoxical form of materiality-as-specter. The picture he wishes to take to Lord Stafford on Allan's account is of "the murder of Bishop Sharpe on Magus Moor" (350), the virtue of which is the imaginative excess it conjures in the viewer well beyond the reality available to the senses. In keeping with his promise at the end of *The Bride* that the tale is *ower* true, Scott's approbation of Allan's historical sketch is that it—like many sketches—can "give a sort of fire to the imagination of the spectator who is apt to fancy a great deal more for himself than the pencil in the finished picture can possibly present to his eye afterwards" (350). The finished picture's concern with exactitude seems to violate Scott's rule against sign-post representation in writing and painting. The sketch has a relation to material reality, but it also offers to the spectator an immaterial excess that has transformed materiality into something more. The terminology of that imaginative process sounds like a description of a superstitious figure in a Romantic novel who is "apt to fancy a great deal more for himself" than reality might offer.[22]

The quasi-superstitious manner of Scott's involvement with Allan's historical painting is suggestively similar to the way gold coins were being approached in England

a few years before the publication of *The Bride*. In 1810 England had experienced a financial crisis around the price of gold bullion. Ill during his composition of *The Bride* with an undiagnosed case of gallstones, Scott writes frequently of his diseased appearance, including in a 14 March 1819 letter to Matthew Weld Harstone when he says that the disease has "latterly brought on a most brilliant jaundice, so that in the specie hunting times I might stand some chance of being coined into deniers (like Bardolph's nose) should I approach the Bank of England, or the Bullion Committee" (319). Scott's figuration of himself as precious metal is significant in the context of his real-world financial preoccupations as well as his literary creation of an antiquated economy in the setting of *Bride*. His thoughts and anxieties concerning monetary exchange stemmed from a larger cultural awareness in England at the beginning of the nineteenth century concerning the unpredictability of metallic currency's relationship to the metal itself. The sharply increased value of gold during hostilities with France after the Revolution led to the government's 1797 decision to let the Bank of England stop converting paper money into gold as bullion (Kindleberger 61).

Removed from circulation, gold bullion became scarce, raising its value relative to usable currency, which still included gold coins. Common sense at the time, however, maintained that an ounce of gold should be worth an ounce of gold no matter the form, and the fact that one could melt down his or her coins into bullion (for it was illegal to simply exchange the two forms) and make a profit seemed unnatural. In 1810 the Bullion Committee, formed to investigate the nation's monetary crisis, released its report, supported by Ricardo's *High Price of Bullion, a Proof of the Depreciation of Bank Notes* (1810), stating that the apparent increase in the value of gold was the result of the

circulation of paper money rather than an endogenous loss in material value, which many thought absurd (Kindleberger 61). How could a gold coin not be worth its weight in gold? As Heinzelman writes, "On 23 May 1810, one could have picked up a piece of gold—a coin, say—only to find that it was less golden than it had been, say, on 22 May 1810" (116).[23] This was a moment of panic over the suddenly unstable value of metal that seemingly could only be solved by minting more gold coins that would bring the value of gold into more normative realms, although the coining of more specie only led to further depreciation of the circulating coined metal. In a "Review of the Controversy respecting the High Price of Bullion" for the *Edinburgh Review* in August 1811, the anonymous author argues feverishly to locate the problem with paper money rather than in a variance in the value of material gold against itself, which is called "incredible" "improbable," and "utterly inconsistent with actual phenomena" (450). The whole affair can be seen as the suppression of the supernatural aura forming around the gold coin.

To offset the uncanniness of gold's apparent transformation in value, the Bullion Committee, as *deus ex machina*, agreed that the issue of paper caused all of these problems, using a textual note outside the frame of gold itself to explain the strangeness of gold, which seemed capable of multiple values at once. In reality, gold bullion and gold specie were simply taking their value from different economies, bullion's worth primarily being determined by international exchange while that of gold coins was linked most directly to the flow of commodities within the realm. Since these are all relative values, the committee could blame paper money with some hope of successfully addressing the problem, but the defense of gold's intrinsic value was a defense of nature. There was nothing natural about it. To return to Scott's evaluation of Allan's historical

sketch, his attempt to sell the imaginative experience of the sketch is not a crass reduction of art to commodity, for he is transferring one imaginative exchange for another. The money that Scott might get for the sketch is no more stable a material representation than the sketch itself.

In the case of the sketch and the case of money, the attempt to return to a mystified reality explains Scott's interactions to some extent. There is a desire to see history in Allan's sketch and to see value in the money it earns, but an absence of the real in each medium constantly thwarts this desire. Ironically it is the frame that signals this absence while trying to overcome it at the same time. The frame's paradoxical relationship to the antiquity—marking it as historically significant and simultaneously removed from its historical setting—has already been established, and the problem of framing surrounding Scott's references to Teniers places historical art of any kind in the same paradox as the antiquity. The concept of history that gives the antiquity or the historical work of art its historical significance requires these problematic frames. Gold coins were no different during the bullion crisis. The ounce of gold in 1810 loses economic value when it is stamped at the mint, or when it is framed by the English government as worthy of its value.

Referring to the coin's frame is not simply tendentious, for Scott uses the artistic stamp on coins to great effect in placing *The Bride*'s plot historically. Money's power to denote history through its form makes it a realistic detail when bringing the past to life. When Caleb complains about Girder's modern economic power in the face of traditional, feudal hierarchical arrangements, he puts it in terms of coins with specific histories: Girder does not simply have a lot of money, but he has "Jacobuses and Georgiuses baith"

(110). Earlier in the novel, Bucklaw considers lending his valuable horse, Grey Gilbert, to Ravenswood and explains to Craigengelt, "Grey Gilbert cost me twenty Jacobuses, that's true but then his hackney is worth something, and his Black Moor is worth twice as much were he sound" (51). Instead of using the equivalent £20, which might mean more to the modern reader, Scott locates the transaction historically through specie, which bears the image of James VI. The insertion of difference into the transactions provides a way to achieve Austen-esque realism and keep the foreignness of the past evident, giving a likeness of its unlikeness. In the novel the coin serves as an intersection for the problems of historical and economic value. Scott is again detailing history with the help of artifacts, but in the case of the coins, he is asking the reader to read the history behind the novel in terms of a material artifact that already seems uncannily strange to them in its present circulation. When the mint stamped the metal, its value dropped instantly, the official mint acting actually as a counterfeiting agent by making gold coins that were not worth their weight in gold.

Like the Teniers painting, the coins achieve new nationalistic and economic values over time.[24] The country revels of the Teniers genre painting, for example, no longer explain the trampled ground in the fields of Waterloo, but a range of other artifacts take its place. Yet, even as Scott substitutes the correct artifacts, he cannot help but project a stranger who relies on the Teniers painting. In that instance the problem of historical reference could be expelled in the form of the stranger, who is simply performing an act of historical analysis just like Scott—even if his purpose in the poem is simply to exorcize any perverse aestheticization of the tragic scene. If the stranger's understanding of Waterloo and Scott's are to exist in the same conceptualization of

history, they are both subject to the imposition of "strange" frames. The antiquarian's frame is what makes historically significant material somehow unequal to itself: the stranger's framing of debris from Waterloo would be different from Scott's, and for every interaction between an antiquarian and an antiquity, there could be a stranger waiting to frame the interaction differently.

"Ta'en up" History in The Bride

The supernatural effects of Scott's novel would seem to have nothing to do with history proper and to have more in common with the antiquarian delight in the superstitious and weird. By focusing on money in the novel, however, we see that antiquarian notions of history cannot so easily be set in opposition to an Enlightenment understanding of history. The strangeness of the coin is not a result of nostalgia. The drift in its economic value in the 1810's escapes the control of the authorities, and while an artifact like the Teniers painting is framed with intent, the gold coin's framing never achieves its intent, even in effect. In fact, the implicit message of a gold coin at the time was to ask its owner to deface it in order to replace its true (more profitable) value. The internal absence of the coin subsumes its positive value in the bullion crisis, and while the temptation to deface the coin-as-artifact—melting it down into more valuable raw material and at the same time ruining its historical markings—is only incidental from the perspective of an English citizen, Scott's novel makes the connection between these two unstable values by circulating the same coin throughout the narrative as it takes on different values.

The valuation of a gold coin's meaning is explicitly at the center of the novel's depiction of fate and superstition, framing what might otherwise seem like ornamental gothic detail as an effect of material history. When Edgar Ravenswood visits Alice, the witch-like figure who has remained on the Ravenswood estate despite its transferred ownership, she warns him to quit his dealings with Lucy Ashton. Trying to preclude the Ravenswood-Ashton union, she uses a coin to symbolize the danger of Edgar's interest. When he offers the gold in an example of ancient *noblesse oblige*, she "refused to receive, and in the slight struggle attending his wish to force it upon her, it dropped to the earth" (153). She says to her old master, as he "stooped to raise it":

> Let it remain an instant on the ground…and believe me that piece of gold is an emblem of her whom you love; she is precious, I grant, but you must stoop even to abasement before you can win her. For me, I have as little to do with gold as with earthly passions; and the best news which the world has in store for me is, that Edgar Ravenswood is an hundred miles distant from the seat of his ancestors, with the determination never again to review it (153)

The comparison of Lucy to a piece of gold counters the warning that Alice offers Edgar. The uniqueness of Lucy's threat to him is lost in the ubiquity of gold in circulation no matter where Edgar goes. The metaphorical juxtaposition of the gold and his bride at once captures the juxtaposition within all material artifacts in the novel: they are historically specific and yet utterly and strangely exchangeable. Indeed, the gold on the ground eventually becomes the gold that Edgar and Lucy break in half to signify their marriage contract. That scene's language makes explicit that the gold is now receiving a new referent: the coin is the same that "Alice had refused to receive from Ravenswood," but now it is "emblematic" of their "troth-plight" rather than of Lucy herself (158). It is also an antiquarian scene, for Scott tells us that this is a "ceremony…of which the vulgar

still preserve some traces" (158). At the same time that the coin is being renewed as a metaphor, Scott identifies it for the first time as a "broad-piece of gold," or a worked coin rather than a generically lump. To an audience aware of the change in value that can result simply by stamping a coin, the coin's ability to reference multiple values is being addressed on two different levels, and the act of splitting the coin is a handy figure for the way coins held two different material values in the bullion crisis. The coin halves are serving as artifactual evidence in this case, having born witness to the secret ritual. Yet, later in the novel when Edgar returns to confront Lucy after her new engagement to Bucklaw, he signifies to her his retreat from the conflict by handing her his half of the "broken piece of gold" to which she responds by returning her own (252). The metaphor's ability to change referents so easily is brought up again when they give the pieces of gold back to each other. The pieces are equal in value yet granted the effect of difference by the parties; i.e. it matters that Lucy has Edgar's, and vice versa. Like the possessions of the Ravenswood family that have been circulated hither and yon in the novel, the coin is biding its time for an historical meaning.

While no critic has examined closely the coin's movement through the narrative, it sheds light on the novel's denouement, in which Edgar disappears while travelling toward a duel with Lucy's brother, who blames the Master of Ravenswood for his sister's tragic end.[25] The reader has already been warned of the prophecy that the Ravenswood line would end with its last descendant heading out toward the quicksand of Kelpie's flow on the way to "woo a dead maiden to be his bride" (139). Edgar's death is in a sense a confirmation that the supernatural, or at least the superstitious, have a hand in the events of the novel. Before he rides off to the duel, however, Edgar throws a purse of

gold on the ground in front of his old servant Caleb and tells him "with a ghastly smile" that he is the estate's executor (267). Here is the return of the scene between old Alice, who is now substituted by the equally superstitious Caleb, and Ravenswood over gold. Only this time Edgar leaves the gold on the ground and abandons the scene. One can only conjecture whether the half-coin from his secret engagement is part of his inheritance to Caleb, and singling it out would only reassert the problem of its meaning. The scene is, for Edgar at least, about the refusal of material culture. Just before he gives the gold to Caleb, he yells at the servant about his belief in the family's legitimacy: "You have no longer a master, Caleb...why, old man, would you cling to a falling tower?" (268). The antiquarian's answer to Edgar's question is "history," but the man, the tower, the coins have all become part of the same system that Edgar is now abandoning. Indeed, the last view of Edgar records his removal from the substantial world: "At once the figure became invisible, as if it had melted into the air" (268).

The erasure of Edgar in the text is an ironic statement about history when the novel's antiquarian themes are held out for examination. Of course, the disappearance of Edgar has been foreshadowed throughout the novel as his physical presence was repeatedly put in spectral terms, including the reference to his "ghastly smile" right before he leaves Caleb. However, Edgar fulfills the prophecy of his ancestry at a moment when he has abandoned all the material trappings of his lineage, and what is more, he fulfills it at a moment when he has metaphorically enacted the retreat from Lucy, via the coins on the ground, that Alice had advised earlier in the novel. His symbolic repudiation of a superstitious history, based around objects loaded with meaning, leads him right back down its path, only without the objects. Alice's equation

of Lucy with a coin seemed poorly chosen considering the necessity of currency, but Edgar's surreal withdrawal from the real world follows the logic of Alice's threat. The superstitious fatality she describes apparently has more to do with a coin than might be thought. *Melted* is a loaded term for Edgar's disappearance considering the problem of coins being melted down in the bullion crisis, and the melting of a gold coin is an etched representative *figure* becoming invisible. If the coin does serve as the key metaphor for this *historical* novel, what space can be conceived of for a more enlightened concept of history proper, which would have to do without the economy of historical artifacts represented by Alice's coin?

In fact there is no choice other than picking up the coin, for to do so is to abandon the world of meaning. Lucy's fate illustrates the problem from another perspective, for her character connects the problem to the possibility of language. In the all-important scene when Edgar returns from the continent to confront Lucy with her previous vows, the coin's estrangement from its symbolic power, as each half is exchanged, becomes a problem for textuality as well. The exchange of the coins is accompanied by an exchange of written marriage contracts. After seeing her newly signed contract with Bucklaw, an "undeniable piece of evidence" of her new intentions, Ravenswood takes her older contract from her, whose evidentiary status is now somehow fraudulent. The fraudulence is merely an effect though, and Lucy's signature on Bucklaw's contract is no more binding in the long term than her exchange with Ravenswood.

From this scene onward, Lucy abandons language until her final tragic, and incomprehensible, words. It is as if signature's iterability has somehow lessened not only *its* power, but Lucy's own command of language, her ability to 'sign' any statement.

When she finally does utter her final expression after apparently stabbing her new husband, she uses her first dialect in the novel: "so, you have ta'en up your bonnie bridegroom" (260). The strange language is an intrusion from another setting, uttered as if it were addressed to Lucy, as if she were a separate entity from the utterance. The voice would seem to represent that of old Alice, who first introduced the danger in an artifact that can be "ta'en up." The statement announces her bridal status without making clear to whom the union has been made. She has married Bucklaw, but she has also "ta'en" up the piece of gold that represented her first intended bridegroom, Edgar.

Further suggesting this reading of Lucy's final scene is a detail from Teniers's *Village Wedding Festival*. The painting portrays a seemingly incomplete union in the trope of the wedding without a bridegroom.[26] Instead of a groom, the bride receives coins, a telling and strange exchange considering the complexities surrounding money in Scott's letters at the time and in the novel itself. Though the violence surrounding Lucy is often placed at the hands of her mother and of the lovers demanding her hand, the novel keeps bringing one back to the problem of commodification and specie. The charge that Lucy does not speak her mind avoids the possibility that she cannot speak it because words have become as fungible as the coin in the novel. For her, language's internal absence is as real as any moldering ruin. The commodification of historical materials has inserted difference into material history, meaning that history has been lost to the novel as a determinate concept. Lucy's fate as an unspeaking (non)participant in the events around her comes to represent the failure of textual history that follows on the loss of material history. When she takes up the coin along with Edgar, she also aligns herself with the antiquarian in Burn's poem who is always *takin'* notes in Scotland. The

antiquarian's approach to history had him collecting and printing the holes, or absences, of reality. Lucy's inability to articulate the meaning of the coin she split with Edgar or of the documents she has signed demonstrates the totalizing effect of the antiquarian approach on reality. Even her attempt to hold back and say nothing at all about the novel's circulating materials—to remain outside of their economy—fails. Her own absence must be filled like any other artifact that calls out for historical framing, and as with the antiquities in Grose's work, the historical framing comes from outside. Even if the ruin feels like it has internal historical meaning that is only an effect of the frame. The absence that is covered up becomes an illogical excess that cannot be incorporated into the rational positing of history. The antiquarian summons—or *conjures*, in Burns's words—this excess in the form of the supernatural by trying to limit it in the name of history and, ironically, thus identifies it as excess. Even when Lucy drops out of this system in her silence, a voice from her but not of her emerges to describe her place in the economy of material history. Lucy's estrangement from language after Edgar's return is not the change in circumstances that it seems, and when the voice seems to speak back to her, it is only mimicking earlier signifiers, such as the coin and her signature. Those, too, were not of her, and the voice succinctly identifies the unavoidable problem plaguing her, and the antiquarian perspective in general: she has *ta'en* up objects in a material economy.

Alice identifies the coin as a key figure in the text, and her special status in this argument is confirmed in the publication history of the novel. Scott's ambivalent approach to her character suggests that the novel's problematic relation of the supernatural and history was part of the difficulty in its composition. In the manuscript

of *The Bride* Scott introduces Alice by comparing her to a coin: "She occupied a turf-seat, placed under a weeping birch of unusual magnitude and age, as Judah is represented in coins sitting under her palm-tree, with an air of majesty and dejection" (32). Scott refers to Roman coins struck to commemorate Rome's conquest of Jerusalem in 72 AD. They often bore the inscription—or, the exergue—"*Iudea Capta*"—Judea captured. The word *capta* carries double meaning in a novel preoccupied with how artifacts are captured as representations and also captured as military spoils. Moreover, the substitution of Alice, symbolizing the folk ways of pre-modern Scotland, for Judah portrays England as a conquering force in the 1707 union of Scotland and England, the key historical event in the background of the novel. Part of this conquest is the ability to frame it as the victor wishes, a representational power that Scott aligns himself with by in effect coining this representation of Alice. Considering the doubt cast upon antiquarian objects in the novel, especially the coin at the center of Edgar's engagement to Lucy, the figure of Alice here has significance for the position of history in Scott's historical novel project. However, Scott removes the reference to the coin before publication, substituting a generic reference to Judah sitting under a tree. Removing the frame of the coin distances the historical novel itself from the line of metaphorical permutations that Edgar's coin goes through in the novel. Leaving the reference to the Roman antiquity would fit in well with Chandler's reading, for the subjection of Alice to an inscription on a coin would be appropriate. She who initiates the coin motif would then be captioned within the same motif. The editorial rejection of the artifact, however, falls into the novel's pattern of failing to frame events determinately, especially in the case of Lucy and Edgar, both of whom die with interpretive questions lingering. Was Lucy possessed

or simply mentally ill? Was Edgar careless or supernaturally persecuted? These questions betray a permeability between the gothic and historical novel genres. By jettisoning the meaning of artifacts, Lucy, Edgar, and the author try to remove themselves from the violence and uncertainty of antiquarian epistemology, but remain unable to close the porousness between history and superstition.

Scott's ambivalence toward Alice's representation anticipates his hesitance to frame the novel's historical setting definitively. As Jane Millgate details, the historical background of Scott's novel is entirely muddled. Three camps of critics have in the past alternately placed the action before the accession of Queen Anne in 1702, between this date and the Union of England and Scotland in 1707 and after the unification (172). Yet she explains that the "truth of the matter is that while the manuscript of the novel, the first edition of 1819, and all subsequent editions for the next ten years set its events two or three years *before* the union, the 1830 *magnum opus* edition transposes the action to two or three years *after* the Union" (172). Peter Garside explains that the problem is not about the wholesale movement of events, but an internal anachronism: "[M]uch of the difficulty would appear to stem directly from *The Bride,* where—at least in all readily available editions—a pervasive sense of a pre-Union setting is heavily offset by two or three apparently ineffaceable post-Union markers" (Garside 6). Robertson identifies two such markers existing in all editions of the novel: a reference to English customs and excise officials, who had no power in Scotland until after the Union and a reference to Law's Scheme of 1717, "recently broached" according to the novel (Robertson xxxv). A key moment of confusion introduced in the 1830 *magnum* edition comes from Ravenswood's threat to Ashton that their civil case over the Ravenswood property could

be appealed to the House of Lords, who held sway over Scottish judiciary matters only after the Union. In previous editions of the novel, Ravenswood threatens to take the case to the Scottish Parliament. Millgate points out that Scott changed the setting in response to his doubts about the original novel's faithfulness to the chronology of events leading up to the Union but also that he "did not weigh fully the effect on the coherence of his novel of such a change, nor prune his new text of all the vestiges of the original period" (173). While Millgate wants to reclaim the novel for historical readings, the initial mistakes and Scott's half-finished attempt to fix it mean that all versions of the novel lack a clear historical accuracy. Pre-Union and post-Union activities are thrust together, and the characters thus inhabit a kind of temporal limbo. Since Scott on the title page plays up the conceit that the narrative is based on textual artifacts passed down from history (and later in the note to the *magnum* edition, he actually cites pre-texts), the absence of a true historical setting seems like a mistake. But the novel anticipates the displacement of artifacts—even of itself as an artifact—throughout. Scott has in effect made the novel into a ruin, whose historical meaning, if it is to have any, must be imposed by an outside critical frame, the kind brought to it by scholars such as Garside and Millgate. Like antiquarians they elucidate the novel's relation to history only to highlight its strange (non)relation to history. The term *historical novel* in this case is covering up a possibility that it is not historical at all. If, like Lucy at the end of the narrative the novel is trying to avoid the problematic determinations made in material history, it fails because it, too, has *takin*' from material history in the form of the pretexts fictionally compiled by Pattieson or those actually compiled by Scott. Even language itself calls out for the reader to frame it and grant it an otherwise absent meaning.

Generically speaking, *The Bride* diverges from the characteristic template of Scott's novels because of its failure to reach historical synthesis through the resolution of its main conflict between Ravenswood, a noble representing the dying values of familial blood and feudal loyalty, and Sir William Ashton, a lawyer who has taken advantage of the changing economic and political landscape to acquire most of the Ravenswood possessions including titles. The standard Scott novel guides the reader through the historical transition into a synthesis of conservative and revolutionary historical forces. Thus, in Scott's first novel, *Waverly*, set during the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745, the English hero Edward Waverly, born of a Hanoverian-leaning father but educated by a Jacobite uncle, in the end marries Rose Bradwardine, daughter of a Scottish Baron who accepts a modern, unified kingdom. Though Scott depicts the divergent historical forces of the time, the narrative logic supports union over conflict. Such an historically affirming marriage never occurs in *The Bride*. It is briefly held out as a solution when Edgar and Ashton's daughter, Lucy, become secretly engaged, but she is forced by her mother to take back her vow and make another contract to marry another man, Bucklaw, a second engagement that is never fulfilled.

Scholars have repeatedly asserted *The Bride*'s status as an outlier. Ian Duncan suggests that it is, in fact, "admired for its supposed untypicality" (135). In his *Modern Romance and Transformations of the Novel* he argues that the novel's charged setting on the cusp of Scotland's loss of independence "is one of Scott's liminal or transitional figures of narrative possibility, but its content here is sheerly negative, signifying impossibility" (136), and part of the novel's uniqueness lies in its unfruitful use of a fertile historical moment. *Pace* Duncan, the negative content in the novel does not derive

from the historical moment in particular, but from historical material in general. In *Scott's Novels: The Plotting of Historic Survival*, Francis R. Hart identifies a similar absence of historical process in the tale's conclusion: "From Ravenswood's death there is no issue; his loyalties lead nowhere, his enlightened values are lost. He vanishes, as if unreal, except as a pawn of his own doomed lineage; his death is not providential" (Hart 318).[27]

The novel is absent from Georg Lukács' totalizing summation of Scott's fictional work as it presents immediate objections to his elegant analysis. For Lukács, the typical historical progress of Scott's novels is a kind of objective patriotism: "as a sober, conservative petty aristocrat, [Scott] naturally affirms the result, and the necessity of this result is the ground on which he stands" even though he "sees the endless field of ruin, wrecked existences, wrecked and wasted heroic, human endeavor, broken social formation, etc. which were the necessary preconditions of the end result" (54). *The Bride*, however, only shows the waste and wreckage; the unexplained and perhaps inexplicable ending mimics the unresolved political conflict in the background of the novel, which in the beginning supports the ascendant Ashton before reversing completely to give power back to Ravenswood and his noble relative the Marquis of A----. At the novel's close, it is unclear how the Marquis of A---- and Ashton will fare in the coming union of Scotland and England, which should theoretically benefit the latter. The historical setting in this case fails to lead to the ground on which Scott stands, for "the gap between Revolution and Union is a twilit moment of transition…pure discontinuity and flux" (Duncan 143). It does not give life to history, but rather removes history from a life the reader knows and understands.

The Bride of Lammermoor then could more properly be termed an antiquarian novel. The book approaches history to see if it is recoverable in the way common sense might hold, looking to illustrate the value of an antiquarian perspective, which may not make the past present but might allow one closer to the real past. Ironically, the novel's approach to the material of the past leads it only to divest the past from reality further. Material history, once broached, becomes a closed circuit that places the facts of history into group of relations that cannot be escaped, for any discourse on history involves the framing power of language, which is part of the material economy that concerns the novel. The frame of the antiquity does not simply exhibit authority over the artifact, but it also holds sway over what lay outside of it and alters for good the notion of a purely linguistic historiography. Scott cannot simply abandon the antiquarian pose in the novel and return to a linguistic history once the proposed relationship between material culture and language has been confronted, anymore than Pattieson can seamlessly translate Tinto's pages of drawings and notes into a narrative. The loss of the artifact will always be known.

The trace of loss in material history thus hangs over all historical discourse in Scott's novel, and this physical absence predicts Marx's discussion of commodity fetishism in *Capital* (1867). Marx writes of the object becoming more than a sensible thing through commodification: "There is a physical relation between physical things. But it is different with commodities. There, the existence of the things *qua* commodities, and the value relation between the products of labor which stamps them as commodities, have absolutely no connection with their physical properties and with the material relations arising therefrom" (31). Marx goes on to analogize this transformation to the

realm of religion, in which the "productions of the human brain appear as independent beings endowed with life, and entering into relation with the products of men's hands" (31). This is the fetishism of products in Marx, and through the process, the sensible and insensible are united. In Derrida's reading of fetishism in *Specters of Marx*, he writes of "the furtive and ungraspable visibility of the invisible, or an invisibility of a visible X, that *non-sensuous sensuous* of which *Capital* speaks…with regard to a certain exchange-value" and notes the odd conjuration at the heart of Marx's demystification in *Capital*: "The point is right away to go beyond, in one fell swoop, the first glance and thus to see there where this glance is blind, to open one's eyes wide there where one does not see what one sees" (149). Scott's entre into material historiography in *The Bride* reveals a similar union of the material with the immaterial, and the immaterial absence at the heart of a material view of history cannot be eschewed. Reproducing history that is involved with artifacts moves away from notions of true or false history and opens the possibility that historical reality is unfaithful to itself. The limitless possibilities for framing an artifact suggest themselves and cause the artifact's meaning to move independent of its creators' (or collectors') wishes.

The collection of historical materials then is not simply the act of bringing the past, no matter how partially, into the present, and because Scott's novel starts out from an antiquarian perspective, it tries to capture what is essentially unable to be captured: the place of artifacts in a general economy of history.[28] While a certain idea of loss is inherent in any discussion of the past, the sensible absence of the artifact makes it uniquely suited for the questioning of history in *The Bride*. By the end of the novel, historical truth seems to be only a fiction, if a productive fiction. Although Scott mimics

the refusal of material history in the removal of Alice's coin frame, he does not simply disappear like Edgar or lose the ability to speak like Lucy. The unreal effects in the novel's plot are the work of Scott's entrenchment within material history even though the value of history is continually questioned in the novel. In the same way that depreciated monetary exchanges involving gold did take place during the bullion crisis despite its strangeness, history goes on despite *The Bride*.

In the novel history goes on in the form of language, for as the figure of Lucy demonstrates, language is implicated in the novel's dilemma over material history. It bears its own frame now, carrying a fundamental absence or "hole" in its center. The frame around one of Grose's antiquities also places pressure on the text surrounding it, so that the frame is as much in supplemental relation to the text as it is to the crumbling church illustrated within. The novel submits to the reality that one cannot describe the abandonment of material history without resorting to it in the form of language, which achieves a nonsensuous materiality in its exchangeable relation to artifacts in an antiquarian view of history.[29]

Once the fetishism occurs, it spreads in this way, so that the artifact's internal absence spreads throughout all description of reality in the way Edgar's appearance as both marble and ghoulish was *communicated* throughout the novel's climactic scene like an illness, but there is no cure for this disease, at least not one that is knowable or describable. Perhaps Scott's own figuration of his disease in the letters best sums up the predicament of material history. In the letter to the Duke of Buccleuch, Scott places his deathly pallor in relation to the ages of man, saying that he cannot sit for a portrait at the moment because "neither my late golden hue for I was covered with jaundice nor my

present silver complection looking much more like a spectre than a man will present any idea of my quondam beef-eating physiognomy. I must wait til the *age of brass* the true juridical bronze of my profession shall again appear on my frontal" (349). The traditional historical narrative that Scott references is a degenerative one that ends, no matter if the source is taken to be the book of Daniel, Hesiod, Ovid with man's wickedness and impiety ruling the world. Scott *must wait*—he must *bide his time*—until the age of brass arrives and a *true* basis for representation will *appear*. But the logic of his trope is telling. Even though the visions of himself as bullion or as a specter feel wrong, the movement to what appears to be true, that is the real fall.

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[1] Michael Gamer exemplifies this tendency toward the textual artifact in his *Romanticism and the Gothic*, for he is writing of antiquarianism specifically but still neglects the material object of history. He writes that antiquarians like Scott "traditionally dealt in textual and archaeological fragments, 'unofficial historical memory and record…song, legend, joke, family tradition…letter, tracts, pamphlets and private memoirs'" (176). The brief reference to archaeological fragments is the last mention of the purely material artifact in his argument. The passage quotes from Ina Ferris's influential *Achievement of Literary Authority*, and it accurately reflects the focus on the verbal and textual in that work as well. Yoo Sun Lee does focus on the material artifact and its relation to the "antiquarian episteme." Lee reframes antiquarianism's relationship to proper historiography as more complicated than merely "unofficial" and considers the material artifact as a market item. These two ways of looking at the artifact constitute a fragmented view of history that is driven by profit motive instead of a Burkean, patriotic view of a seamless English history. This chapter addresses rather the presumption of reclaiming history as it happened by analyzing material antiquities, and the historical drift inherent in this analysis leads to an understanding of historicism through a figure of economic exchange.

[2] Trigger notes that that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Western Europeans only gradually began to believe that the stone tools they found were manmade and were "not of natural or supernatural origin" (52). Prior to this turn in thinking, all found, distinctly shaped, stone tools were labeled as fossils, the same as actual animal remains.

[3] When referencing Scott's relation to the *gothic*, I follow the example of Gamer by reading it as a generic term for literature that indulges in supernaturalism and sensation, from which Scott tries to disassociate his public authorial image after adopting the form of the historical novel (163-200).

[4] See Appendix, figure 1.

[5] Ironically, in the introduction to this novel, Pattieson makes clear that he has received the tale from his friend Dick Tinto, not the landlord of the Wallace Inn, so in a sense the novel's first description of a past event, the initial telling of the story, is inaccurate and in need of revision. This type of historical substitution will be the focus of the analysis that follows.

[6] The poem first appeared in 1791 in *Gentleman's Magazine* under the title "Written by Mr. Burns, the Scots Poet, when Capt. Grose was in Scotland in 1790 [or 1789]." The ambiguity of the date might be an

ironic nod to Grose's own habit of ending his description of ruins by providing the exact year he encountered them, though possibly it is an addition of the editors. The poem was later collected in Burns's 1793 version of *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*. I will refer to the version of the poem in James Kinsley's edition of *Poems and Songs* (392-393).

[7] It is tempting to consider Grose's Berwickshire descriptions as possible pretexts for *The Bride*, but the "original" version of *The Bride*'s story took place in Wigtownshire, in southwest Scotland, while Berwickshire lies in the southeast. Scott maintained throughout his life that the novel's most celebrated structure, Wolf's Crag, almost in ruins at the time of the story, is imaginary. Many readers asked Scott if it was based on Fast Castle, which stands near to the Lammermoor Mountains, but it is unclear if Scott had ever seen Fast Castle before writing *The Bride*. It is not illustrated in Grose's collection.

[8] Tinto's drawing of caricatures strengthens his resemblance to Grose, whose *Rules for Drawing Caricaturas: with an Essay on Comic Painting* was published posthumously in 1795.

[9] Scott alludes to these paintings in *The Antiquary* (38).

[10] From a certain perspective, this chapter can be seen as an attempt to further contextualize—or reframe—Chandler's reading of the novel. What our two approaches share, however, is a belief that, according to the logic of *The Bride*, historicist interpretation is no longer something one can just "do." The impulse itself is questioned in the novel, and the inside and outside of historicist discourse become hard to discern or differentiate. I believe that these problems can be looked at with a little more specificity than Chandler offers. By looking at the novel in conjunction with the antiquarian literature of the period, we include the alterity of the artifact in the pattern of representations through history. The utter loss allegorized by ruins is not something easily substitutable with a caption.

[11] *Paul's Letters* are told from the fictional point of view of Paul, but critics tend to take the reports as Scott's own thoughts and feelings. In an 1816 letter to Matthew Weld Hartstone, he expresses the wish that he had foregone the persona, which he chose "in order to speak more decidedly than I felt entitled to do in my own and also because the supposing a certain number of correspondents of different tastes gave a good reason for treating of various subjects in separate letters" (225).

[12] See Appendix, figures 2 and 3.

[13] Based on the *Galerie du Musée Napoléon* (1804-1828), edited by Antoine Michel Filhol.

[14] An engraving of this painting can be seen in *The Marquis of Stafford's Pictures* (1818); it is plate 65. The same engraving is reproduced in the *British Gallery* (1818). Though neither of these works appears in Scott's library catalogue, it is certainly possible that he was aware of their publication and their relation to Stafford's collection. The actual painting remains in possession of the Marquis's family today. See Appendix, figure 4.

[15] According to James Dallaway's *Anecdotes of the Arts in England* ([1800]), the background to Stafford's collection was common knowledge. Discussing the Orleans collection he writes, "That sumptuous assemblage of pictures is well known to have owed its origin to the Regent Orleans, and his minister cardinal Richlieu, and its dispersion to his later degenerate successor….[who] mortgaged them to Walquier of Brussels and M. la Borde, of whom they were jointly purchased for 43,500*l*. by the Duke of Bridgewater, the Earl of Carlisle, and Lord Gower, under the management of Mr. Bryan, in 1796" (517).

[16] Jones also points to theories of Thomas Reid and his *Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense* (1764), in which he suggests that the "art of painting is in part a skill of copying what we see rather than what we know" (Jones 218-219). Charles Bell furthers this assertion by Reid in his lectures and subsequent book, *Essays on the Anatomy of Expression in Painting* (1806), in which he "attempts to conceptualize the importance of expression in human beings" by making known expression's anatomical basis (Jones 218). Jones's research leads her to believe that "[a]lmost certainly, Scott…knew the work of Bell" (219), and he would have understood the problem of reality and realism.

[17] The quotation originally comes from Scott "Emma" 193.

[18] The term *specimens* is interesting because it points to a category that Scott never provides. The half-attempted system of classification exemplifies the scientific flaws in antiquarianism, and the deferral inherent in Scott's language gets at the mobile referentiality of material artifacts explored in this chapter.

[19] The discussion relates to the scene in the Marquis's room where Teniers's fine art is put in juxtaposition to the useful quegh, "the work of John Girder's own hand."

[20]Sutherland writes further, "That Smith's economic theory as expounded in *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776) influenced Scott needs no general proof…In any case it has been long recognized, if only in general terms, the large contribution of the Scottish philosophical historians, through his mentors Robertson, Ferguson and Stewart, to Scott's intellectual development" (100).

[21] Scott presumably means "chowderheaded" as an alternate form of "jolter-headed," a form that occurs elsewhere in his fiction and diaries, and describes a person with an overly large head. According to the *OED*, "chowderheaded" emerged later from "jolter-headed." Scott probably intends no further wordplay with *chowder*, for its culinary meaning was almost entirely relegated to America and Newfoundland.

[22] In *The Bride* the word *fancy* is used in the initial description of Lucy's character, specifically her tendency to retreat from reality into her imagination. In her fancy, "her secret delight was in the old legendary tales of ardent devotion and unalterable affection, chequered as they so often are with strange adventures and supernatural horrors," and "erected her aerial palaces" as part of what Scott calls her "delusive though delightful architecture" (25). The emphasis placed on architecture in the passage is puzzling unless we have been prepared to look at the novel's preoccupation with antiquities. While Lucy seems to abandon reality in favor a world of complete fancy, a materiality remains to constitute it. Her vision of a legendary tale is not essentially different from Scott's imaginative recreation of an actual historical event. The question is how his vision can be granted any historicity while Lucy's cannot.

[23] Heinzelman links the economic problem to a "crisis in language," for "as it became apparent that a more sophisticated theory of money was required, it also became apparent that the simplistic poetic economies of an earlier time would no longer suffice" (117, 119). In his reading of Blake's poetry, the imagination—that which is spiritually most precious and also most abundant—is forfeited when it is commodified and entered into the circulation of language (120-121). In order to experience the true value of the imagination, one must attain a "direct apprehension of labor value," which is an experience of the poetic act, of creation before exchange (121). Language is implicated in my discussion as well, but from a different vector. In *The Bride*, the loss inherent in language becomes sensible once it is put into circulation with material history.

[24] Grose exploits the historical contextualization of coins in *The Antiquities of Scotland*. Regarding a sketch of Tantallon Castle in Haddingtonshire, he writes: "This view shews the outside of the Castle, with the gate. It was drawn A. D. 1789. The inside has lately been converted into a garden. Pieces of bombs, cannon balls, and broken arms, are frequently found here; and likewise small copper coins of King Charles I. and II" (190).

[25] It is worth noting that Scott's end for Ravenswood does not come from his source material. The fateful ride seems to have been entirely his addition.

[26] The subject of the Teniers painting parallels the wedding metaphor Scott applies to the 1707 union of England and Scotland, which serves as the novel's implicit setting. This is not a trope particular to Scott. For further information on its commonality, see Deborah Elise White 86 n.17.

[27] In an apparent attempt to recover the novel as a typical Scott statement about history, Hart writes that the "destruction of the Ashtons is providential" (318). Later he remarks, however, that the "two principles" fought over in the novel are "unreconciled, and irreconcilable…self-destructive, marking the degeneration

and death of both old and new" (333). The mutual destruction of the past and future confusingly means for Hart that there is "no transcendence of historic fatality" in the novel, though history would appear to have no finality to transcend. This chapter has tried to clarify these kinds of paradoxes through its discussion of material artifacts.

[28] I am taking the term "general economy" from Georges Bataille as interpreted by Derrida in "From Restricted to General Economy: A Hegelianism without Reserve." A general economy describes meaning's relation to the radical loss of meaning, and as with many of the concepts that interest Derrida, general economy "opens the question of meaning" (Derrida "From" 270). Restricted economy on the other hand describes the relation of determined and phenomenological meanings. In the context of this chapter, a standard that Scott pilfered from the artifacts left on the field of Waterloo would take its historical (and economic) value from a restricted economy. How that value came to be determined is something that could only be imagined in a general economy. It is not the standard does not effectively serve as evidence of what happened at Waterloo, but as Scott's novel acknowledges, there is a denial of something in this positive knowledge. Derrida remarks in the essay that Hegel's system "was wrong for being right, for having triumphed over the negative" (258), and I am arguing that the system of history in *The Bride* is operating under a similarly burdened concept of what is "right."

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Chapter 2

Figuring Subjects: Artifacts, Commodities and Violence on Salisbury Plain

> The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living.
> *-Marx*

Wordsworth and Ruins in Context

"How profitless the relics that we cull," begins Wordsworth's "Roman Antiquities" (1831), commodifying the material past, even if the poet sees artifacts as poor investments. Peter Manning believes the tone of "Roman Antiquities" "bespeaks Wordsworth's remove from the nascent science" of archaeology (287), but Wordsworth's distrust, or mere distaste, for archaeological pursuits does not stop him from realizing that the financial and historical discourses that surround artifacts are two intertwined economies. What frightens Wordsworth is the tendency of economies to homogenize all things by turning them into exchangeable values. Entering the economy of artifacts could conceivably turn the subject into an artifact:

> Of the world's flatteries if the brain be full,
> To have no seat for thought were better doom
> Like this old helmet, or the eyeless skull
> Of him who gloried in its nodding plume (5-8)

The threatened loss of subjectivity in these lines, as the antiquarian's brain becomes too much filled with conjectures of the past, is not specific to Wordsworth's later poetry, as Manning suggests. One of his first poetic endeavors, "Salisbury Plain," considers the import of historical remnants, the monuments at Stonehenge in particular, which stand as testaments to the continuity of British history. A protest poem against the

impoverishment of the lower classes, the poem also suggests that artifacts and wealth operate within similar, if not overlapping, economies.

Charles Rzepka, in contradistinction to Manning, actually refers to Wordsworth as our first archaeological poet because he uses material remains as a kind of testimony to reconstruct the past, and he identifies the inquisition of the historical object within a movement in Romantic historical understanding from a spiritual analysis of the past to a secular one based on material evidence. Rzepka believes Wordsworth to be influenced by William Stukeley, an eighteenth-century British scholar among the first to use a scientific approach in unearthing human remains. Rzepka cleverly reads Wordsworth's Lyrical Ballad "The Thorn" against Stukeley's work *Stonehenge, a Temple Restored to the British Druids* (1740). What separated Stukeley from the antiquarians who came before him was his focus on taking precise measurements, and some of the more curious lines of "The Thorn" involve the speaker coming upon the spot of the alleged infanticide and becoming strangely compelled to produce measurements. We learn the thorn is not five yards from the path, the muddy pond is three yards beyond, and it measures three feet long and two feet wide. Against this, Rzepka quotes suggestively from Stukeley's work on digging up what seems to be the remains of a child while describing the effort in exacting detail, including a square hole cut in the chalk that was "three foot and a half, i.e., two cubits long, and near two foot broad, i.e. one cubit: pointing to Stonehenge directly. It was a cubit and a half deep from the surface" (Rzepka). If Wordsworth's familiarity with Stukeley is as strong as Rzepka believes, Wordsworth's own exploration of the relics at Stonehenge is surely worth further investigation. The poet does not have to be an acknowledged antiquarian like Scott to wonder at the power of material history

to call forth the past with an aura that seems to touch the subject in ways more profound than any written record.

Nevertheless, Wordsworth's research into the power of ruins appears to have leaned even more on their aesthetic qualities, and his familiarity with William Gilpin's picturesque collections in the 1790's can be deduced from his letters.[1] Wordsworth owned Gilpin's *Observations*, in which a ruin is often captured in visual form followed by Gilpin's precise description of the surrounding scene. For example, after a plate showing Inveraray castle, Gilpin lets the reader know that the fort stands in a mountain recess and that nearby the "herring-boats commonly take their station on the lake, as the evening comes on; and if all this moving picture should happen to be enlightened with a splendid sun set, the effect is very fine" (180-183). Gilpin's view of the ruin is synchronic, but his meandering gaze works its way through time, the boats coming and going, waiting for fineness, or the picturesque, to call/respond to him.

The odd intersubjectivity of Gilpin's experience of the picturesque finds a similar psychic construction in the Enlightenment study of psychological association. Somewhere between the possible archaeological and aesthetic patterns for Wordsworth's interaction with artifacts, association theorists, such as David Hartley (1705-1757), Archibald Alison (1757-1839), Abraham Tucker (1705-1774), and Dugald Steward (1753-1828), had been interested in how scenes of the past haunt and even enliven monuments and ruins. Wordsworth's aesthetic theories from *Lyrical Ballads* have been linked to Alison's *Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste* (1790).[2] But the latter text also speaks to history's odd relationship to the scene of the ruin and asks, "What is it that constitutes the emotion of sublime delight, which every man of common sensibility

feels upon the first prospect of Rome?" (25). Amid the "scene of destruction" and "ruins of that magnificence" it is "Ancient Rome which fills his imagination....It is the mistress of the world which he sees, and who seems to him to rise again from her tomb, to give laws to the universe" (25). The act of historical association is like a rebirth from the dead, outside of logical constraints, and it takes control of the mind, filling it with images rather than the mind serving as an imaginative font. Of course, Alison points out, if the spectator had not learned about Rome throughout his life or if he were unaware that he was looking at Rome, then "how different would be his emotion!" (25). Alison's final point demonstrates a connection between the concerns of an actual antiquary like Scott and the philosophers of the mind's patterns of association, which Wordsworth in the preface to *Lyrical Ballads* professes to be. Whether recreating the past or describing its psychological effects, reading an artifact is an unproductive exercise until outside resources have been brought to bear.

Stonehenge and Cultural Abjection

Before the statement of his poetic principles in *Lyrical Ballads*, Wordsworth depicts the mind's power to associate with artifacts most directly in "Salisbury Plain," where he records the main character's interaction with what is perhaps England's most famous ruin, Stonehenge. The originating event for the poem, Wordsworth's solitary journey across the plane, took place in the summer of 1793 only a few months after war was declared between Britain and France. His emotional state was disturbed by the escalation of the conflict in France, where he had travelled in 1790 and returned late in 1791. There he started a relationship with Annette Vallon, the mother of his child,

Caroline, born in Orléans in December 1792, around the same time as the poet was returning to London.[3] While his experiences at the time inspired a poetic response, he had trouble crafting it into a final product. "Salisbury Plain" was begun 1793-1794 and later revised in 1795 and entitled "Adventures on Salisbury Plain." It was finally published in yet another revision in 1842 as "Guilt and Sorrow; or, Incidents upon Salisbury Plain." Prior to that, a small part of the poem was published in *Lyrical Ballads* (1798) as "The Female Vagrant."[4] In the beginning, the poem makes a political statement against England's war with France by connecting the sorrow and poverty such conflicts bring upon the poor with the barbaric violence of England's ancient past. "Salisbury Plain" introduces two different historical moments centered around Stonehenge, and their symmetrical mapping across the first four stanzas suggest a method for comparing and contrasting the experience of England's mythology and its modern present.

A close reading of the passage demonstrates that the historical analogy is not as stable as might be first assumed. The monuments of the plain lead the poet to compare the state of the precultural English savage to that of contemporary England. His depiction of a barbarous past supplanted by a "civilized" but still unenlightened present is in some ways generic.[5] The poem though complicates the historical narrative by attaching it so strongly to artifacts at Stonehenge, which do not provide material assurance of England's cultural continuity after all. They are remains and metaphors at once, meaning their "realness" is determined by the semantic structure that gives them a historical value. Wordsworth imagines an early English world in which its artifacts are not understood as such, so their reappearance later in the poem represents historical and

cultural continuity to the reader but also calls into question the intellectual origins of the perceived continuity. Narrating the traveler's experiences on the plain, Wordsworth is also writing an anthropological tale about a culture that believes in the power of artifacts to offer evidence to historical discourse.[6] Stonehenge acts as a monument justifying England's historical narrative, but it can be said to have emerged as a monument—an artifact—at the same time as that narrative. As Wordsworth *reads* the historical meaning of Stonehenge, he also *creates* that meaning. While the epistemological power of the artifact results from the viewer's ideological perspective, the privilege of the artifact in the narration of history, as an object displaced into that narrative, marks it as strange and familiar, other and subject.

The logic of the opening few stanzas of "Salisbury Plain" seems a clear symmetrical past-present comparison that will give historical depth to the poem's political and cultural protests. In the first stanza the savage suffers his hardships stoically: "happier days...he never knew" (12-13). The modern subject, on the other hand, though not struggling against nature red in tooth and claw, as Tennyson was soon to call it, is burdened with the "memory of pleasures flown / Which haunts us in some sad reverse of fate" (21-22). Beyond the burden of memory, modern man must also deal with the seductive tendency to compare socio-economic situations, unlike the savage who knows only "men who all from his hard lot partake" (17). The poem distinguishes the primitive and civilized state by the latter's double burden of memory and class consciousness. The problems share a common root in the modern subject's proclivity to compare his current experience socially and historically. Supporting the comparative impulse is the assumption that these multiple realities are comparable according to some

logic that has developed within the historical progress from savagery to civilization. The savage lacks a way to differentiate his experience. Most noticeably he lacks an historical consciousness that would give access to the larger context of cultural memory in the way "Salisbury Plain" does.

When Wordsworth fleshes out the modern socio-economic predicament, he begins to play with the world-historical narrative of the opening by introducing rhetorical devices that re-inscribe the savage's life within the modern complaint. The want of cultural memory is a critical distinction between the savage and the civilized subject that emerges even as the poem's parallel structure brings the two remote historical points together. The painful remembrances that plague the modern individual "derive from memory of pleasures flown / Which haunts us in some sad reverse of fate" (21-22), lines repeating a formula for the savage's life experiences: "For happier days since at the breast he pined / He never knew, and when by foes pursued..." (11-12). In sequence the lines place in parallel a happier past and a frightful present spent in flight. The distinctions made between the experiences of the savage and of the modern subjects—referred to as "us"—put into question the very method of historical memory on exhibition. Our "pleasures flown" take up the same metrical position as "breast he pined" of the previous stanza. The savage remembers no happier days since his infancy, the pre-linguistic, preconscious time when his desires were unutterable yet inevitably met by his mother. One's infant experiences can only be "guessed at," much like the poet claims to be guessing at the world of pre-historic England in the later prefatory note to "Guilt and Sorrow."[7] The poet analogizes the savage's memory, or lack of memory of his childhood, to the larger problem of cultural memory by moving from the third-person

discussion of the savage in the first two stanzas to the first person plural in the third. The memory of pleasures flown belongs to "us," a group defined against the savage. The absence felt by the united "us" is the projected memory of an infant state in which memory was no burden, a conjectured loss that is embodied in and represented by the savage, who is unable to speak and explain his place in world history.

The symmetry of the past-present analogy, enforced by the strict Spenserian stanza, leads one to look for an object that might provide protection to the modern subject in the manner of the savage's fortress rude, but the modern sufferer finds no comfort in the object because what "haunts" him is not merely a physical threat. The haunting arises from remembrance of the past, so the threat is internalized in a way that the savage's is not. The poet and his contemporaries

> from reflection on the state
> Of those who on the couch of Affluence rest
> By laughing Fortune's sparkling cup elate,
> While we of comfort reft, by pain depressed,
> No other pillow know than Penury's iron breast (23-27)

It is not that some have more wealth than others, but it is the "reflection," the psychic examination of this fact, that rankles the modern subject. The self-haunting of the modern mind is exacerbated rather than soothed by artifacts, for the enlightened self sees figural value in each object. The material products that should provide comfort—the couch of Affluence, the sparkling cup of Fortune, and the pillow of Penury's iron breast—do not even exist in reality. For the savage the fortress is a real, solid object for use, but in the case of the modern perspective, the first artifacts mentioned are immediately put in terms of economic value. These emblems of relative wealth provide a

way to measure value that is unavailable in Wordsworth's briefly sketched state of savagery.

An object the poet does not discuss in the modern half of the binary is the savage's fortress, even though he is clearly seeking it out to anchor his protest and raise consciousness of his social cause. If held to the symmetry that rules the poem, the savage's use of the monument as shelter has become the poet's use of it to "reflect" to such an extent that the external reality of the monument is dissolved in its specularization; it is merely a mirroring substance. The savage views his inhospitable surroundings from within the safety of the structure, but the poet—and "us" with him—internalize external objects and turn them into figures for historical or political purposes. Moreover, the maternal breast has returned at the end of the third stanza rather uncannily in the poet's imagination as "Penury's iron breast," no longer a projection of the real, but a symbol for the hardships suffered by the poet and reader. A metallic figure, the iron breast is at once a way to capture, or attempt to capture, the infant's experience of the Real and also represent the radical otherness of that perceived Real as something inorganic and foreign to the subject.[8] The poet rightfully names the paradoxical image of fullness and absence Penury, for he is representing want. To rectify the want, Wordsworth desires fairer economic and political practices, but in the passage his, and our, pining is always figured as a yearning for the past, ultimately the infancy of mankind where language does not exist and desires are automatically and unconsciously met with maternal fulfillment. That fullness lies beyond signifiers in the realm of the pure signified.

The uncanny image of the breast in these first stanzas may be read in conjunction with Kristeva's concept of abjection, which deals with the primal loss of the maternal at the origin of subjectivity. She writes in *The Powers of Horror* of the abject in terms that remind one of Wordsworth's opening stanzas: "The abject confronts us, on the one hand, with those fragile states where man strays on the territories of *animal*. Thus, by way of abjection, primitive societies have marked out a precise area of their culture in order to remove it from the threatening world of animals or animalism, which were representatives of sex and murder" (12-13). Wordsworth's depiction of the savage in the fortress would seem to be the only thing separating him from a truly animal—as opposed to barbaric—existence. Within the structure, the savage demarcates his being from the surrounding world of chaos. His days spent running from the animal nature around him never cease "since at the breast he pined," an image that finds a parallel as the Kristeva quotation continues. "The abject confronts us, on the other hand," she writes, "and this time within our personal archaeology, with our earliest attempts to release the hold of maternal entity even before existing outside her, thanks to the autonomy of language" (13). The release has begun for the savage infant, for he already feels desire for the absent breast. The poem suggests that little has changed for the savage between those first experiences of yearning and his retreat to Stonehenge, and from the poet's perspective, the monument represents mankind's initial rejection of a prelinguistic origin. Abjection is a transitory process during which the subject recognizes the loss of unity with the maternal before the loss is complete, and Wordsworth's infant savage demonstrates the desire to reverse the loss before his entrance into the linguistic world.[9]

By portraying Stonehenge as a creation based in mankind's abjection, the poem treats the monument as something between the world of language and the unconscious, which explains why it is not referenced when describing the modern plight. The infant cannot speak of its own abjection, not even later as an adult because it was not experienced within a knowledge of language, and similarly "we" cannot speak of Stonehenge and capture its strange familiarity. Though it animates the imagined past of the first few stanzas, it does not appear in the present tense, understood as a relic, until the story of the traveler has begun to be narrated, at which point it quickly becomes a scene of supernatural visions. The poetic voice of the narrative frame, so sure of its political stance does not address the monument until the end of the poem when the frame is closed and the tale of woe leads to a jeremiad against the oppressors of truth and reason still operating in the world. The poet's exhortation of worldwide Enlightenment is not total. "Heroes of Truth" with their "mace / Of reason," will fight "till not a trace / Be left on earth of Superstition's reign, / Save the eternal pile which frowns on Sarum's plain" (541-549).

Insoluble into full consciousness, the monument is a troubling remainder in the poem. Why, given all the ancient violence envisioned upon Salisbury Plain throughout the narrative, should Stonehenge remain? And why is its importance to the poet's political stance thrown in at the very end of the poem? Starting with an Enlightenment comparison of the savage and modern state, the poem ends by jettisoning an object from its critical purview even though that object serves as the link that holds together the historical analysis.[10] Wordsworth feels he must get back to the monument before he can end the first draft of the poem, and when he does, he has transformed the savage's rude

fortress into an eternal monument to superstition. Granting Stonehenge symbolic status, of course, allows Wordsworth to dodge his own responsibility to destroy the outworn idols that he has encountered, but the final line reads as haunting uncertainty rather than a reasoned assertion. The figuration of the "frowning" monument at the end of "Salisbury Plain" echoes the traveler's first encounter with Stonehenge in the poem's narrative when its walls "raise / Their brow sublime" (79-80). That encounter causes a "voice as from a tomb" to relate to the traveler a gothic tale of "hell's most cursed sprites" supposed to haunt the "powerful circle's reddening stones" (82-99).

The disembodied voice distances his poem from sensationalism to an extent. After all, the vision of druid rites does not *literally* take place in the poem, but is merely related second hand. Yet, the sensationalism of the encounter is not purely psychologically motivated either since the traveler does hear a disembodied voice. The poet needs to signify the superstitious past without himself and his protagonist being inveigled fully within it, but the artifact will not speak for itself. Anne Williams in *Art of Darkness* writes that "Gothic manifestations of the supernatural...suggest the fragility of our usual systems of making sense of the world. Spirits that should be dead (or departed for another world) return; the non-material, the 'disembodied' suddenly materializes. Or, conversely, the material but inanimate object suddenly takes on the characteristics of the living—it moves, bleeds, or even speaks" (70-71). Wordsworth's awkward gothic work around Stonehenge hews to Williams' observation, as the spectral disturbs the historical sense of the artifact and opens up the question of how one does read an artifact *normally*. Once the fragility of the communication is revealed, it cannot be set aside at the end of the poem. Wordsworth cannot un-disturb the process of interpreting an artifact, so

Stonehenge remains a figured, "frowning" symbol even though it disappoints the poet's desire to break from the past and rely on reason alone to solve the world's injustice. Remembering the traveler's interaction with Stonehenge, the reader might expect a similar, strange voice to accompany the monument at end of the poem before realizing that Wordsworth's poem is/has been that voice. Even on the level of diction, the speaker of the poem and the disembodied voice are similar: the voice calls it "that mountain-pile" (82), the poet "that eternal pile." The strangeness of the encounter is not contained within the narrative, escaping to infect a speaker who strives to be the voice of Enlightenment.

Wordsworth does not put a frown on Stonehenge without a cultural reason. It was customarily viewed by the English, as Tom Duggett explains, as a symbol of disparate, violent episodes in England's past. The interpretation, put forth by Stukeley that Stonehenge was a Druid church was considered "eighteenth-century orthodoxy," but another theory held that Stonehenge was a monument to the Treason of Long Knives, built by Aurelius Ambrosius to remember a Saxon massacre of British nobility (Duggett 165). In her analysis of Wordsworth's early poetic theory, Frances Ferguson claims that for the poet of *Lyrical Ballads*, "Language is recognizably figurative insofar as it reveals perception modifying previous perceptions" (20), and she goes on to find in Wordsworth's treatment of objects a "sense that the act of perception is not univocal and that perception over a period of time inevitably gives rise to the multiple forms of 'seeing as' which figures attempt to communicate" (22), and English writers were in the habit of seeing Stonehenge as an active reminder of a tumultuous history.

"Salisbury Plain," before *Lyrical Ballads*, investigates the temporal basis for figuration by looking at how objects, such as the rude fortress, become figures that cannot be undone, or even spoken of in one's own voice any longer. Wordsworth's description of the structure in the narrative of "Salisbury Plain" corresponds best to Stukeley's explanation, but the ruins appear in the poem in a manner that subtly questions whatever orthodoxy the Druidical interpretation had, for when the traveler comes upon the monuments, he misidentifies it as something else entirely. He has a moment of sublimity that matches that of Alison's visitor to Rome, but with the key difference that the voice calling forth images from the past is not inside the head of Wordsworth's traveler. Whereas Alison mentions without further consideration the need for education in order to enjoy artifacts, Wordsworth takes this moment of mediation seriously and considers just how strange artifacts are and how our perceptions are figured by ideological historical narratives.

When Wordsworth first addresses the modern place of Stonehenge, it is within the narrative of his nameless traveler wandering upon the plain, and the "reflection" that the poet experiences in the first stanzas is repeated in his character's figurative mirroring of the ruin. Approaching, he stops his perambulation and "stands beholding with astonished gaze, / Frequent upon the deep entrenched ground, / Strange marks of mighty arms of former days" (74-76). The wanderer's shock is matched by that of the reader, who would expect Stonehenge to appear upon the horizon as the cause of this trance-like state. Instead a kind of writing upon the landscape confronts the narrator, but not marks *upon* a surface but from *within*, a network of abscesses in the expected ground that reads as a proto-language. The material past appears to the wanderer as profoundly alien to his

subjectivity, merely traces left in a landscape. If the dark plain up until these marks has been "sheer vacancy" unable to provide a Lacanian Other against which the subject might stabilize itself, as suggested by David Collings (25-26), these traces fail to fill such vacancy, in fact provide a vacancy within vacancy, recalling Kristeva's abjection. The scene of Stonehenge is already associated with the movement from cultural infancy, and now the traveler experiences the pangs of abjection as he finds himself not quite in the world of language, but on the verge.

The traveler, whose meandering path leads him away from a "distant spire / That fixed at every turn his backward eye" takes less comfort from the strange traces, which figuratively turn him into stone (a*ston*ished). Chased out of his senses, the traveler becomes a de-spiritualized body, an artifact of a subject. Karen Swann's investigation into the frequent trances that are depicted in "Adventures on Salisbury Plain" finds a similar pattern by which the subject recognizes its otherness through the loss of full consciousness. She writes that the " poem's repeated sudden openings onto an 'other world,'" like the one just described, "shock not because one sees ghosts, but because in these moments one intuits 'oneself' as a ghost, as one of the undead whose periodic returns to life are regulated by alien laws of transport" (815). Focusing on "Adventures," Swann does not address this very first trance-like state in the group of poems where it is revealed to the subject that its ghostliness is intertwined with its materiality. The traveler here becomes a statue that would be at home in the ghostly tableaux in the drawing room of the *Bride of Lammermoor.* Out of the proto-signs of the marks on the earth—prelinguistic attempts at language—the subject loses mastery of itself. The pun on the "arms" that left these marks—at once limbs busy in monumental construction and

weapons intent on destruction—neatly establishes the ambivalence of the subject's (mis)identification of itself in its astonished state

Wordsworth's statue can still see, however: "Then looking up at a distance," he sees "[w]hat seems an antique castle spreading wide. / Hoary and naked are its walls and raise / Their brow sublime" (78-80). The artifact stares back at the traveler, its stony gaze mirroring his own astonished gaze. What Alison suggests about the artifact is that it will lead to a pleasurable re-inspiration of the past once the artifact is informed by previous knowledge, but Wordsworth finds nothing so salutary in the exchange. The relic appears self-moving, but no more or less than the traveler himself is. The vision of druids and sacrifices that follows comes from a voice that seems to be a post-haunting haunting, as though haunting itself is a method of recovering mastery over something even more phenomenologically terrifying. The haunting voice actually commands the traveler to "avert thy face" from the relic before it explains in detail the nightmarish scenes that attend the spot at night. The specters awakened by the stones do not actually appear to the traveler, but are merely reported to the onlooker in the much the same way that Robert Burns's "Tam o'Shanter" contends ghostly events to have taken place near Alloway Kirk. Stonehenge itself seems to be communicating with the traveler after it has taken on a human face, but communicating a tale of a supernatural rather than the historical past.

Even though the poem depicts this interface leading to the strange voice's vision, as soon as the admonishing nightmare is over, Wordsworth writes, "The voice was from beneath but face or form / He saw not, mocked as by a hideous dream" (100-101). Even at gothic style's most unconventional, "There was no face that spoke" is a curious way to

describe a haunting. The face of the monument disappears, and is forgotten, as soon as the haunting is over, and the subject renews itself, no longer enthralled by its own haunting materiality. Because no affective traces linger after the interaction, Wordsworth's gothic mood is after a purpose other than suspense or horror. While the opening to the poem suggests that the language has distanced the modern subject from his abject origins, Wordsworth repeats the moment of abjection in the traveler's approach to Stonehenge. The traveler turns to gaze upon Stonehenge not as a master subject to be threatened by ghosts, but as a haunted subject (an emptied out subjectivity) staring at itself. The subject returns to itself with the gothic intrusion rather than at its exit.

The traveler, of course, is a subject only to the extent that the poet writes him as one, and the stakes of the encounter with Stonehenge seem to be as high for Wordsworth as for his character. If the traveler is astonished by the strange marks within the ground, Wordsworth and his reader are potentially astonished by the strange voice, its words themselves "entrenched" as in a tomb. The voice has no speaker in the narrative, supposedly emanating from ground, but the reader corrects for the absence by supposing the narrator, and ultimately the poet himself, as the form behind the voice. As the written word, the poem itself is in a sense permanently estranged from its creator, but the reader imaginatively fills in the absence without thinking, making the strange utterly familiar through a facility with language. The passage suggests that the moment of astonishment is a recurring problem. The strange marks *frequent* the plain, the temporal connotation of the word suggesting a repeated return of the strange marks and the loss of subjectivity they inspire. Following the sequence of the passage, Stonehenge, or some other artifact,

will reestablish the subject because it can be figured and that figuration can mirror the subject's own re-figuration.

Later when the traveler seeks shelter at the Spital where he finds the female vagrant, the pattern of abjection and reintegration through figuration continues. The Spital for her has been haunted by tales she has heard attached to it, in particular one of a traveler who had stayed there one stormy night until awakened by his horse's pawing at a rock:

> Struck and still struck again the troubled horse.
> The man half raised that stone by pain and sweat,
> Half raised; for well his arm might lose its force
> Disclosing the grim head of a new murdered corse (150-153)

The grammar works to align the revelation of the corpse with its re-covering. The man discloses the body as he raises his arm, but the revelation appears to depend just as much on his losing his force and covering the body back up. Once the past is revealed, the stone is a monument to that past, and monument is now marked by the corpse. Like Stonehenge, the dead man's *ad hoc* monument has been figured by the subject's engagement with it. And like the traveler, the man who finds the corpse under the Spital is already marked as the living dead before the discovery, for he is "forced from the storm to *shroud*" within the structure (145, my italics). The potential death-in-life hangs in the background of the lines until called forward by the words, "the man half raised," in which the reader is invited to see the man only partially returned from the dead, an animated corpse before the actual corpse makes an appearance. Again, the making of historical material is cast as something based in discovery and enlightenment while at the same time betraying supernatural or superstitous traces.[11]

Even the traveler's first interaction with the vagrant follows the pattern as he arouses her from her sleep: "when that shape with eyes in sleep half-drowned / By the moon's sullen lamp she scarce discerned, / Cold stony horror all her senses bound" (155-157). Like the traveler's stunned reaction to the strange marks upon the ground, the vagrant's horror is based on partial legibility. What she sees is nothing more than a shape, and half-asleep she can only begin (scarcely) to interpret it. The vagrant begins to mirror the shape, an outline without interiority. Having heard the story of the corpse discovered at the Spital, her terror not only transforms her into the corpse she has heard about, but she also takes on the stony aspect of the rock that covered the dead man. The story elicits in the woman precisely the response one expects from narratives of trauma like this: she experiences the tale in repetition. She applies the plot to the traveler, whom she casts in the role of the strange or unknown, seeing him as "that shape" (218). Like the marks around Stonehenge, he is recognizable as a sign though unreadable, but the disclosed corpse turns out to be her. As "cold stony horror all her senses bound" (220), she becomes both dead body and monument, recalling the traveler's shock at the traces in the ground. To undo that spell, Stonehenge itself became an animated figure, while the traveler summons the vagrant from her trance as he "to her in low words of chearing sound / Addressed" (158-157). Because the earlier interactions involved faces—the brow of Stonehenge, the corpse's grim head—the traveler's *chearing* tone invites further inquiry since the word carries a sense of emotional support by the offering a friendly face, *cheer* having meant "face" initially, as Wordsworth would have known.("cheer").

The emergence of these faces upon material surfaces—whether they are truly stone objects like Stonehenge or figuratively so as in the case of the vagrant's face—

recalls Paul de Man's discussion of prosopopeia in "Autobiography as De-facement." His reading of Wordsworth's "Essays upon Epitaphs" finds anxiety in the poet's discussion of epitaphs that mimic the dead's voice, as if the dead were speaking to the living. De Man identifies this convention as *prosopopeia*, the use of language to address an absent subject, or in de Man's words as he follows the word's etymology "to confer a mask or a face (*prosopon*)" to it (76). The application of the *prosopon* to headstones bothers Wordsworth's understanding of the device, in de Man's reading, because the "latent threat" of prosopopeia is that by making the dead speak "the symmetrical structure of the trope implies, by the same token, that the living are struck dumb, frozen in their own death" (78). More than forboding, the rhetorical device in this context signals "our actual entry into the frozen world of the dead" (78). One can see Wordsworth figuring similar exchanges in "Salisbury Plain," but the system is more open ended than in the case of the "Essays upon Epitaphs." For one thing, Stonehenge in this case is bare with no linguistic call to the viewer. The tropological system in "Essays upon Epitaphs" begins with the sun which "reads" the epitaph, granting it a voice, and thus material nature becomes figured as a subject" (75).

Rather than a threat, the haunting encounter with the material past (another way to represent the meditations on tombstones in "Essays upon Epitaphs) saves the subjects in "Salisbury Plain" from crises of reference. The traveler gazing at the strange marks or the vagrant staring through a haze of half-sleep at a strange shape are frozen by traces that *might* speak but cannot be fully understood. Unsure whether they are being addressed through a system of signs and reference transforms them into living statuary. The disruption of the binary of life and death by these moments of both/and is the

disruption of the abject, an experience that comes before, and predicts, the system of prosopopeia that de Man identifies. The system, however, works in reverse here as the *prosopon* reinvigorates the subject. The traveler's "words of chearing sound" nicely captures the reifying interaction, a specular interaction, because *chearing* can easily be read as providing a face to the vagrant, who has been frozen in fear, and simultaneously the traveler, who previously was just a shape. The mutual figuration and the social existence it bolsters work in the poem like the Lacanian mirror stage where the subject begins to identify itself as such but only through the alienation inherent in reflection.[12] Artifacts serve as mirrors for the subjects in "Salisbury Plain" because they reveal the subject as also as figured stoniness. The way Wordsworth's artifacts often take on partial human forms, such as brows, frowns, or faces, presents the identification as a gestalt similar to Lacan's discussion.

Reflected figures come up again and again in the poem as they begin to constitute the history that interests the poem's political aims. In "Adventures," Wordsworth makes the *prosopopeia* of Stonehenge even starker:

> Thou hoary Pile! Thou child of darkness deep
> And unknown days, that lovest to stand and hear
> The desart sounding to the whirlwind's sweep
> Inmate of lonesome Nature's endless year;
> Even since though sawest the giant Wicker rear
> Its dismal chambers hung with living men,
> Before thy face did ever wretch appear,
> Who in his heart had groan'd with deadlier pain
> Than he who travels now along thy bleak domain? (154-162)

The apostrophe takes the place of the voice from below in the first draft, a substitution which only highlights that the previous "haunting" voice was always the poet's estranged voice. (Re)conferring a face to the monument in the revision covers over that

estrangement in the same way the stranger's spectral gaze at the monument displaces his astonishment at the strange marks. Wordsworth explicitly uses the artifact as a reference point to unite the past and the present within a continuum and compare them therein. The violence of England's past emerges in the form of human sacrifices believed to have been performed by the druids by placing victims within a giant wicker figure that is then set ablaze. The pain of those victims is, according to Wordsworth, no worse than the pain of his newly formed main character, a Godwinian sailor, who has suffered though an intricate system of socialized violence. The political message is based on the same understanding of moral philosophy that is found in the discussion of the savage earlier: the civilized world has not broken from its barbaric roots.

Though the opening stanzas of the first version of the poem are removed by Wordsworth in "Adventures," the savage figure is in the background of the address to Stonehenge. Whereas the savage's relation to his mother as a child served as a metaphor for how mankind initially related to Stonehenge, here the two relations have been combined. The monument now has an infancy of its own and a dark maternal from which it once separated. Like the savage's infancy, the monument's prehistory is a oneness that cannot be explicated. Its possible separation from Nature is only hinted at in its recognition that it is Nature's inmate rather than its integral part, although that distinction fails to register phenomenologically against the "endless year" of eternity. Another subtle trace of a difference that is hard to come by in this darkscape is that the desart's "sounding" at the whirlwin'd's "sweep" may or may not be redundant. The completion of the monument's abjection from the darkness of unconsciousness is, once again in the poem, the discovery of another monument, in this case the giant Wicker.

"Reared" intransitively as if from the abyss, the Wicker Man provides a figure in which Stonehenge can see itself and leave the abject darkness, no longer an inmate of Nature. The historicizing moment in which the monument is used as a mooring within the flow of history is also a system of specular (and figuring) gazes that lead from the giant Wicker to the poet. Without figuration of the artifact, history would be frozen and uncommunicative like the traveler staring at the strange marks, an inmate in Nature's eternal year.

The wicker image connects the ceaseless figuration of history to violence against the self, ironic in a poem devoted to halting a history of violence. The victims attain their historical meaning through their literal transformation into a monument, but the transformation is not complete until, through fire, their subjectivities have been consumed and subsumed by the artifactual process of material figuration.[13] Political and economic violence thus become intertwined with historical discourse. Mediating the past forces the subject to become a speaking artifact like the monuments and relics that he encounters from the past, and the previous self is sacrificed. It is a necessary violence and a fruitful sacrifice, for even when Wordsworth writes of the Wicker *rearing* itself one hears the connotation of a mother bringing and educating a child to maturity. Through the sacrifice of self, one leaves behind the dark maternal prison of timelessness where exist no language and no history. It is telling that Wordsworth would refer to Stonehenge as the "inmate" rather than the sacrificial victims in a poem so informed by Wordsworth's experiences in the aftermath of the French Revolution, sparked by the storming of the Bastille and its transformation into a monument. The English

monument's imprisonment in prehistory demands justice in its own right, even, Wordsworth suggests, if that freedom comes at the cost of violence.

This is a deconstructive reading for a text invested in deconstruction. The first version of "Salisbury Plain" ends with reason literally deconstructing the "Oppressor's dungeon" and the "towers of pride" as the "Heroes of Truth" with their "mace / Of reason" fight "till not a trace / Be left on earth of Superstition's reign, / Save the eternal pile which frowns on Sarum's plain" (541-549). The remainder of the monument unsettles the revolutionary crescendo in the poem. In a deconstructive turn, the material past is "always already" there despite the sweeping enlightenment that Wordsworth espouses. Collings notes that the final heroic stanza is as violent in its images of Enlightenment's reign as the earlier lines describing human sacrifice and that the later violence is inscribed in the earlier barbaric scene because that horror "which seems to trigger a political response is already the product of an interpretive act" (33). True, the poet appears to run up against his ideological constraints as an English citizen, but his interest in Stonehenge locates the fetters of ideology not in English culture necessarily, but in material history broadly. The eternal pile still stands because it shows the subject its own historical existence. Focusing on the place of Stonehenge in the poem reveals that were the violence extended to the frowning pile, it would be in effect violence against the self. The failed worldwide englightenment of the final stanzas seeks the impossible "history without events" that Marx mocks in the *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* to which Derrida responds in *Specters of Marx*, "Now, in what does this absence of events, and finally this ahistoricity, consist? What does it look like? Answer: an absence of a body, of course" (Derrida 116-117). The result is pure spirit of

revolution that cannot but be presented "in the sense of *phenomenon* and in the sense of rhetorical *figure*" (Derrida 117), which requires the bodily be reunited with the spirit as reified specter. Thus, Wordsworth's subjects, reflected in mankind's artifacts, become specters themselves. Taken back to the Wicker Man, the subject's spectralization is not merely rhetorical, but has foundations in real violence. The effect of the artifact's double bind is that Wordsworth goes deeper than merely asserting a certain modern barbarism in the culture around him. History, rooted to the spectral artifact, violates Wordsworth's subjects on Salisbury Plain, and the violence is located in the artifact's commodity form.

Getting History: Wordsworth and Commodity Form

As an anti-war poem, "Salisbury Plain" is especially preoccupied with the economic tragedies wrought by war. The war with France will especially affect the lower classes, forcing them into the transitory existences Wordsworth depicts. The revamped main character of "Adventures," the sailor, is press-ganged early in the poem, and rather than describing the terrors of war, the poem focuses on his denied compensation upon return, the immediate reason behind his murder of a stranger. By sublimating the abstract ideas of political economy into the personages in his poem, Wordsworth brings the materialism underscoring his political message into the larger economy of material figuration already considered. The pattern of abjection and figuration turn from a sensational trope to a stunning look at the power and sweep of the commodity form in history.

The opening stanzas of "Salisbury Plain" are not simply about the cruelty that has remained in man's passage from barbarism to civilization; they also introduce the idea of

unequal wealth as a new creation in cultural history. The power of the fortunate is their power of ownership, but the power of acquisition is undermined as soon as it is broached in the poem. The "couch of Affluence" and "Fortune's sparkling cup" refer to artifacts of a wealthy existence, but they are immediately troped, doubled by language. The turn from the burdensome "memory of pleasures flown" to burdensome class consciousness suddenly introduces personification into the poem, which disrupts the anticipated symmetry of the first four stanzas. In a poem so preoccupied with faces and anthropomorphism, it is not surprising to find that the first evidence of class in the poem is immediately possessed by figures. The line, "Of those who on the couch of Affluence rest," is worded such that *those* take on the figure of *Affluence* through their mutual ownership of the couch. *Those* become even more obscured subjects when they rest "[b]y laughing Fortune's sparkling cup elate," where *elate* can modify *cup* or *those.* The two readings on one hand link the raising of the cup to the elevated mood of those more fortunate members of society, but on the other hand, *those* fortunate ones are quickly crowded out of the figurative imagery so that they seem to be removed from the picture, literally *elated*, carried away. Their elation is necessary because the moment that their possessions are acknowledged is also the moment that they become subsumed by them. The word *elated* is etymologically connected to *sublation*, the common translation for Hegel's *Aufhebung*, the negation/preservation of contradictions through their synthesis in dialectical discourse. [14] Wordsworth's use of *elate* works in a similar manner as it sets up a dialectic between the subject and its material possessions. The synthesis of possession, or wealth, arrives when those two phenomena are substituted by figures. The figural language announces the poem's theme of protest, but what is so frustrating about the

problem of class as it unfolds in the poem is that the couches and cups of the wealthy cannot just be taken away by violence—as some are attempting in France at the time—because the wealthy and their objects have already been lost into a system of ownership that is itself violent.

The figural system that Wordsworth employs follows that used by Marx in his analysis of commodity fetishism. His famous introduction to the topic in volume one of *Capital* discusses a table that as a commodity takes on mystical existence beyond the material wood: "it changes into a thing that transcends sensuousness" (163). As it transcends its materiality through commodification, the table becomes a figure worthy of "Salisbury Plain": "it stands on its head, and evolves out of its wooden brain grotesque ideas, far more wonderful than if it were to begin dancing of its own free will" (163-165). Marx explains the strange appearance of commodities as projected social relations; men relate to society through their labor, which becomes objectified in the "socio-natural properties" of the products of that labor (164-165). Through fetishism, Marx's producers seem to be simultaneously carried away yet defined by the commodity figures they have produced, for the commodity "reflects the social relation of the producers to the sum total of labour as a social relation between objects, a relation which exists apart from and outside the producers. Through this substitution, the products of labour become commodities, sensuous things which are at the same time suprasensible or social" (165). The social relations of men are reflected in the relations of these commodity figures, and this reflection also seems to be the origin of men's social relations. As with the traveler and Stonehenge, the figure given to the material object reflects a figure given at the same time to the subject. For Marx, this mask determines man's social existence, and

Wordsworth takes it even further by suggesting that the reflection of these self-moving figures allows mankind to exist inside an historical framework.

Placing Stonehenge in the same epistemological plane as the couch and the cup turns the question of the historical artifact into the question of economic inequality that those objects are meant to signify. The perspective of the poem's narrator, and the reader, is one of economic victimization as Wordsworth details those objects denied "us." The figurative meaning attending these images—beyond literal reference—is something in excess and inaccessible in the objects themselves. Wordsworth reads in the object and its two values something akin to "use value" and "exchange value" where the rhetorical use of language is in apposition to exchange value. As literal referents, however, they would already be objects of exchange: a couch and a cup the poor cannot afford. If simple reference is similar to use value, in this case it has already been contaminated by exchange value.[15] Troping the terms then reveals the exchange value of exchange value, or if one reads exchange value as a kind of trope, Wordsworth is revealing a trope of a trope. Marx's discussion of commodity form describes social relations, and Wordsworth's further figuration obscures the reality of those social relations even further. The cup and couch do not belong grammatically to those wealthy and affluent members of society that oppress the poor, for they belong to personified Affluence and Fortune, who have been substituted for Wordsworth's nominal political targets. He is in effect speaking of economic classes, but as the figurative chain of history reveals itself in the poem, the figure of class becomes a violent identifying effect of the artifact.

The figures that populate history in "Salisbury Plain" exist within an economy of exchange between artifacts—as man himself becomes an artifact—which show their

historical faces only in relation to other historical faces. Though Wordsworth's social protest is largely leveled at a structured class system, his rhetorical language discovers a commodification that lies at the heart of social inequality, and he connects the burgeoning capitalism in English society with the figuration he employs. In the fourth stanza of "Salisbury Plain," he references the commercialism—in the form of international trade—that is afflicting the poor:

> When men in various vessels roam the deep
> Of social life, and turns of chance prevail
> Various and sad, how many thousand weep
> Beset with foes more fierce than e'er assail
> The savage without home in winter's keenest gale (32-36)

But the poet remains figural in his discussion of social ills as the maritime image quickly becomes a metaphor, the turn of phrase mimicking the turns of chance that cause the sadness of the thousands. The martial and mercantile endeavors of England, and specifically of the female vagrant and the Sailor of the later drafts, are announced in the image of ships on the main, and the enjambment expresses the surprising way in which those international matters manifest socially. (Wordsworth's distrust of money as a social organizer is evident in his "Letter to the Bishop Llandaff" where he assures the bishop that no legislator need come to the aid of the wealthy, for "the history of all ages has demonstrated that wealth not only can secure itself but includes even an oppressive principle" (62).)

The opening of "Salisbury Plain" does not stop with the objects of the wealthy, for while they try to experience their possessions, "we of comfort reft, by pain depressed, / No other pillow know than Penury's iron breast." The acquisitions that define the rich begin a problematic poetic series where Wordsworth must provide an image that

demonstrates the poor's lack of acquisitional power, *i.e.* an object that represents a lack of objects. The iron breast is a stand-in for the economic hardships felt by a large number of English citizens in the early 1790's, a denotation that struggles to merge with the object's place in the historical discourse that is revealed in the organization of the early stanzas. The iron speaks to the lack of economic security available to the narrator and his reader. It also implies an existence in a world of relative values where precious metals mark the value of commodities and, therefore, people. Obviously then, the breast must be iron rather than silver or gold. However, in its juxtaposition to the cup and couch, the breast is likewise a commodified object that has been further troped into an economy of figurative representation. The poor, too, have been elated through this troping so that their relationship to objects is as fraught as that of the wealthy. The iron breast not only belongs to another persona, Penury, it exists in a different plane of understanding from material phenomena. Penury signifies the poor's situation in the commodified world of things even if they do not materially interact with these things, a powerful image of the insidiousness of capitalism. Moreover, the poor exist in a dialectical relationship with these things just like the wealthy. Figuration again provides the synthesis, but the specular structure suggests that the want, or absence, that prefigures the iron breast is symmetrical to the poor person who prefigures the "us" of Wordsworth's poem. Simply put, there is no us before "us." The trouble Wordsworth will later have with his vision of apocalyptic enlightenment at the end of the poem, where the poet threatens to negate his own voice, is foreshadowed here: his discourse interpellates subjects into a system of figuration that negates any sense of a pre-figurative subject.

The iron breast is also an artifactual image, like the "shield," "stone-ax," "helms" and "rattling spear" that are later purported to accompany warrior ghosts that arise from the plain at night (172-189) . Unlike the images of Fortune's cup or Affluence's couch, the iron breast unites the idea of artifact and human subject into a sculptural representation that naturally fits into a poem where every historical object seems half-inspired with life. Whereas in other cases, the material object has become animated through figuration, the iron breast reveals the reification that can also result from the figurative system. The iron breast does double duty as a materializing figure because it turns the primordial breast, utterly left behind in the past, into a ghostly reality. Recall that the poem contends modern dissatisfactions "derive from memory of pleasures flown / Which haunts us in some sad reverse of fate," lost pleasures metrically parallel to the "breast [for which the savage] pined." The poem invites the belief that history is essentially cultural memory, but when the breast returns as an artifact a few lines later, the organic sense of history as memory is obscured by a living artifact, as if the memory has turned into an artifact haunting the modern man. History as memory is already a figure, and Wordsworth's complex first stanzas thematize the figuration and explore the (dis)continuity of historical narrative.

Nor is individual memory unaffected by the poet's imagery. As memory is *derived* from pleasures flown, one hears *derive*'s original meaning to draw off a river, to separate and also remain consistent, implying a conception of memory as homogenous with the subject. Yet there is also the threatening false etymology of *rive* with its connotation of violent cleaving and separation. The breast's return at the end of the passage only highlights the cleft between it and the subject, for even as memory it has

become a spectral Other in the form of an artifact. For the reader, who read the savage breast as an image of the historic English past, the iron breast is an admonishment that such imagery actually belongs to an economy of artifacts, no matter how naturalized it feels. The past is not an ontology, but is riven internally as the real is obscured or even produced by its figural representation.

The circular movement back to the primordial breast evident in the structure of the poem directly opposes the apparent linear progression from savagery to civilization insisted upon by the narrator. A result of historical progress has been economic disparity, as opposed to the common lot ascribed to the savages, and thus, the poem correlates the rise of historical and economic consciousness. The image of the iron breast serves as the object around which coalesce these two modes of understanding the world. As it marks what is missing economically in the life of the audience, it also marks what is missing historically, for it is only an image of the past and fails to reproduce the living warmth of previous human existence. In the poem, the savage state in the narrative of mankind is analogous to the subject's abjection in infancy, but the monument, whether it is the iron breast or Stonehenge, reproduces the abject state while also highlighting its non-presence. The pre-linguistic state of abjection can never be present in a world defined by language and the Name of the Father. Its apparition in the form of the artifact causes the subject to doubt its own presence.

The temporal remove of the present from the past plays a role in developing figurative power, for the development of language has ushered into the culture the communicative abilities of trope and rhetoric, which unmoor the subject's experience. The maternal breast for which the savage used to pine becomes in the space of a few lines

a sign for poverty. The breast begins the passage as a source of fulfillment for inarticulate desires, but it becomes the symbol for external reality's inability to comfort. By troping the breast, the narrator relates to it as one who has passed on from infancy and can make linguistic signs out of external reality. The figured breast replaces the ideal from infancy, but using the term *breast* rhetorically, Wordsworth unites infancy and English pre-culture in one image. As already stated, the process by which the breast becomes a symbol of want rather than fulfillment is a process of temporalization as the subject becomes aware of the loss of the past even as he tries to capture it in language. The artifact can be substituted for the past reality in the same way it can be substituted in a trade for other objects or money, and from a certain perspective it merely represents the potential for exchange in general. The sense that the artifact is forever about to be something else explains the poet's unavoidable need to compare the past and present when he comes across the monuments.

Memories resurfacing as artifacts plague the female vagrant later in the poem as well. She cannot forget the past travails that haunt her, but they haunt her through materials. She cannot achieve the history-less existence of the savage because she is haunted by earlier times in a way that he is not. The woman's repeated rhetorical question, "Can I forget?" indicates a tendency for history to cling to individuals in the way the monuments of Salisbury Plain unavoidably reflect the past to Wordsworth or the way the poor cannot help but feel their absence of wealth. Building on the dense first stanzas, the poem investigates the linkages between individual memory and cultural memory through the female vagrant character. The self-moving monuments that confront Wordsworth and the traveler would seem to have little to do with vagrant's tale of woe,

but as she describes her previous existence in her father's home, her story is awash in material artifacts that seem to haunt her memory as surely as the past haunts the artifacts. The church's bell (238), her "snowy kerchiefs" (245), her "humming wheel and glittery table store" (247), and the "hunted slipper" (249) are all material objects that she cannot forget. In "Adventures" Wordsworth adds to her litany of memories the "staff...which upbore / The bending body of my active sire; his seat beneath the honeyed sycamore / ...and chair by winter fire" (289-292). These items become significant in the *Ruined Cottage* as well, perhaps nothing more so than Robert's "very staff [which] stood undisturbed beside the door," the ever present symbol of Margaret's abandonment.

As in the beginning of the poem, the haunting power of these items intersects with their power as commodities. In "Salisbury Plain" the stanzas devoted to her cherished past include the word *store* three times: before her glittery table store is discussed, she mentions that she used to lead her father's "fleecy store" and that her garden was "stored with peas and mint and thyme" (232). The initial two senses of the word capture a feeling of idyllic abundance and explain why her father would not have traded his existence for "mines of gold" (229). The third instance—her table store—reveals that her treasuring of these memories is a commodification that she was herself involved in The coming seizure of her father's assets—a "storm unheeded"—is in a sense always about to happen because of the exchangeability of all of their store. As someone who runs her own small market, she is unfortunately a participant in her family's own hard fortune by her inclusion in an economy of things. Memory's store works in a similar way because of modern man's enmeshment in an economy of commodities.[16]

Wordsworth's revisions to the initial poem make even clearer the importance of the market to the woman's early idyllic life. "Adventures" includes the clothes she wore to market in her litany of haunting images: "when market-morning came, the neat attire / With which, though bent on haste, myself I deck'd" (293-294). Her attire swims in the economy of things that recall her childhood and marks the overlap between her memory's use of these objects and their use to a more generic economy of commodities. The haste of the market day interrupts what is to this point a string of unworried images of what Gary Harrison calls the "rural economy, in which celebration and play were associated with harvest days and work fairs" (Harrison 106). The market's demand for speed is mimicked in her litany's underlying disquieted tone as these memories seem to fall upon each other without order, maddeningly interchangeable. Any sense of order they evince stems from their unbidden movement, as if their relations are determined by mysterious forces outside of her control.

The unmediated return of these images reads as trauma, which often plays out as the literal return of the past. As Cathy Caruth writes:

> Indeed, modern analysts…have remarked on the surprising *literality* and nonsymbolic nature of traumatic dreams and flashbacks, which resist care to the extent that they remain, precisely, literal. It is this literality and its insistent return which constitutes trauma and points toward its enigmatic core: the delay or incompletion in knowing, or even in seeing an overwhelming occurrence that then remains, in its insistent return, absolutely *true* to the event" (5)

The female vagrant's memory follows the form of trauma, unmediated and untreatable, for she wants to forget but cannot. Her trauma, however, is not merely her family's removal from their cottage, but includes the moments that should be governed by nostalgia. Even re-experiencing her "pleasures flown" disturbs the subject's mastery. Like the image of the iron breast at the beginning of the poem, the images of the past

seem to haunt her, and the way they possess her is more evident the more she repeats the word *my* (four times in her list of insistent images). The loss of her family's wealth reveals how fragile their power of ownership was, and the lesson extends to her memories, which now seem less like possessions than hauntings. If Stonehenge suggests violence in the creation of artifacts and the iron breast locates this violence in the commodification of objects, even those used to create history, the vagrant's inarticulate beginning to her story expresses the trauma of such a system to a human psyche. While Caruth speaks of the literal in clinical terms, the vagrant's story discovers where the figurative and literal meet in memory. The reason her past can haunt her lies in its sensuous nonmateriality—its spectrality—that results from a system of commodified objects like Marx's table. Wordsworth's figuration of memories as spectral commodities recalls Derrida's reading of Marx's *German Ideology* in which he elucidates a "paradoxical *incorporation*" when "ideas or thoughts (*Gedanke*) are detached from the substratum," for "one engenders some ghost by *giving them a body*....Not by returning to the living body from which ideas and thoughts have been torn loose, but by incarnating the latter in *another artifactual body*, *a prosthetic body*" (Derrida 126, italics his). The vagrant's memories are not substance, but through commodification they are ghostly artifacts of the substance they once had.

Even though the vagrant's memory presents an opportunity for a continuous recreation of the past, her repeated lament, "Can I forget?" implies an uncontrolled insistence behind her memories that shares a form with the haunting that plagues Stoneheng. Her entanglement with the system of commodification is repressed but expresses itself obliquely in her wish to forget, in which *getting* is at the heart of her

horrific past as things that seemed safe and idyllic turned out to be transferrable and capable of being seized. The linking of memory to the inexorable truth of capital hinges on the poem's evolving vision of materiality. Her father's cottage is the first thing she mentions in her story, and the material object around which she weaves her tale. By the end, however, she is forced to view their "glimmering cot through tears that never ceased" as they leave their edenic ground (270). The line's focus on the dissolution of the cot in her view is in stark contrast to its initial representation, a change evident even in Wordsworth's shortening of it from *cottage* to *cot*, and the cot's *glimmering* recalls verbally and visually the *glittering* table store she introduces in the middle of her lament. The play of the words calls attention to their ambivalent meanings. In the woman's creation of commodities she has changed the appearance of something to attract attention to it. However, in the process, the apparent visual refinement is revealed to be a glimmer, an ironic effect of light in which attention is gained through diminution, a paradox of presence through negation. The movement of things into the realm of the past is thus linked to the movement of things to the realm of the commodity, and both are formulated as kinds of *getting* with no foregoing the process. Though Wordsworth reduces the litany of "Can I forget..." down to two instances in "Adventures," one occurs right after the father and child are forced out of their home. At the moment that they are most aware of the transactional state of their home, the vagrant forms a haunting memory and asks, "Can I forget that miserable hour?" In her misery she becomes a *miser*, unwilling or unable to spend her memories' power as they rush upon her in a frightful process of repeated getting. The transactional loss of her belongings is quickly repeated in the creation of memories, from which she cannot fully divorce herself no matter how much

she tries to put them down. As commodified substances, memories are the artifacts of the subject that give it a past and a temporality. Removing herself from this economy would mean that she would be without memory or in effect without subjectivity at all.[17]

Even at her most nostalgic, the market hangs on the horizon of her thoughts. Speaking of her father's simple life, she claims, "A little flock and what the finny flood / Supplied, to him were more than mines of gold" (228-229), unable to communicate the preciousness of the family's resources without reference to the universal equivalent of money. In the "Adventures," Wordsworth makes explicit that their travails originate in market economics. After "rose a mansion proud our woods among" (299), the wealthy owner offers to buy the childhood home of the vagrant, but when her father "had refused the proffered gold, / To cruel injuries he became a prey / Sore traversed in whate'er he bought and sold" (306-307). The father's downfall has an elliptical sense to it in this revision, for the perceived cruelty of the wealthy neighbor appears from a certain remove as a simple business transaction that does not go through, followed by other transactions that are "successful" in their completion but ultimately unbeneficial to the father.[18] *Traversed* neatly ties together the luck and systemic failures that explain his lost: the vagrant wants us to define the word as "to be thwarted, or opposed," but her father is also being moved within an economy of things. His buying and selling involve him in the circulation of goods as well so that his economic existence negates the separate agency he feels he owns.

Figures Get Physical: Commodified Artifacts and Pain

Spectral memories do not start with the modern poor. Rather Wordsworth traces them back to the very origin of man. The vagrant's memory of the "dance that beat the merry floor, / The ballad chaunted round the brightening flame" recalls the description of Stonehenge as the demons and ghosts are summoned and let loose:

> For oft at dead of night, when dreadful fire
> Reveals that powerful circle's reddening stones,
> 'Mid priests and specters grim and idols dire,
> Far heard the great flame utter human moans (249-251, 91-94)

She has also heard similar details from a man she has met:

> And oft a night-fire mounting to the clouds
> Reveals the desert and with dismal red
> Clothes the black bodies of encircling crowds
> It is the sacrificial altar fed
> With living men (181-185)

These previous examples of communal expression link the past and present though the repeated image of imprecations to the supernatural power that separates the living and the dead. In both cases, the past returns as specters—"warrior specters of gigantic bones, / Forth issuing from a thousand rifted tombs" and the "dead / Thrilled in their yawning tombs their heads uprear" (97-98, 185-186). Again in Wordsworth's poem, the barbaric is repeated in the present, and while the chanting song circle may appear to be little more than parody of the past gruesome scenes, the vagrant experiences the violence integrated into the mechanics of her memory. Everyone is outside the fire now, but they feed it with their own selves as they enter the market, which transforms them into priests, specters and idols at once. Commodity figuration has destroyed the distinctions. In the previous imprecations, the unsettling of the artifact's status was caused by a supernaturalism that entered the scene for unknown reasons, but in the vagrant's modern tale, one sees that the

modern man imbues material with special significance that transforms it beyond an ontological framework.

The violence done to the Real in the poem's conception of figuration finds its most significant image in the wicker man to which the Druids tied their sacrificial victims. The barbaric practice operates scarily by a logic of exchange whereby live men are destroyed for a more powerful figure that can call forth the spectral reality of the past. The importance of violence to the exchange recalls Heraclitus's Fragment 90, central to Marc Shell's analysis of economic discourse in literature, about the nature of exchange: "All things are equal exchange for fire and fire for all things, as goods are for gold and gold for goods" (52). Shell focuses on the universal equivalence of fire in the fragment as a metaphor for the fungibility of gold in the circulation of goods: "one thing is not simply exchanged for another; rather it is first exchanged for all things" (55). Shell's otherwise thorough reading does not examine the violence of Heraclitus's fragment. Fire does not merely substitute for all things, but it consumes all things in the exchange. At the heart of exchange is violent consumption in the name of universal equivalence, and Wordsworth's deployment of fire in the Salisbury Plain poems reflects an understanding that before history or exchange, there is murder, as subjects and objects are negated for the sake of figuration. The fire around which the vagrant and her friends danced engulfs its victims surreptitiously as it lights the event which will become a haunting memory which she cannot forget, alienated from herself by the system of exchange. The sublimation of fire in Wordsworth's treatment of commodification finds an echo in Marx's discussion of the movement from a primitive accumulation to a capitalist economy: "the history of this, their expropriation, is written in the annals of mankind in

letters of blood and fire" (Marx 875). History as narrative reduces the violence of the worker's alienation from himself to a false evolution, like the one Wordsworth investigates from England's barbaric past to the late eighteenth century. Marx asserts that it feels like "emancipation" to escape serfdom and the rule of guilds, but these "newly freed men became sellers of themselves only after they had been robbed of their own means of production, and all the guarantees of existence afforded by the old feudal arrangements" (875). In "Salisbury Plain," commodification predates the "'free' proletariat" that Marx sees as foundational (876), originating instead in the birth of history and creation of the artifact.

The play of light in the poem helps set its mood, and the contrast of light and dark engages questions of epistemology as characters are forced to search the dark for traces of "enlightenment" to save them from the cruel gothic history that inhabits the dark plain. The thematization of fire complicates the journey, however, for the light the fire gives off is always violent in its creation of historical reality; even when the literally violent Druidical fire is long extinguished, fires like the one that gathers the vagrant and her family create the memories that will eventually torture the subject. Early on, the lost traveler laments that in the storm the moon offers no "friendly beam" and only "once did the lightning's pale abortive beam / Disclose a naked guide-post's double head, / Sole object where he stood had day its radiance spread" (105-108). Day will bring no further knowledge to console the traveler, only a greater awareness that he is alone with the object—much like the overwhelming radiance of enlightenment at the end of the poem only makes clearer that the speaker is alone with Stonehenge. In "Adventures" he refers to the brief view of the guide-post—now lit by the "lightning's faint disastrous gleam"—

as a "glimpse of pleasure shed" (176, 171), a play on the phrase "shedding light" insinuating that the pleasure is gone as soon as it is visible.[19] The poem's investment in artifacts is reflected in the sign's nakedness of language like Stonehenge, which is also "naked," and its figuration as double headed. Ian Reid reads the sign as a symbol for all of Wordsworth's verse: "That line compresses potently the intuition of direction-by-exposure which pervades Wordsworth's poetry with Janus-like awareness of both loss and restoration, both weakness and renewed strength, both dreariness (or gloom, or mist) and illumination, both fall and ascent" (548). From the perspective of the poem's preoccupation with figured objects, it would suggest the impossibility of catching them off guard, in space or in memory, for they are always ready to turn any light shed upon them into a commodity figure. Wordsworth relies on *gl*-words to depict the power of the darkness on the plain: the "starless gloom" is not broken by any candle that "glimmer[s]" in the distance and is only partially dismissed by the moon's "sickly glare" (110, 115, 119). In the "Adventures" he adds that a "red kiln glaring bright" to the litany of possible light sources absent from the plain and refers to the brief view of the guide (176). The use of light treats enlightenment as a futile effort against the darkness. Being largely absent and existing in weak spurts, light only reflects the subject's figuration, which is bound up in its loss of any agency other than economic. The transformation of subjects into "economic agents," a term borrowed from Keith Tribe, is widespread at the turn of the eighteenth century, according to Langan, and "in contradistinction to other discursive constructions of agency is crucial, of course, for it discloses agency, like the others, as a negation" (67). The violence of light in the "Salisbury Plain" poems is that it allows the

material object to move, and that movement causes the negation Tribe and Langan recognize.

The cleaving of the subject through commodification opens up a third reading of the traversal experienced by the vagrant's father in his bad business deals. *Traverse* can mean to "pass through as with a weapon" as well, and the "cruel injuries" he suffers in "Adventures" mimic the sailor's murder of man by battering him in the head with a piece of iron. The sailor's crime is repeated when he and the vagrant come upon a boy beaten by his father. Showing concern, the sailor notes that the blood on the boy's head "[f]low'd from the spot where he that deadly wound / Had fix'd on him he murder'd. Through his brain / At once the griding iron passage found" (645-46). The crimes of the sailor and abusive father make literal what is figurative, but still violent, in the case of the vagrant's father. His subjectivity is traversed painfully as commodities find a way to pass through him and keep the market circulating whether he turns down the neighbor's gold or not.

The scene of the wounded boy is particularly invested in the power of memories since the sailor (re)experiences the trauma he caused when he sees it inflicted on someone else. Karen Swann masterfully unpacks the symbolic density of the iron:

> Turning around on its wielder, the griding iron of recollection de-forms the spectacle, which comes at once to image past and present events, and cleaves the subject, whose recognition that he was a giver of blows, coming as a blow, at once locates him in the positions of batterer and sufferer. Past is riveted to present and Sailor to scene; simultaneously the whole constellation moves into the time and space of fantasy, an impossible "at once" conveyed by signifiers that function as nodal points: the "spot" that refers to spots on two heads; the "brain" that refers to three brains-"his" the Sailor's, "his" the murdered man's, "his" the child's (822)

In a manner of thinking, the griding iron is an artifact from "Salisbury Plain." While the iron breast is removed from the poem by Wordsworth, it remains in circulation, its

haunting value still on display. In the "Salisbury Plain poems "artifacts move, and while the movement may be fantasy, as Swann suggests, the pain and violence is real. It is not simply that the murderous stroke is repeated, but it repeats itself; the iron *finds* its own passage, unmotivated by the seeming of fantasy. The griding iron is figured, and its ability to haunt takes full advantage of its sensuous nonsensuousness as the trauma it wreaks on the subject is figurative and material.[20] The memory does cleave the subject, and the understanding that he is both batter and sufferer can be located within a deeper realization that he is alienated from his own memories, which were not formed from a position of agency. Both he and the other are figured in a system of exchange that engulfs the entirety of his experience, even his memory and body.

Before the moment of sympathy, the abusive father harangues the sailor, recognizable from his clothing, as a "vagabond, and knave, and mad, / And ask'd what plunder he was hunting now" (635-634). He is primed for a traumatic memory by an interpellation that acknowledges him only as an economic agent, based solely on the clothes that he wears. As if to clarify that the sailor is merely a figure to him, the man says that the "gallows would one day of him be glad" (637), an anthropomorphosis that recalls the description of Stonehenge's brow. The next line completes the allusion: "Here cold sweat started from the sailor's brow" (638). Because the poem denatures bodily description, the sailor's physiology becomes more than a body, and he reads as another animated statue. The justice that the father wishes to mete out extends the earlier artifactual interaction in which the subject and the artifact become figures.

After looking at the boy's wound, the sailor puts into words the lesson the interaction has taught him, and unsurprisingly he finds that commodification orders his

haunted experience of the world: "'Tis a bad world, and hard is the world's law; / Each prowls to strip his brother of his fleece" (658-659). A possible allusion to the Golden Fleece is perhaps already there even if the vagrant had not earlier compared her father's flock to "mines of gold." For a sailor, the golden fleece would hold special meaning since it traditionally inspired Jason to build the world's first ship in order to track it down, a myth Wordsworth would show familiarity with in the later poem "Source of the Danube" (1820). Sea passages opened up the markets that create the wealth and poverty against which Wordsworth is protesting in the Salisbury Plain poems, and the choice of commodity here, the brother's fleece, carries potential mythological implications for all the commodities that it symbolizes. The Golden Fleece is the payment required of Jason before he can take Pelias's throne, but the golden commodity is so much more. It is part deity, for the ram is said to be the son of Poseidon; and it is part artifact as its worth to its possessor, Aeetas, derives from its involvement in a previous mythological adventure in which Phrixus escapes being sacrificed by his father Athamas. As a conduit of history, the Golden Fleece retains some god-like power in its ability to call forth the past, just like Stonehenge for the imagined idolatrous priests and, as the poem reveals, for the modern spectator as well. Allusively, the various values of the Golden Fleece coincide in the fleece the sailor feels each man is compelled to take from his brother, and the myth helps interpret the ruling specter of commodification that the sailor has identified. The insidiousness of commodification is precisely its legality. The hard law, which remains Wordsworth's object of protest, is in one sense the justice system that will punish the sailor for his crime, but it is also the underlying economic law that compels him to, if not to steal from his brother, *fleece* him through a bad deal, the kind which ruined the

vagrant's father. Also, just after the haunting moment with the wounded child the fraternal theft that he imagines ruling the world implicates him as potential victim as well.

Even as "Adventures" puts the law under greater scrutiny and thus takes on Godwinian themes, the poem still locates its violence in commodified history.[21] In his *Enquiry concerning Political Justice* (1793) Godwin writes:

> A numerous class of mankind are held down in a state of abject penury, and are continually prompted by disappointment and distress to commit violence upon their more fortunate neighbours. The only mode which is employed to repress this violence, and to maintain the order and peace of society, is punishment. Whips, axes, and gibbets, dungeons, chains, and racks are the most approved and established methods of persuading men to obedience, and impressing upon their minds the lessons of reason (9)

Godwin presents the law's violence against its subjects as a repetition of the political victimization already inflicted upon them, and like Wordsworth, he sees penury as the prefiguration of the later violence. After "Salisbury Plain," Wordsworth would have found his poem's interest in transfigured bodies echoed in Godwin's fascination by the materials that distress the body, but Godwin realizes that more nefarious than the state's effects on the body is its effect on the mind, the sensuous nonsensuousness of these devices captured in the word *impressing*.

Later in a summary of David Hartley's work, Godwin writes a chapter, "Of the Mechanism of the Human Mind," from which Wordsworth appears to take away the theory of the brain's material involvement in pain as well as the literal images used by Godwin. Godwin seeks to prove that the mind is a mechanism, "understanding by mechanism nothing more than a regular connexion of phenomena without any uncertainty of event, so that every incident requires a specific cause, and could no

otherwise in any respect than as the cause determined it to be" (319 *sic*). The theory of the mind as physical mechanism allows one to "conceive the human body to be so constituted as to be susceptible of vibrations" that "are conveyed to the brain; and, and in a manner that is equally the result of construction, produce a second set of vibrations beginning in the brain, and conveyed to the different organs or members of the body" (319). Godwin demonstrates the system through the example of a "piece of *iron*" which is heated and "applied to the body of an *infant*," causing a "report of uneasiness" in the system that "vents itself again in a shrill and piercing cry" (319). Reducing it even further, he then offers a second example by way of simile: "The case, as here described, is similar to that of the bag of bagpipes, which, being pressed in a certain manner, utters a *groan*; without any thing more being necessary to account for this phenomenon, than known laws of matter and motion" (319-320). Agency is hard to find in the system that treats the brain as a passive exchange where the past marks its surface in a language that is, like the marks upon Salisbury Plain, unreadable from the outside: "Let us add to these vibrations a system of associations to be carried on by traces to be made upon the medullary *substance of the brain*, by means of which past and present impressions are connected according to certain laws, as the traces happen to approach or run into each other; and we have then a complete scheme for accounting in a certain way for all the phenomena of human action" (320, all italics mine). Godwin does not finally endorse this map of the brain's activity, but the poignancy of a tortured infant calmly embedded in the description of a fully materialized, agent-less system could have caught Wordsworth's eye. The alienated responsibility of the iron mysteriously *applied* to the body of the infant, causing vibrations to its brain and then to its crying mouth, is echoed

in the iron that finds its own passage through the sailor's victim's brain. After a series of recognitions the sailor "groans" like Godwin's bagpipes, as though the moment of guilt and suffering is using Godwin's text as a palimpsest with certain words leaking through. Geoffrey Hartman in *Wordsworth's Poetry, 1787-1814* refers to the "human machinery" of "Salisbury Plain" with good reason (140), for the sailor's expressions of passion can be read as a rewritten description of a bagpipe blowing. Godwin's use of the infant suggests that the subject's inclusion into the world of political and physical violence is a developmental step, an idea taken even further by Wordsworth in the form of the "infant" beaten by his father, and the poet goes on to overlap the experience with the materialized memories that impress themselves in the substance of the sailor's brain. The foundations of thought that Godwin outlines is rewritten by Wordsworth as the establishment of the body's ability to be traversed by material, interpellating the subject into commodification and historicization. The brain's impressibility in the scene, wherein is written a language that the self does not fully understand, resituates the abjection of the self in the action of memory. The remembering subject experiences a moment of mechanical materiality like the infant being burned by an iron or the traveler looking at strange marks on the plain, a moment from which Wordsworth's subjects emerge as haunted figures, or moving artifacts.

Finally driven by his guilt to admit his crime in "Adventures," the sailor receives his punishment from the "hard law" that has victimized him, and he pays for his crime with more than his life. He provides the legal system a memorial to impress its power on the minds of onlookers in Godwinian fashion:

> They left him hung on high in iron case,
> And dissolute men, unthinking and untaught,

> Planted their festive booths beneath his face;
> And to that spot, which idle thousands sought,
> Women and children were by fathers brought;
> And now some kindred sufferer driven, perchance,
> That way when into storm the sky is wrought,
> Upon his swinging corpse his eye may glance
> And drop, as he once dropp'd, in miserable trance (820-828)

The final image of "Adventures" is thus a recapitulation of earlier scenes as spectators arrive at a haunted market to purchase their own violated identities. The battering father figure reappears as fathers seek out the spot as a destination to demonstrate the right of the father, and whereas the earlier abusive paternal figure is held up for shame when he impresses his law through physical violence, the final scene shows that the subject is victimized in its entrance to the world in ways more subtle than that. In the *sought*/*brought* rhyme on the heels of the festive booths, one hears the word *bought* in the background, and the artifact of the law is impressed upon the onlooker as commodity. Even if someone does not buy from the festive booths, they self-identify with the ghastly monument in a moment of Lacanian specularization that echoes the confrontation with Stonehenge. The dissolute men notably place their booths beneath the *face* of the sailor, rather than his corpse, recalling the prosopopeia of the earlier artifact: the monument is not simply dead material because it is always a figure. Rieder draws a distinction between the "seriously deformed commercial community" that is established around the gibbet and the "kindred sufferer" who is moved by the scene into a "miserable trance" (Rieder 94), but such a value distinction might be too quick since the poems go so far to show that artifacts move like commodities. Once he *glances* his eye at the gibbet, the glimmering, glittering world of artifacts interpellates him, and the odd transitive use of glance demonstrating that the gaze has material effects on the *eye*/*I*, set ablaze and

refigured by the reflected light of the artifact. His "miserable trance" not only echoes the sailor's earlier trances, but also all the moments of misery, or *miser*-y. The sailor's "miserable work"—Wordsworth's term for the murder—is re-inscribed as a glance at the material past, which disturbs the subject and sets it moving, in *trans*, in the historical economy of figures.

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[1] For a thorough analysis of Wordsworth and the picturesque, see the first section of Thomas Pfau's *Wordsworth's Profession* 17-139. On Gilpin's theory of the picturesque in particular, see 70-72.

[2] For Alison's possible influence on Wordsworth, see Marshall Brown and John Hayden.

[3] See Stephen Gill 37-67.

[4] All citations of the poems will come from William Wordsworth, *The Salisbury Plain Poems*, Ed. Stephen Gill, Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 1975. In my text "Salisbury Plain" will refer to the 1793-1794 version of the poem, and "Adventures" will refer to "Adventures on Salisbury Plain" (1795-c. 1799).

[5] Collings smartly connects the poem's view of history to its form. He sees the verse coming out of a Spenserian tradition defined by antiquarian concerns. In particular he sees the influence of Thomas Warton's antiquarian verse which is "implicated in a Hobbesian conception of cultural history, insofar as it imagines that culture institutes a great divide between itself and the violent state of nature which preceded it" (23). By refusing to keep the "antiquarian dream" situated in the past in his poem, Wordsworth takes issue with a Hobbesian view of history. Collings notes that beyond removing the division between nature and culture, Wordsworth poem seems to follow Rousseau in its suggestion that a cultured world is actually more violent than a precultural one. James Chandler also identifies Wordsworth's anti-Hobbesian stance in the poem with Rousseau's *Second Discourse* (130-131). See also Paul Kelley.

[6]Alan Bewell has covered extensively the connections between Wordsworth's poetry and eighteenth-century Enlightenment anthropology. Anthropological projects grew out of moral philosophy, a vast field that covered any subject relating to mankind, including the history of the species. The Enlightenment anthropologists relied primarily on a "comparative method," by which the evolution of the civilized man was filled in by observing the primitive figures remaining in the eighteenth-century world (20-21). These walking examples of mankind's earlier states often lived in less advanced, foreign cultures, but they also included local figures afflicted with attributes, such as idiocy, fanaticism, dumbness, or blindness, which were thought to mimic the experience of primitive man (24-29). These types of people allowed Wordsworth an opportunity to perform what Bewell calls "domestic anthropology," an extension and critique of typical anthropology that depicted the marginal figures in fuller form rather than as evidence of a social theory. Bewell does not address the "Salisbury Plain" poems, but he does offer the re-telling of the poet's journey in Book 12 of *The Prelude* as an example of the important of "imaginative reverie" to Enlightenment anthropology (43). I hope to extend Bewell's investigation by considering the historical artifact in Wordsworth's poetry as something else that is marginalized by enlightened anthropological perspectives even as it undergirds them. For the relation of Wordsworth's work to moral philosophy, see Bewell's introduction 1-47.

[7] Edna Aston Shearer cites a marginal note in Richard Payne Knight's *Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste* (1805) that reveals Wordsworth considered infancy and the savage state to be analogous: "What means all this parade about the Savage when the deduction as far as just may be made at

our own firesides, from the sounds words gesticulations look &c which a child makes when learning to talk" (73).

[8] The opening stanzas bear striking similarities to the well known passage from Book II of the *Prelude* (1805):

> Blessed the infant Babe,
> (For with my best conjectures I would trace
> The progress of our being) blest the Babe,
> Nursed in his Mother's arms, the Babe who sleeps
> Upon his Mother's breast, who, when his soul
> Claims manifest kindred with an earthly soul,
> Doth gather passion from his Mother's eye! (237-243)

In his conjecture Wordsworth describes as best he can the subject's development of self-consciousness through the recognition of the mother, and the passage continues to describe the infant's new mental ability to "combine / In one appearance , all the elements / And parts of the same object, else detached / And lothe to coalesce" (II.247-250). In "Wordsworth and the Victorians," Paul de Man identifies the substitution of *eye* where one would expect to see *breast* (90), an example of the poet's preoccupation with the role of sight in one's experience of consciousness, even in the very beginning. At the same time, argues de Man, the infant enters into a world of language as the soul "claims" its kinship with the mother (91). The significance of language and sight can be found in Wordsworth's conjecture on the origins of man as a race in "Salisbury Plain," but Stonehenge is in the role of the mother's eye. Like the passage from the *Prelude*, the maternal breast remains something to be substituted out of experience. On the figurative power of the maternal breast in the "blessed babe" passage, cf. Caruth *Empirical Truths* 44-57.

[9] The fallen-ness of language is an idea often repeated in literary and critical history. I am clearly following a Lacanian model in my reading. Anne Williams perhaps best describes the entrance into language that I am referencing in her synopsis of Lacan's theory of psychosexual development: "But the speaking subject pays a price, enacts a kind of Faustian bargain—exchanging power (through access to the Symbolic) and consciousness for his prior, blissful symbiosis with the mother (a paradise always about to be regained in the deferred 'other' of the 'signified')" (58).

Hartman refers to Jung when he identifies in "Adventures on Salisbury Plain" a relation of the "(conscious) ego and (unconscious) self," which must be reconciled to each other for the subject's growth. Hartman writes that in Jungian individuation, as played out in the poem, the "ego runs the danger of being assimilated by the self, i.e. of returning to a preconscious wholeness which is an undifferentiated 'one'" (123). Looking back to the first version of "Salisbury Plain," I believe we can note a preoccupation even there with the cusp between undifferentiated unconsciousness and individuation, a realm of experience where stones are about to move and marks are about to speak.

[10] Forcing the monument out of the discourse also signals its abject status in the poem. Kristeva compares this involuntary expulsion of an object to vomiting (2-3).

[11] "Salisbury Plain" is a key text in establishing the "spot syndrome" that Hartman identifies in Wordsworth's early poetry. In his narrative of the poet's mind, as the imagination pulls back from nature, it localizes itself to a place that is "still nature but reduced to one center as dangerous as any holy site" (122). Hartman focuses on the past rising from the spot in the form of the corpse, but the way the imagination clings to artifacts may be more complicated when we pay closer attention to the specific objects that Wordsworth puts in the way of his characters.

[12] Though a transitory state, Lacan's mirror stage forces upon the subject the awareness that it will never be absolute: "But the important point is that this form situates the agency known as the ego, prior to is social determination, in a fictional direction that will forever remain irreducible for any single individual or, rather, that will only asymptotically approach the subject's becoming, no matter how successful the dialectical syntheses by which he must resolve, as *I*, his discordance with his own reality" (76).

[13] Dugget believes that Wordsworth would have been familiar with an image of the Wicker Man prepared for sacrifice from Aylett Sammes' *Antiqua Britiania Illustrata* (1676) (Duggett 165).

[14] On the connection between Wordsworthian *elation* and Hegelian *Aufhebung*, cf. Geoffrey Hartman "Elation in Hegel and Wordsworth." For an explanation of *Aufhebung* as negation and preservation as well as its economic consequences, see March Shell's chapter "Money of the Mind" in *Money, Language, Thought* 131-155.

[15] Cf. Gayatri Chakrovorty Spivak.

[16] On the intertwining of pastoral memory and commodification in Wordsworth, cf. Thomas Pfau's reading of "Michael" in *Romantic Moods* (191-225).

[17] Langan makes some use of the *miser*/*misery* overlap in her criticism of "The Old Cumberland Beggar" and "The Thorn" (71, 73). Misers, or hoarders in her understanding, are transfixed with the "*thingness*, rather than the communicative or symbolic function, of the representative object" (73). As the Salisbury Plain poems show though, removed from circulation, physical thingness is always an object about to move. It is animated material.

[18] Langan, reading "The Female Vagrant," sees the neighbor as a landlord who denies the right of "neighborage," which she associates with usufruct, the right to enjoy, without despoliation, private lands (77). Wordsworth in a note does identify usufruct as the quasi-legal understanding that fails the father when "[h]is little range of water was denied," but the right almost certainly never supported the man's possession of his home, which is, the poem makes clear, a commodity he is forced to sell after a series of poor business decisions. For a discussion of neighborage and usufruct as well as the larger reading of Wordsworth's verse that they help to constitute, see Langan's chapter "Money Walks: Wordsworth and the Right to Wander" (59-138).

[19] The *OED* traces the phrase to well before Wordsworth, as early as the thirteenth century. It even provides a line from Book XIII of *The Prelude* to support the phrase's purchase in the nineteenth century. See "shed, v.1." OED Online. March 2013. Oxford University Press. 12 April 2013.

[20] Though Wordsworth is being figural, he stumbles upon a neuro-scientific fact that traumatic events cause biological changes in the brain. Studies, such as J. D. Bremner's, report reduced hippocampus volume and activity in PTSD and childhood abuse victims. Wordsworth passage and the materiality of memory evident in his work overall suggest neurobiological readings of Romanticism, such as those found in Alan Richardson's *British Romanticism and the Science of the Mind*. Ironically considering the haunting power of memories in "Adventures," Richardson points out that Coleridge disliked Hartley's mechanistic theory of the mind because it offers "no way for organizing perceptions and memories" (11).

[21] For a recent and thorough look at the links between Godwin's writing and the Salisbury Plain poems, see Quentin Bailey, in particular his second and third chapters.

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Chapter 3

The (Ruined) Cottage Industry and the Competing Economies of the Artifact

> The confusion of personalities and things is precisely the mark of exchange and contracts.
> *-Mauss*

The Strangeness of Substitution

Wordsworth's *Ruined Cottage*—begun in 1797—makes theatre of the antiquarian/artifactual impulse at its original moment, the discovery of a ruin.[1] Unlike the landscape soaked in nationalism of "Salisbury Plain," the setting of *The Ruined Cottage* is free of competing claims and interpretations to which Wordsworth's poet might be responding. Yet, Wordsworth still attempts to escape from a view of the past that commodifies the self, a perspective in which all subjects are haunted artifacts. Like "Salisbury Plain," Wordsworth's later poem investigates the suffering of the poor and underclass, but as Gill notes, "Wordsworth was not . . . recapitulating on his social protest poetry of 1793 to 1795. He focuses now on Margaret's suffering for quite different ends" (134).[2] James Averill offers a typical understanding of Wordsworth's new goal as "Aristotelian *katharsis*," a process by which his "characters meditate upon the tale of sorrow, give themselves up to it, and are purged of their previous feelings" (60). Critics have argued about the specifics of the poem's cathartic lesson, as well as in some cases about the value of the achieved calm at the end, but the process inarguably involves the artifact of the ruined cottage itself, the material remains of the long-suffering Margaret. Because her narrative is mediated by material remnants, the poem's understanding of

how the artifact creates and distorts meaning affects how the poem's lessons are to be taken.

At first blush the poem appears to repeat the characterization of subjects found in "Salisbury Plain," as forever threatened by an uncommunicative materiality. Margaret, the suffering woman at the heart of the story, is presented as an increasingly alien presence in the poem. Karen Swann remarks, "One might equally argue that [the] narrative works to transform her human body into an eerily inspirited simulacrum of a body—or, in more tendentious words, into a gothic spirit" (85). Swann's reading is buoyed by the physical effects waged on Margaret's physical form as she drowns in the hardships that befall her, in particular her abandonment by her husband, Robert. The pedlar, the narrator of Margaret's sorrow, remembers seeing her after her husband has gone: "her face was pale and thin, her figure too / Was changed" (338-339). She seems scarcely alive: "But yet no motion of the breast was seen, / No heaving of the heart" (384-385). Margaret herself admits, "I have slept / Weeping, and weeping I have waked; my tears / Have flowed as if my body were not such / As others are, and I could never die" (354-356). There is a strangeness in her body that prohibits her from feeling completely human, a strangeness that arose again and again in "Salisbury Plain," as characters discover the extent of their materiality.

Psychologically what changes Margaret into walking death is her husband's enlistment in the military, but her form becomes less and less alive after finding one morning that Robert is gone with only a "purse of gold" (323), his enlistment pay, in his stead. The purse of gold operates as a crucial figure for the trauma at the core of the text. Margaret's suffering, and the pedlar's recounting of it, is intricately bound up with forces

of commodification that inform her life even before that purse of gold appears. In telling her tale, her communication with the pedlar is symptomatically halting. When he finds her, he reports, "[she] looked at me / A little while, then turned her head away / Speechless" (306-8), a silence that is contagious for he "wist not what to do / Or how to speak to her" (310-311). When she finally does talk, the pedlar complains, "I cannot *tell* how she pronounced my name: / With fervent love and with a face of grief / Unutterably helpless and a look / That seemed to cling upon me" (312-315). The individual sorrow of Margaret might explain her reticence to speak, but the contagiousness of the communication breakdown (and its similarity to moments in "Salisbury Plain" when characters interact with artifacts) shows that more is at stake as the silent exchange of Robert's body is enacted on those left behind as well.

The traumatic quiet even threatens the poet-narrator who listens to the pedlar's tale, for he too will forever be unable to tell how Margaret said the pedlar's name or how helpless her look was. The recourse to gazes and vision at the heart of the poem inserts absences into the history of the place, which turn Robert's monetary gesture of self-sacrifice into a symbol for the process of explicating a ruin within the poem—and by the poem. A word for something that cannot be put into words, *unutterable* is a counterfeit word in the way that the money left behind by Robert is a counterfeit person. In a world of infinite exchangeability, nothing or no one is truly incapable of being put into words or substituted out of existence. The ruined cottage itself is substituted for Margaret and despite all that is unspeakable in his tale, the pedlar still tells it, and seems to repeatedly do so. Still, Wordsworth's poem questions whether exchangeability is a necessarily haunted negativity.

The poem's composition history demonstrates that the poem itself was subjected to repeated substitution by Wordsworth, his frequent rewriting and transposing leading to numerous "counter" texts. MS A of *The Ruined Cottage* shows that "Incipient Madness," a fragment poem on the page opposite from the first attempts at Margaret's poem, shares some of the same details. It depicts the wandering of a nameless narrator who finds on a "dreary moor" a ruin which calls him back over and over. James Butler notes that the two poems have an unsteady relationship: the "gothicism (of "Incipient Madness") no doubt helped inspire *The Ruined Cottage* but does not fit with the more simple story the poem later became" (Wordsworth *Ruined* 461). However, the gothic elements of "Incipient Madness" (and its forebear "Salisbury Plain") could more accurately be described as *repressed* within *The Ruined Cottage*. The speaker in "Incipient Madness" finds in the ruined hut a "broken pane which glitter'd in the moon / And seemed akin to life" (6-7).[3] *Glittering* recalls the female vagrant's view of her cottage in "Salisbury Plain" (as discussed in Chapter 2) which became a memory that she could not escape. Just as that glittering signifies a commodification that ultimately begins to govern all historical meaning for the vagrant, the broken pane's glittering in "Incipient Madness" "could produce / A feeling as of absence" in the heart of the narrator, creating the sense of loss only when the subject finds an exterior signifier for it (14). Wordsworth identifies the sense of loss shared with, and created by, the speck of glass as pathological, but it shares much with the form of artifactual interaction seen in "Salisbury Plain." It appears to cause the speaker's despair, but the poem quickly unsettles the opposition between affect and object (or inside and outside):

> ... There is a mood,
> A settled temper of the heart, when grief,

> Become an instinct, fastening on all things
> That promise food, doth like a sucking babe,
> Create it where it is not. From this time
> I found my sickly heart had tied itself
> Even to this speck of glass (7-13)

The connection with the glass appears external to the subject, as something that he could just come upon without prior knowledge, and yet it also appears as something that could not have existed before he found the artifact. "From this time" implies he can identify the moment he discovered the hut, but his heart *had tied* itself there already. As in a mirror, an artifact reveals what is already present, and a piece of glass with its reflective surface offers the Wordsworthian subject a means to see itself, literally and figuratively.[4] The sucking babe image reflects the pane's primal calling to the speaker, and even more explicitly than in the opening images of "Salisbury Plain," the artifact offers itself as a substitute for the mother's breast. The speaker's unexplained grief revolves around a feeling of abjection patterned on the infant's sense that the bond with the mother is not absolute and needs to be recreated between the subject and something else. The artifact creates a feeling of a debt that is not enacted by language and thus recalls the childhood sense of differentiation from the maternal even before the separation was completed by an entry into the world of language.[5] The poem looks ahead here to the "Blessed babe" passage from the *Prelude* where the loss of the mother's affection is replaced by the *prop* of Nature.[6] Unlike that substitution, the relations (the infant/mother and the poet/glass) here are not complete, for the infant *cannot* recreate the fulfilled promise of the mother's breast.[7] The poet says that the food is not there, and the concept of promise, even before it is broken, implies a broken unity in the infant's world. His needs are not being met before they are uttered but require an understanding of faithful exchange between the

babe and mother. The promise contaminates the relation before the infant can put the promise into language, marking the experience as abjection rather than separation. When the poet recreates the relation with the piece of glass, he identifies its abject status through the production of quasi-absence ("the feeling as of absence"); like the infant, he senses a lack before the lack's existence, but does so through his relation to the artifact.

Explicitly reading "Incipient Madness" as a part of the composition history of *The Ruined Cottage*, Swann provides dual readings in which Wordsworth substitutes the piece of glass for Margaret or the other way around. If *The Ruined Cottage* were written first, "Margaret is here reduced to vanishing: her to and fro, her shaping eye, her eerily lifelike sighing resolve into the merest pulse or glitter of a speck of glass, one in a chain of revenants that grief, 'like a sucking babe' and possibly in a constant reenactment of that early loss, creates to compensate for abandonment" (86). Swann concedes that, per critical consensus, Margaret is most likely Wordsworth's attempt "to flesh out a glittering spot" (87), which she identifies as "madness full-blown" in its attempt to create realistic autonomy out of a "figure whose effective life derives from the eye's investment in the material projection of a technical apparatus" (89). Swann addresses only part of a lineage that goes all the way back to the glittering artifacts that clutter "Salisbury Plain," which in their frequent figuration are "akin to life" and become substitutable for a Wordsworthian subject. Moreover, the substitutionality that Swann addresses does not remain at the intertextual level, but can be read in the tale of *The Ruined Cottage* itself, where a monument (the cottage) has replaced a woman whom the pedlar is trying to bring back to life. What is so astonishing about the piece of glass is the spectrality that takes over for its merely human origins. It is "akin to life" not only because it offers a replacement for

the mother, but also because of its synecdochal relation to whomever lived in the ruined hut before. Margaret's replacement of the glass is more than a synchronic substitution across the page of a notebook. Her life in *The Ruined Cottage* is the life whose projection gives a spectral quality to the artifacts she leaves behind.[8]

The glass is, of course, already a projected subjectivity, and the fear that hovers over artifacts in Wordsworth's early poetry is that the synecdochal relation is a substitution that cannot be undone, that once objects are substitutable for subjects, those subjects can never be anything but artifactual figures. In "Salisbury Plain," the system is revealed to follow the logic of commodification, and the subject exerts little, if any, subjective control over the interaction. The subject becomes a moving artifact in its own right through the mediation of the specular figure before it. As pointed out in the previous chapter, the picturesque serves as one template for Wordsworth's interaction with the historical artifact in its transformation of the gaze upon an object into an intersubjective experience. As Thomas Pfau writes, "The increasingly reflexive character of Wordsworth's poetry after 1797 also reveals that the previously unconscious motivation of the Picturesque is becoming more articulate and self-conscious" (115). If the focus of Pfau's critique is narrowed to one of the picturesque's quintessential elements, the aesthetically pleasing ruin, one sees in Wordsworth's deployment of the artifact a productive self-reflexivity, a way to further sublate the artifactual exchange to make the human psyche more prevalent. However, the figurative system of "Salisbury Plain," reveals the production of historical reality to be a form of commodification that does not offer any transcendence, or even any real intersubjectivity, and in fact appears to repeat the cultural and political ideologies that Wordsworth is protesting. In his reading

of *The Ruined Cottage*, Pfau, too, finds an economic component that undergirds Wordsworth's poetic voice and psychic preoccupations: "The motive that produces the artifact of poetic description, in other words, is not an essential sympathy but a deep-seated, often compulsive cultural productivity" (115). If Wordsworth's poetry is itself an artifact, as Pfau implies, then, it is the next in a series of exchanges between figural artifacts and artifactual figures that litter the poetry in the form of ruins and monuments.[9]

Both "Incipient Madness" and MS B of *The Ruined Cottage*, the first complete version, end with physical remains that continue to haunt Wordsworth's subjects. The speaker of "Incipient Madness" says:

> ... I alone
> Remained: the winds of heaven remained—with them
> My heart claimed fellowship and with the beams
> Of dawn and of the setting sun that seemed
> To live and linger on the mouldering walls (45-49)

The speaker has recovered from his grief remarkably quickly, as Swann points out (88-89), and claims a connection now with the elements that create mesmerizing artifacts and make them visible. He asserts control of his gaze and, like the sun, reflects himself in the objects before him. Still the vision retains some of the strangeness of the exchange with the pane of glass and, perhaps, too, its covert trace of commodification. One hears the rhythm and terminal consonants of the term *glittering* absorbed in the word *linger*. The repetition of *remained* also suggests a lack of confidence in the newly formed I/eye as the subject feels alone but still confronted by an opposing materiality, a scheme that does not so much replace the interaction with the glass as repeat it. The subject and Nature might be transcendent rivals in Wordsworth's poetry, but lines such as the end of "Incipient

Madness" place the rise of these rivals within a larger history of the subject's meditation upon artifacts.

Wordsworth ends the first draft of *The Ruined Cottage* (MS B) with similar imagery, now in memory of Margaret: "In sickness she remained, and here she died, / Last human tenant of these ruined walls" (526-527). Wordsworth told Isabella Fenwick in 1843 that the conclusion to MS B was actually the first part of the poem composed, and Coleridge sent the last 37 lines of the poem in that state to John Estlin in June 1797, revealing the centrality of the walls to the tale of sorrow Wordsworth envisioned (Butler 9-10). The final two lines by themselves serve as a moving paraphrase of the poem overall, as if the story were translated into an epitaph. Compared to the end of "Incipient Madness," the self-consciousness is muted as the focus is shifted to the life that the walls monumentalize rather than the monumentalizing gaze itself. *Remaining* continues to signify an unquiet mind as it does in "Incipient Madness," but it has been displaced onto Margaret, even though the pedlar and poet have demonstrated their own commitment to lingering by the ruin. They are not "human tenants" of the wall, though the phrase is over-determined to make allowances for the "unshod Colt, / The wandring heifer and the Potter's ass" that sometimes seek shelter in the ruin (111-112). Since he is willing to stretch the meaning of *tenant* to encompass the intrusion of Nature, it is surprising that the pedlar does not assert his own relation to the wall. The oddly worded epitaph dismisses humanity in a way that denies the pedlar and poet theirs. Margaret and Nature remain(ed) at the cottage, but the pedlar cannot admit that he does. Joel Faflak points out that in these final lines of MS B the "specter of the cottage itself takes us back to the text's future" since at the beginning of MS D the pedlar will still be outside the walls.

"Through a repetition compulsion echoing Margaret's own," writes Faflak, the pedlar "seems continually drawn back to a primal scene he appears unable to work-through (he remains *outside* the cottage)" (89). The Wordsworthian peddler so wants to remove himself from the consideration of artifact that he reaches for the voice of the epitaph, but the language merely obscures his true relation to the monument—traumatized, material, and, as I will show, haunted by the specter not just of Margaret, but of its own commodification.

The Remains of the Supernatural

In MS B the poet-narrator treats the first view of the cottage with the same astonishment seen in Wordsworth's earlier characters who find monuments: the "ruined Cottage, four clay walls / That stared upon each other.—'Twas a spot! (30-31). The figurative interfacing has already begun, and his exclamation arrests his movement in the way Stonehenge arrests the traveler in "Salisbury Plain." The "wandering gypsey" and the "lime-kiln" of the next few lines even reappear in "Adventures on Salisbury Plain."[10] In MS D, however, Wordsworth revises the lines to soften the shock of the encounter: "I found a ruined house, four naked walls / That stared upon each other" (31-32). In "Salisbury Plain," Stonehenge raised its brow to face the viewer, but the confrontation in the revisions to *The Ruined Cottage* involves a more subdued anthropomorphism. Without the walls staring upon each other, the artifactual moment in *The Ruined Cottage* might simply evolve into a series of explications that one might find in a book of antiquities as one person captions a piece of material history before another person comes along and captions that caption and so forth. Rather than de-emphasize the process—and

perhaps reestablish the stability of the subject by default—Wordsworth complicates the exchange by the circularity and perhaps insularity of the walls. The reflexivity of the cottage in this image is striking compared to the repeated moments of mutual prosopopeia in Wordsworth's earlier poem. Indeed, that model of interaction exhausts itself in "Salisbury Plain" as all subjects come into being through a system of exchange that figures them as commodified artifacts or ghostly statues.

In this case, the historicist journey that the poet begins by seeking what knowledge the pedlar has of the ruin is short circuited by how quickly he displaces his own gaze onto the structure itself, but unlike in "Salisbury Plain," the specular relationship between subject and artifact transforms into a kind of voyeurism.[11] The exposure of the walls goes beyond being bare and takes something from the shame of human nudity alluded to in the moment after Adam and Eve have eaten the forbidden fruit in Genesis, when the "eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons" (King James Version, Gen. 3.7).[12] The poet's initial interaction with the ruin is not as supernaturally fraught as the traveler's with Stonehenge, but the history haunting and inspiring that artifact is transmuted into Biblical echoes that, half-heard, elevate artifactual interactions in the poem to a discourse about becoming human.[13]

Wordsworth's allusive use of Judeo-Christian myths, whether taken from the Bible or Milton, is not a new area of study. David Simpson notes that Wordsworth's "rovers (preeminently the poet-narrator himself) often have Satanic qualities, expressing the pain of their own alienation from human communities or from individuals with whom they cannot bond" (43). The description holds in *The Ruined Cottage*, but the alienated

figure is initially (and strangely) the unspeaking relic. The poet's approach to the spot on the "bare wide common" where a "group of trees / ...midway at that level stood along" is indebted to the description of Satan's approach to Eden in Milton's epic.[14] Just as Satan climbs the wall of Paradise, so the poet climbs a wall—at the insistence of the pedlar—to enter the "plot of garden ground" where he can find a well.[15] The mixing of various parts of the creation myth into the poem's initial encounter integrates into denser imagery the investigations of historical origins in "Salisbury Plain" through the depictions of the savages and the Druids.[16] The fragmented tropes of the myth are reflected in the various ruined material objects scattered through the scene, and these objects become like relics of something far more important than they may seem to the naïve onlooker. Indeed, the pedlar's tale, centered on the cluttered spot, reveals that the objects are imbued with a tragic power due to their presence at a tragic past. The spot's similarities to the Garden of Eden would seem to be ironic as the tragedy of the tale belongs to Margaret, not to the walls or the poet approaching them. The ruined house is nothing to the speaker at first, and yet he sees it as indicative of a fallen world. The *primal* voyeurism is also the poet's who stares at the naked walls.

The poet's initial impression of the scene as the beginning of a postlapsarian narrative obscures the facts of Margaret's story and the sociological reasons for it, and his account of how he "found the ruin," expresses something foundational in the act as if the ruin was built, *founded*, in that instance. A cultural fetishism of ruins in the eighteenth century encouraged confusion about the founding of ruins. As Sophie Thomas has discussed, ruins were so enjoyed at the time that there arose a "ruin industry: the popularity, in eighteenth-century culture, of ruins as an essential element of picturesque

beauty, which gave rise to the building of artificial or sham ruins—follies—in the gardens or parks of (primarily) the wealthy" (181). If one chooses to see the poet-narrator as a rewritten Satan, his discovery of the ruin would conceivably also be the instance of its Fall. Wordsworth's poem places such an impulse at the origin of the historical investigation of a ruin. The violence of the poet's aesthetic interest still does not quite take in everything without leaving a historical remainder. The past participle *ruined* encapsulates the disparate temporal dimensions held at bay by the poet's gaze. As an adjective, *ruined* presents the structure as an eighteenth-century aesthetic object, but as a verb, it testifies as well to the change and loss that went into the house's aesthetic value.[17] In a scene burdened with the imagery of the Fall, redeeming the historical value of the ruin becomes an action of mythical import. The supernatural ostentatiousness of Stonehenge in the Salisbury Plain poems has been subdued in the poet's arrival at the ruined cottage, but the synchronic aestheticization still bears the trace of temporality whose revelation is figured as supernatural, or, more precisely in *The Ruined Cottage*, divine.

The imagery prepares the reader for the climb to redemption. More than merely a framing device, the discussion between the poet and the pedlar attempts to answer how one should internalize the tale of woe in order to profit most from its spiritual import. The self-reflexivity of the poem arises from the poet's role as intercessor between the pedlar's tale and the audience. Removed from the naturalized chronology of an invisible third-person speaker or a simple first person narration, the history of the ruined cottage is put into tension with the relic itself as the explication of an artifact is dramatized.

The most famous readings of the poem consider what the pedlar might be teaching the poet with his tale, a perspective that already places a pedagogical motive above historical recreation in the narrative. The two most prominent, and competing, approaches are put forth by Geoffrey Hartman and Jerome McGann. Hartman reads the poem's early drafts as merely symptomatic of the "spot syndrome" in early Wordsworth and the attendant attraction and mesmerized responses to a fated location (137). As Wordsworth rewrites the poem, Hartman sees the power of the imagination growing to rival the power of the ruin that is haunted by Margaret and her story, and, if it is not able to fully idealize the spot, it is at least able to rival it (138). Margaret, for Hartman, is the embodiment of the human spirit that gives into the feeling of "omphalos"—the sense that a spot is fated—and remains bound to the place physically and spiritually. McGann, on the other hand, believes the poem to be a work of complete idealization that displaces the historical facts that so violently impact Margaret's family (83-85). The escape from history in Wordsworth's approach is, according to McGann, a typical Romantic gesture in opposition to that of an "Enlightenment mind," which would analyze the events more sociologically (84). McGann believes the poem is disguising history as something else and that naturalizing the effects of history through the image of weeds and grass encroaching upon a structure is Wordsworth's aesthetic strategy for avoiding responsibility for the tragedy of *The Ruined Cottage*.

Part of the conflict between the two readings is that Hartman largely conceptualizes the ruin as a part of Nature, which forces the poem into subject-object dichotomy in which historical materials cannot help but be objects when defined negatively against the conscious mind. Hartman does read it at one point as a symbol of

the "merely human" in its disintegration (137), standing in contrast to the atemporal power of the soul as it is beginning to be understood in Wordsworth, but by the end of his reading, the ruin's material reality becomes blurred with that of Nature. It represents, at least on one level, the timelessness of alien Nature against which the imagination is trying to define itself, but the abandonment of the cottage to its natural "tenants" in the conclusion belies an imaginative elision of the Nature-human distinction. The artifact loses its historical meaning in Hartman's reading, but McGann's assertion of Wordsworth's (and Hartman's) displacement strategy is not entirely accurate. As has been shown in "Salisbury Plain," the meaning of historical context is destabilized by material objects, and Wordsworth's approach to the artifact of the cottage may not be an evasion of the responsibility of the "Enlightenment mind," but rather a revised understanding of what that responsibility looks like, especially when juxtaposed to the ironic treatment of universal Enlightenment at the end of "Salisbury Plain."

The pedlar does not rage against the system of oppression operating in the background of his tale, but his archaeological approach to the cottage is still in search of a cause, though it is socio-economic theory mixed with psychoanalytic mythmaking. He thus transforms the supernatural aspects of the Fall into a more naturalized experience of individual growth. The poet's turn to the pedlar for details about the ruin expands the artifactual interaction because, throughout, the pedlar relates the story of Margaret through continual reference to the artifacts around the two men in order to give life, and evidence, to the story. Her absence is made real to the speaker by pointing to the artifacts that miss her touch. She used to sit "on this old bench" and stand "by yon gate." The interactions still bear the psychoanalytical weight of the glass speck image from

"Incipient Madness." After they drink from Margaret's well, the pedlar explains that he saw by the water the "useless fragment of a wooden bowl" that "moved my very heart" (91-92), recalling how the glittering speck had already tied the speaker's heart in that poem. Peter Manning connects the wooden bowl to a pitcher of spring water in "The Baker's Cart," another poetic fragment found alongside *The Ruined Cottage*'s first drafts, and points out that "[i]n classical psychoanalytical theory, pitchers are often interpreted as displaced symbols of the maternal breast, an equation to which the Wordsworthian instances give credibility" (13).[18] Indeed, soon after the pedlar describes his reaction to the pitcher, he refers to the spot "[w]here we have sate together while she nurs'd / Her infant at her breast" (110-111), and his own drinking in of the ruinous scenery emulates the nursing infant.

When he pathetically points out that wandering livestock now invade the "chimney-wall / Where I have seen her evening hearth-stone blaze / And through the window spread upon the road / Its chearful light" (113-116), his desire for the ruins approaches pathological, especially because it is disturbingly unclear whether he remembers an evening spent alongside Margaret inside the hut with her family or one spent outside as a peeping tom. Inside or out, the pedlar envisions the cottage, even before it was a ruin, as a structure around which a community can form. The use of *chearful* recalls the word's frequent use in "Salisbury Plain" to ascribe to a figure not only a pleasing aspect but also a *face* that can serve the subject as a surface on which to see his own reflected. Later, he notes that the cottage "in its outward look appeared / As cheerful as before" even as Nature begins to encroach upon the hut.

As the pedlar moves backward in time, he more and more locates the fallen-ness of the scene in the very presentation of the materiality around him rather than in any cultural or political crime. Even within his experience of the decline of Margaret's family, the narrative is marked by his preoccupation with the artifacts of the spot. Robert's absence is marked by the materials left behind: "the idle loom / Still in its place," his "Sunday garments hung / Up on the self-same nail, his very staff stood undisturbed beside the door." All of these material objects form a clutter of material that has to be unified by poetic power, but, similar to what one finds in Scott, as argued in chapter 1, it is also unified by an *antiquarian* approach to them. Hallowed by age, these materials would have counted as antiquities to the antiquarian scholar, and the pedlar employs them as such. In MS D caught by the poet in his odd recollection of viewing Margaret's hearth, he apologizes:

> You will forgive me, Sir,
> But often on this cottage do I muse
> As on a picture, till my wiser mind
> Sinks, yielding to the foolishness of grief (116-120)

His aestheticization of the scene follows an antiquarian rather than picturesque approach, for he is forever reliving the past events associated with the ruins in front of him. It is an antiquarian's gaze run rampant, for he appears to have treasured the cottage as a ruin even before it *was* ruined. When everything is thus a potential relic, the distinction between ruin and history becomes blurred. The pedlar is not treating the scene as a single picture, but as a series of snapshots that define his experience with the cottage. Ironically, in MS B the pedlar mentions no "picture" in his apology saying simply, "I feel I play the Truant with my tale" (171). The earlier version dismisses voyeuristic

antiquarianism as a distraction, while in the revision it becomes associated with his wiser mind.

Covering the Past

The pedlar's obsessive relation of his story to the scattered remains around him comes close to fetishizing objects rather than the past they are meant to illumine. The self-moving materials of the female vagrant's past find corresponding objects in the "bric-a-brac" around Margaret's cottage (Liu 313), and Wordsworth demonstrates the alteration of the artifact's objective status early on through the poetic choices he makes. One of the first things the pedlar says of Margaret yokes her tightly to the ruin:

> ... She is dead
> The worm is on her cheek, and this poor hut,
> Stripped of its outward garb of household flowers,
> Of rose and sweet briar, offers to the wind
> A cold bare wall whose earthy top is tricked
> With weeds and the rank spear grass. She is dead (103-108)

His discussion of his loss immediately turns to the ruin in front of him where he wishes to localize the narrative. However, when he changes grammatical subjects—from Margaret to the hut—he begins to anthropomorphize the hut, "stripped of its outward garb," just enough so that the repetition of the phrase, "She is dead," almost reads as a comment on the cottage. It also foreshadows the final lines describing how Margaret *remained* at the cottage during her life, as if she were already part of material remnants before her death. The syntax serves as potential evidence of the aesthetic displacement seen by McGann in the poem, but the wall's interaction with Nature is not figured in a way that satisfactorily naturalizes the act of ruination yet.[19] Outside of the binary of *human*/*Nature* that Hartman and McGann both see in the poem, the wall presents a third term, natural enough to mix

with the household flowers but anthropomorphized to the point that it can offer itself to Nature. Recognizing the importance of a third term helps explain the pedlar's early cryptic lines as he prepares the poet for his lesson:

> ... I see around me here
> Things which you cannot see; We die, my friend
> Nor we alone, but that which each man loved
> And prized in his peculiar nook of earth
> Dies with him or is changed, and very soon
> Even of the good is no memorial left (67-73)

A person's death is also the death of their possessions and artifacts, those things that they "prized," an idea that complicates the possibility of a memorial. On first reading, Wordsworth appears to lament the ruination to nothingness that afflicts material artifacts, but he actually points out a failure in artifacts to serve as memorials. What the pedlar sees (and what the poet cannot) is that the cottage is no memorial for Margaret after all. He knows what cannot be seen there and knows that the cottage's memorial power has died with her, a paradox that explains the difficulty the two speakers (and Wordsworth) have in interpreting her story effectively. But the pedlar's special challenge is that for him the artifacts were always imperfectly present. Even when Margaret (and Robert) inhabited them, he experienced them as ruins. They are and are not memorials, just as they are and are not 'natural' or 'human,' subject or object. And that uncertain status was always part of their condition.

The figurative use of the word *garb* in reference to the cottage wall refers to Margaret's act of dressing her cottage in decorative flowers and begins the poem's series of images in which clothing commonly mediates the subject's relation with the world. Garments are the first thing that Margaret makes note of as she awaits passerbys who might have word of her abandoned husband: "garments that shewed the Soldier's red, /

Or crippled Mendicant in Sailor's garb" are always stopped for inquiry (463-64). After the failure of the soldier or mendicant to give information on Robert, Wordsworth refers to them as "they / Whose presence gave no comfort" (468-69). The clothes do, however, briefly allow Margaret to articulate her loss to someone, and a world without the soldier's garb circulating in the countryside would be a world without Margaret, or at least the poem's conception of her. Earlier in the passage, the pedlar says, "For hours she sate, and evermore her eye / Was busy in the distance, shaping things / Which made her heart beat quick" (454-57). Her eye's relation to the artifacts, or "things," that approach recalls the poet of "Incipient Madness" whose spirit sought nourishment in the speck of glass. In *The Ruined Cottage*, such power, or habit, becomes associated with clothing otherness in a certain way. Her labor of hope, what keeps her "busy" creating evidence of her loss, finds its incarnation in the creation of clothing. Even as she interacts with the pedlar in MS D, he feels that her unutterably helpless look "seemed to cling upon" upon, connecting with him through a visual exchange that covers and reshapes his identity, even to himself.[20]

As the speechlessness of trauma infects the pedlar earlier in the poem, so does Margaret's habit of shaping the outside world into garments. He projects Margaret's hope as foolish by referring to the remains of Robert that she has let remain where they were: "Yet I saw the idle loom / Still in its place. His Sunday garments hung / Upon the self-same nail, his very staff / Stood undisturbed behind the door" (432-434). Beyond the sheer sympathy he feels for Margaret at seeing these signs of her husband, his understanding of the signs hides, or presupposes, a way of reading artifacts that does not entirely separate his perspective from hers. Though the passage decries the idleness and

waste of the scene, his eye is as "busy" as Margaret's, reading a pathetic absence into these objects. The enjambment that leaves Robert's garments hanging at the end of the line before a nail is revealed to support them suggests a moment of strange self-will on their part, a ghosting of the artifact. When the pedlar shuts down the hint of supernaturalism, his words betray an obsessiveness that rivals Margaret's. It is not the same nail, but the "self-same" nail; it is not his staff, but his "very" staff. The temporal sameness insisted upon by the pedlar relies upon a temporal distance between his two viewings of the scene, but his language is so self-conscious, it nearly casts doubt on the truth of Margaret's loss. As one who likes to play truant with his tale and capture a succession of images, the absence to be noted in these artifacts is undesirably discursive.

Alan Liu has written extensively on how Wordsworth's imagery in the poem follows an economic model that is informed by his biographical experience with debt as well as his understanding of the larger economic realities facing weavers, like Robert and Margaret, in late-eighteenth-century England (311-341). Turning to the broader economic concerns in the poem allows one to disentangle the artifact, as the product of labor, from the Wordsworthian anxiety over Nature. The pedlar begins his tale by explaining that a complex social system actually explains the state of the cottage, the harsh economic conditions caused by "[t]wo blighting seasons when the fields were left / With half a harvest" which only made worse the "plague of war" (134-136). Throughout, artifacts and the temporal reality that they punctuate and create are involved with a larger economic context such that clothing the past becomes a kind of labor that keeps the eye/I "busy."

The scenes of Margaret's actual labor show her literally tracing time with thread. The pedlar points to a path: "There to and fro she paced through many a day / Of the warm summer, from a belt of flax / That girt her waist spinning the long-drawn thread / With backward steps" (459-462). Her action places her inside a cottage industry, but it creates an artifact, which serves as the fabric of temporal passage. Her labor gives time a distinctly human meaning. Kurt Fosso says that she is "figured as a type of historian" or "she is fundamentally a figure of the elegist, whose vocation is the textualizing of what has been lost. ... no amount of backward steps will lead her back to Robert or to her proper mourning of him. They will only measure, like poetic meter, her distance from that loss" (110). In the move from historian to elegist, Fosso recreates a critical habit, shared with Liu and Pfau, of quickly moving beyond the material labor in the poem to see an allegory for Wordsworth's poetic career. David Simpson comes closer to analyzing the effects of Margaret's labor on her body and relation to her spot, noting that she "takes on the spectral form of the factory worker," spending "her days walking backwards, to and fro, spinning her tether in a motion that mimics the movements of a machine and the automated motion of a ghost" (47). Her mechanized clothing of the past, representing it as thread, ties her to the spot in a literal manifestation of the haunting connection that "ties" the poet in "Incipient Madness" to his speck of glass. In light of that abject relationship, the flax resembles a replacement umbilical cord that is trying to recreate the lost unity of infancy.[21] As in "Salisbury Plain," however, artifacts do not merely punctuate history, they recreate it entirely which is what the flax does here. The flax is also a commodity, and typically Margaret's labor of mourning would be circulated, losing its umbilical connection to her. When the pedlar says that when we die those

things we loved die, his logic opens up the frightful possibility that the loss of those things through economic circulation could bring about death more quickly that one expects, and Margaret's ghastly presence suggests that death is already integrated into her life.

As Wordsworth was composing his poem, he and Dorothy were busily engaged in their own production of garments, sewing shirts for William and his brother Richard. The family letters surrounding the labor detail how the alienation of from one's labor intertwines with the creation of historical reality. Dorothy tells Richard in a letter from 19 March [1797] that she is

> sorry that we have not already got some shirts prepared for you as you say you are in great want of them. We did not receive the cloth till last week, and till I get a measure of the necks and wrists we shall not be able to do any thing. I will thank you to send me a sheet of paper the exact length of your necks and wristbands; tell me how long you would choose the *bodies* of the shirts to be, and whether you would choose *two* button holes upon the wrists to be worn with loose buttons; or one button hole and a button fastened to the wrist (178)

In a letter draft dated 3 May 1797, Richard writes that he needs the shirts from Dorothy very badly and puts on one of the sheets an indication of the wrists and collar lengths he is looking for and asks for a body of "tolerable good length" (182). While letters allow the siblings to overcome their physical distance, the production of the shirts recreates Richard's bodily presence in front of his siblings to the extent that they receive slips of paper that have literally clothed their brother's wrist and neck. Dorothy and William, like Margaret, are "shaping things" from a distance, and their work clings to his body even in its absence. Critics, such as McGann, Liu, Pfau and Simpson, invested in the way *The Ruined Cottage* reflects economic conditions in Britain have ignored these passages, though they demonstrate a kind of cottage industry, even if relegated to the family. In a

letter from 7th of May, William suggests to Richard that the entire household is laboring to produce his clothes: "Your shirts are begun to today, and shall be dispatched as fast as possible. We shall not be able to make as good as we could wish as the whole house is indisposed" (182). Their work demonstrates how easily material objects begin to take on a supplementary relation to those around them. The responsibility William feels to the shirts implies a slippage of presence between producer, consumer and product that could prefigure the possible life and death of things that the pedlar discusses.

The creation of artifacts with which to clothe Richard helps to articulate the consequences of artifacts in the poem. Liu places the professions of Margaret and Robert in tension between the different weaving economies of the Northern and Bristol areas (326-331). Household weavers in both areas took out their wool on loan, but Liu describes the "subsistence scale" of Northern debt and repayment as a "sort of static noise of economic existence," so unobtrusive that he can claim, "*debt was invisible*" (328-329). In the Bristol area, however, the clothier kept ownership of the wool so that the "weaver worked in a nascent wage system not yet fully differentiated from the piece-rate system of payment" (329). Invisible debt is a highly charged non-image to put in proximity of a poem so obsessed with loss. Margaret's shaping countenance is in a sense an image of rage against invisible debt as she not only seeks the return of her husband, but seeks a way to clothe her loss appropriately. The pedlar, for his part, is less inclined to dress up grief in this way, not least of all because his job is to keep the area's economy circulating, taking and exchanging the relics he finds, reducing them to an ahistorical currency. Simpson is the first critic to question the pedlar's motives openly for this reason. The lack of apparent trade between Margaret and the pedlar "might signal a purity of

interaction," he writes. "Or it might prompt some reflection on the pedlar's role as a poet-proxy, one who makes stories out of the demise of others and whose profit is deferred for a future while maintaining a detachment that can seem forbidding or even amoral" (49). The pedlar-as-war profiteer is perhaps an uncharitable interpretation, but even if the pedlar (and by extension Wordsworth) does not revel in sorrow, there is no denying he is integral to the system that creates it: "It might even suggest that the pedlar is an analogue for circulation itself, of the commodity or money form that enables everything while remaining in itself nothing" (49). The pedlar is not buying the flax from Margaret, but someone like him is ready and waiting to take her labor of mourning—as literally as she could make it—and sell it, exposing the relation between its artifactual and commodity statuses. One even suspects that the idle loom and Sunday garments bother the pedlar in part because they could be sold if Margaret were willing to part with them.

The alienation of the market proves a disruption to the production of artifacts even in the story of Richard and William's shirts. In the beginning, the sewing of the shirts brings the family into proximity as a community, and the absence of Richard is lessened by his spectral presence giving form to the shirts his siblings make for him. They are in a sense a memorial for their absent brother, giving the absence a phenomenality it would not have otherwise. The dynamic changes when Richard broaches the issue of debt and payment, in effect opening up the familial economy to a larger market economy. In the drafted letter of 5 May, Richard writes: "I sent you an acct. of what I paid for the linen for *your* shirts. How am I to be repaid these and other sums?" (182). Two kinds of absence then find representation in the labor of Wordsworth and Dorothy, the absence of their brother who gives meaning and intent to the labor and

the debt owed Richard for the material. The evidence of the debt is the account drawn up by Richard, a device he encourages his brother to use in his own affairs with debtors: "I would advise you by all means to keep a clear regular Ac[coun]t D[ebto]r and C[redito]r between yourself and them....you should not trust too much to Memory" (182). Richard's sound business sense displaces the problem of the artifact onto the ledger sheet where debt can be enumerated as a telling presence, but juxtaposing memory with finances problematizes the means of remembering in the poem Wordsworth is composing at the time.

Richard's admonition discourages reading garments as signs of particular absences. Instead the debts that have been created, monetarily by the loaned linen and artifactually by the loaned representation of his body in the form of slips of papers, need to be closed. The pedlar's self-reassurance that the garments hung on the nail are Robert's is based on the recognition that they would fit Robert's bodily form in the same way Richard's shirts are fitted to his form even though he is absent. When Richard instructs his brother not to trust in memory, and to legitimize debt in writing, he identifies a threat to the artifact's meaning. Once the artifact's debt is paid, its power ceases. Once the shirts leave Racedown, they no longer spectrally diminish the distance between the siblings. The pedlar understands the importance of this debt in creating memory, which is why he plays truant with his tale. What gives the artifact its power is that it appears to hang upon those absent subjects. If that distance were cut down by repayment, there would be no mourning and no loss. The ruined cottage is perhaps in little danger of being bought and circulated out of its monumentality, but through his tale, the pedlar (and

Wordsworth) displaces the absence into language, not trusting memory wholly, just as Richard suggested.[22]

In the poem's second part, the pedlar offers clothing as an overarching metaphor to his entire story, but with the hesitance of one concerned about the fantasy state of absence he invokes. He has stopped his tale and has to be entreated upon by the poet to continue. The pedlar expresses hope that there is in the sadness of the tale a "power to virtue friendly" before he tells the poet:

> ... 'Tis a common tale,
> By moving accidents uncharactered,
> A tale of silent suffering, hardly clothed
> In bodily form, and to the grosser sense
> But ill adapted, scarcely palpable
> To him who does not think (231-236)

One whose peregrinations so familiarize him with the area would certainly know if Margaret's fate reflects a larger pattern of socio-economic injustice in the community. The tale's specificity is, however, not common, and not only does Margaret risk being forgotten in the sweep of history, the pedlar's obsession with the spot seems in part to result from this anxiety. The pedlar's suggestion that even the type of tale is commonly known is immediately countered by his words describing it as virtually invisible and mute. The suggestion of barely present corporeality in the tale recalls the image of Dorothy and William fitting shirts to their absent brother's body, a routine, but imaginative act that succeeded in making their brother slightly palpable. That dream was eventually retold as a written account of debt and repayment, but the pedlar's tale is stubbornly "uncharactered," that is, unwritten, inaccessible to the repetition of language. He attempts to work with specters in his tale as he tries to make the unutterable utterable.

The term *common* is a loaded one in Wordsworth's poetry and echoes the preface to *Lyrical Ballads*. "The principal object" of *Lyrical Ballads*, says Wordsworth, is

> to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible in a selection of language really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect; and, further, and above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature: chiefly, as far as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement (597)

Even here, one must cover up—or clothe—what is common in order to uncover truth. The plot of *The Ruined Cottage* fits the later formulation of Wordsworth's poetic project in its culling an otherwise unnoticed occurrence among the poor in order to tease out a moral. Still, a certain anxiety lurks in these passages that what is merely common will not be noticed by spectators, and *common* can be read as not merely *ordinary* but as its related sense, *communal*. That which belongs to everyone tends to get immersed in, and lost to, habit. *The Ruined Cottage* and *Lyrical Ballads* clearly seek to overcome the limits of commonality by making the ordinary special, but *The Ruined Cottage* in its distanced embrace of the sorrowful narrative evinces unease in elevating something out of the common into the ownable. Clothing the outside world is part of Margaret's pathology, and the pedlar is wary of presenting his tale in the same way. Even the claim that he clothes the past to make it "scarcely palpable" inserts it into an economy of scarcity like the one that leaves Margaret with only "tattered clothes" to fight the seasonal cold (485).[23] The pedlar finds himself in a bind; the truly common event, unchanged by a shaping eye, is merely the result of social, political, and economic forces, but clothing it imaginatively appears to offer nothing more than a supporting role in the play of those social forces.

The imaginative act, giving the tale bodily form, bringing the past to life, or partial life, enters Margaret's suffering into an economy of exchange that threatens its significance. The ghosting of the tale's figures serves as an odd corollary to the later statement of principles in the preface. In that case the given event could be re-figured by the imagination; in this case, achieving the given event—the pedlar's determination of what took place around the cottage—is an act of imagination. The preface's re-clothing of the common event could turn out to be the re-clothing of a re-clothing, a problematic formulation that the pedlar already invites by clothing the tale in a body, further muddling the inside and outside of the tale. Encouraging his listener to think in order to grasp the tale implies that the onlooker should seek to make the event more palpable, granting it further incarnation and ironically approaching the past as Margaret does, with an eye ready to shape things in the distance of the past.[24]

The Gifts of Nature

The complexity of the pedlar's relation to the past harkens back to his description of the wall's garb, where his language begins to strip away and invade Margaret rather than re-incarnate her. The "worm is on her cheek," the hut is "stripped of its garb," and the wall is "tricked / With weeds and the rank spear grass." Part of the ruin's overlap with humanity is that it is subject to violation, so images of the worm invading Margaret's corpse quickly cut to a picture of the hut being stripped and overrun with phallic spear grass. The wall's violation throws Margaret's in a strange light, for the wall is said to *offer* itself to Nature (in the form of the wind). The glimpse of subjectivity from the hut, which is able to participate in its transformation into a ruin, recalls the similar glimpse

seen in Stonehenge by the traveler before it is immediately forgotten. In this case, the momentary subjectivity granted the wall is closed off by the pedlar's refrain, "She is dead," but the artifact's essential and yet problematic place in the pedlar's discourse has been revealed. Though Margaret and the pedlar at various points seek to shape things into clothed absences, the pedlar here figures the wall as giving itself to be shaped and worn down by time.

The figure of the cottage offering itself makes an attempt to temper the voyeurism that hangs over the poem. The pedlar's language substitutes the wall for Margaret's corpse, and the sexualized imagery of the passage reflects the potentially troubling relation of the dead woman and the male speakers looking to make use of, or create their own psychological value from, her life.[25] Noting that the poet-narrator was only added in the course of revisions to the text, Faflak contends, "This framing [between Pedlar and Poet] relocates the dialogue between the narrator and Margaret as a triangulated exchange that recuperates Margaret's alterity dialectically in the conversation between two men" (85). Thus, what could have been a "narrative of sensibility" becomes a "metadiscourse, which asserts its masculine prerogative over this body by rationalizing it away" (85). The possible evasionary techniques of Wordsworth's revisions seem even more complicated, when one considers the rather crude way Margaret's body and the wall are metonymically joined. The violence of their gaze is mitigated by its displacement onto the wall, not to mention the wall's gift of itself to the wind, which naturalizes the male gaze by proxy. The substitution of the wall for her body allows for secrecy, an imputation of unrealizable value that one would expect of any monument and that could not exist without the frame where the pedlar and poet gather around the ruin.

Wordsworth's use of the word *tricked* to describe the takeover of the ruin by the uncultivated aspects of Nature is a sly acknowledgment that something untoward has taken place in the appropriation of Margaret's body by the ruin.. Clothing absence with an artifact is a kind of trick that the subject uses to hallow that absence. The slippage from human to ruin repeats the constant figuring of artifacts in "Salisbury Plain," but looks to dissolve the figure into its constituent parts. One can see in the word *offer* that historical material still operates by the transfer of value as surely as it does in "Salisbury Plain," but now, instead of a commodity, the artifact is read as a gift. The economy of artifacts on Salisbury Plain seemed to subsume everything, but in the act of *offering* itself, the cottage wall inserts giving and self-sacrifice into the discourse. The specter of violation is seemingly exorcized by the act of giving. Immediately, the pedlar produces an image of a mother nursing, a less overtly sexualized image of woman's offered body:

> ... She is dead,
> And nettles rot and adders sun themselves
> Where we have sate together while she nurs'd
> Her infant at her breast (109-112)

"Incipient Madness" exposes the abjection in such a comparison of the monument to a mother's breast, but *The Ruined Cottage* looks to ground the reading of artifacts on a primal act of giving, even if the nursing mother has literally been replaced with serpents, the reminder to the reader that the scene is not as edenic as the figure of offering might suggest.

Identifying the cottage wall—and by extension all historical artifacts—as maternalized gifts, the pedlar intentionally confuses the labor of reading an artifact with the unity of the mother-infant bond. In these passages, Wordsworth uses the elements of the foundational, figural murder that Warminski discusses in the famous "Blessed Babe"

passage from *The Prelude* (1805). Wordsworth's mother must die in the poem so that the "Wordsworth Baby could become an 'I' and the Boy Wordsworth could become a poet" (24). Margaret's relationship to the pedlar is more complicated than a mother's to her child because Margaret's maternal gift to her child in the form of her bare breast is exchanged by the pedlar, perhaps as a means to displace his own sexual guilt, for the gift of the cottage wall. There is an attempt to realize the unity of the mother-child relationship in the pedlar-cottage interaction. Not only is it threatened by his sexuality, however, but his relationship to the wall is marked by the absence of Margaret, just as Richard's shirts are marked by his absence from Racedown.

The poem does not easily accept the substitution, and the gift's relationship to immanence and presence breaks down as it, too, becomes associated with debt. When critics, like Simpson, observe that the pedlar might be profiting off of Margaret's loss in some way, part of what they are responding to is his lack of charity (49). The poem does mention possible avenues of charity. Referring to the time of the blighting seasons, the pedlar recalls that "shoals of artisans / Were from their daily labour turned away / To hang for bread on parish charity / They and their wives and children" (154-157). Again, *hanging* implies a debt, but unlike Robert's garments which are in need of his body, the bodies of affected artisans are hanging in wait of nourishment. Liu suggests that Robert refuses the charity, but it is Margaret who does not appear to trust handouts. She tells the pedlar that she "had lost her elder child, / That he for months had been a serving-boy / Apprenticed by the parish" (403-405), lines that Jonathan Wordsworth calls an "overstatement" because of the brief suggestion that the child is dead (134). Construing it as a death is just one more evocation of death-in-life in the poem, however, and instead

of seeing the apprenticeship as an opportunity, she reads it as the completion of an economic exchange with the parish. Her son is in effect payment for the debt of charity. The arrangement follows the same form of her husband's enlistment, and reveals that social institutions, such as the church and the military, do not outright fail Margaret's family as much as they force the individuals into exchanges that alienate them from a feeling of agency. Following the logic of Margaret, the artisans *hanging* on charity find that it is not a completed exchange and that a debt is still to be paid, if not with their own sons, then with their acceptance of the institution that can take the sons of others.

The definitional breakdown between a gift and a debt is evident in the Wordsworth letters about Richard's shirts, for what at first seems to be the offering of sibling labor becomes an account that needs to be settled. In his famous study of the gift, Marcel Mauss determines from his ethnographic research that the gift is the "origin of credit" in the West (34-35), and he suggests that to speak of a gift is necessarily to speak of a "gift exchange" (45).[26] Wordsworth's financial outlook at the time perfectly captured how a gift could quickly become contaminated by debt and exchange. He was focused on an endowment he had received from his friend Raisley Calvert, which offered him the image of financial security (Gill 84). Liu writes that Wordsworth saw this income as "pure endowment," "seemingly immaculate of market exigencies," and "not really money: it was benevolence" (335, 336).[27] Even so, Wordsworth loaned the money out to a pair of unreliable acquaintances, Basil Montagu and Charles Douglas, an act that eventually caused him great anxiety when the unpaid debts put off the repayment of his relatives in Whitehaven for their funding of his education, part of which came due in early 1797. Wordsworth turned to his brother Richard in his letters for a bond to help

ease the situation, and it is this debt-obligation that haunts the labor Dorothy and William put into Richard's shirts. Even in Mauss's understanding, the gift is always the giving of a debt, and Margaret's approach to charity in the poem recalls Wordsworth's unpleasant experience of this phenomenon.

The problem of the gift extends further into the poem's very conception of Nature. The poet opens MS B with an epigraph taken from Robert Burns's 'Epistle to J. L.*****k [Lapraik]":

> Give me a spark of nature's fire,
> Tis the best learning I desire.
> ...
> My muse though homely in attire
> May touch the heart

As Liu notes, in this version of the poem at least, "give" is the first word of the poem, signifying its thematic importance.[28] Burns's poem contrasts the education from Nature to one received in schools, and as an entrée into Wordsworth's poem, and perhaps Wordsworth's poetry in general, the lines locate effective poetry as a gift from Nature. Yet, the reference to homely attire suggests that the poet's muse is in fact Margaret in her tattered clothing, an image of a woman victimized by her economic and social conditions and which bears an uneasy relationship to Nature. Moreover, *homely* becomes a pun in a poem centered around Margaret's abandoned home. The poem's muse is a home, and although MS B has transformed the "speck" of glass into a "spark" from Nature, the poem remains preoccupied with the ruins of economic and social injustice and the pseudo-life they project. Nature's fire would seem to indicate the sun's role in the poet's inspiration, which fits well with the poem's frequent use of light and dark to set its scenes, but its power is immediately bound to economy in the epigraph, as though the

power of enlightenment from "Salisbury Plain" is now entirely subsumed by the artifactual economy it makes visible. Nature's prime gift to man fails as a gift even before the poem begins, its spark no better than the other glittering half-presences in Wordsworth's early poetry that are always soon to be absent. Even biographically, the gift of education is not pure beneficence for Wordsworth as he lives in anxiety over the debt he owes Whitehaven.

Light, in particular the sun, is as key to Wordsworth's image of the experience of time in *The Ruined Cottage* as it is in "Salisbury Plain." The day before their encounter near Margaret's cottage, the poet sees the pedlar "alone, / And on the middle of the public way, / Standing to rest himself. / His eyes . . . turned towards the setting sun" (38-40). The sun sits at the end of a series of gazes here, and the pedlar's absorption into the sun immediately troubles the economy of memory that emerged in "Salisbury Plain." In that poem, as discussed in chapter 2, light enforced figuration of subject and object. Early in *The Ruined Cottage* the sun becomes part of the economy itself, entering an exchange with the pedlar's eye and granting it the power to illuminate subject-object relationships just as the sun, the source of light, does. Immediately the sun-like power of the pedlar's gaze affects the poet as he sees a "tear / Stand in his luminous eye when he described / The house in which his early youth was passed" (45-47). A transitive substitution has taken place so that the rays of the sun are now associated with the pedlar's *luminous* eye. Liu notes that this transference "shows the Pedlar to possess 'eyes' of such intensity that they emulate the sun, the fount of Platonic reality in a shady universe" (316), but while Liu considers the power of the pedlar's vision to reshape the external world in general, the immediate concern of his luminous eye here is to reflect, as if the sun, the absent

house he grew up in. As with the female vagrant, remembered artifacts are associated with the play of light, but the poet-narrator controls the materiality of history through his appropriation of the sun's power to illuminate the past. While his focus gathers around the eye of the of the pedlar, the poet "found (he) was no stranger to the spot" where the pedlar lived (48-49), and the pedlar elucidates a secret significance—like the one that resides in the ruined cottage—in the spot. Swann correctly notes that at this point in the poem, like the end of "Incipient Madness," the "[p]oetic consciousness claims fellowship with the sources of light itself " (88), but the insertion of the poet-narrator tests the logical limits of such a large claim, especially when addressing the temporality of loss.

Tellingly, the poet *found* that the pedlar's birthplace contains a secret significance to him, the same word he uses when coming upon the ruined cottage. Taken literally, the line speaks of revealing the already present. Though the poet claims he was not a stranger to the spot, in fact the spot's full value to him had not been revealed until the pedaer's description of it. His words elide the spot's interim strangeness. The act of elision is furthered by the poet's displaced attention from the peddler's stories to his luminous eye. The pedlar's eye is figured as the "sun" illuminating an object from the past, and the poet is able to react to the remembered house as if it were the cottage being illuminated by the actual sun. Whereas light in "Salisbury Plain" reveals the world as an economy of haunted artifacts, light in *The Ruined Cottage* becomes integrated into subjectivity. The elision of strangeness in the "recognition" of the pedlar's youthful home creeps into the perception of the present.

In looking for a suitable metaphor for the spectrality of commodities, which seem to exist outside of men while merely reflecting the social relations between laborers,

Marx looks to the function of the optic nerve, in which a mechanical process is naturalized:

> In the same way, the impression made by a thing on the optic nerve is perceived not as a subjective excitation of that nerve but as the objective form of a thing outside the eye. In the act of seeing, of course, light is really transmitted from one thing, the external object, to another thing, the eye. It is a physical relation between physical things. As against this, the commodity form, and the value-relation of the products of labor within which it appears, have absolutely no connection with the physical nature of the commodity and the material [*dinglich*] relations arising out of this (165).

Marx's description of the complex phenomenon of the commodity seems on the verge of declaring that all external reality is the result of mystification before backing away. Wordsworth also looks to light to save him from a mystification that could prove to be insurmountable. All the glittering specks and sparks of the manmade world could potentially be naturalized if viewed as merely the sun's gift.

The sun's gift is problematic, however. The poet's early visits to the pedlar's childhood home remained incomplete until he later heard the pedlar describe it. When the poet looks to the pedlar's luminous eye, it is with the half understanding that light has let him down in the earlier encounter with the hut whose history had remained estranged to him. The encounter with the ruined cottage is an uncanny repetition of that earlier failure of the gaze. The postlapsarian guilt of the allusion to Adam and Eve in the very first appearance of the naked cottage walls stems from the poet's previous failure to read the pedlar's childhood home fully. The home held secret knowledge that he could not identify—or even acknowledge as a secret—until the pedlar-as-sun elucidated his ignorance. The naked walls of the ruined cottage reflect a failure of the gaze's absolute authority to know, and instead of approaching a place of omphalic origin, he approaches a place that is already displaced. The purity of the sun is in effect contaminated by its

entrance into the debt-ridden economy of artifacts. As the pedlar turns his luminous eye to re-enliven the past for the poet, the poet's new knowledge of the place's history will include a doubt that his knowledge is complete. In other words, within the gift of the tale will be a debt, the unutterable shaping of things that cannot return (because they were never fully present), but can only be reshaped.

The sun's gift of enlightenment fails because it leaves dark spots of missed opportunities and ignorance that cannot be redeemed. The small economy of artifacts over which the pedlar and poet fret actually resides inside a larger material economy of Nature, powered by the sun, in which waste is unavoidable. Margaret's decline is read by the pedlar in the her hut's return to Nature, an expenditure without market or historical value. After she begins to wander away from home in her distressed state, he notes that the "honeysuckle crowded round the door / And from the wall hung down in heavier wreathes" and that "knots of worthless stone-crop started out / Along the window's edge, and grew like weeds / Against the lower panes" (304-312). The knots recall the household members' occupation as spinners, and in particular the care Margaret takes with her flax to avoid knots. What is labor for them is waste on the part of the sun as the stone-crop has no value in a trade. It proves incapable of tracing time in the manner of Margaret's flax since the knots disrupt its linear growth. Vegetation's failure as an artifact is carried onward in the next few lines regarding the "changed" garden area where pedlar sees the "unprofitable" bindweed "spread his bells / From side to side" (314-315). The word *stone-crop* and the *bells* of the bindweed belie a human imagination that seeks commodities even in the waste of Nature.[29] And while the pedlar can muse upon the cottage as on a picture, he complains that "an hour / Was wasted" in the garden (320-321)

as if the sun is not just wasting its light on non-commodities, but on the very conditions of material existence (the "hour"). Indeed, its energy goes to disarticulating material artifacts, replacing humanity's labor to punctuate and keep track of time with the atemporality of Nature.

The creep of Nature's destruction threatens the economy of the poem with a non-human economy, similar to what Georges Bataille calls general economy.[30] The scarcity or abundance of resources changes according to the perspective one takes: "From the *particular* point of view, the problems are posed *in the first instance* by a deficiency of resources. They are posed *in the first instance* by an excess of resources if one starts from the *general* point of view" (196). Whereas at the end of "Salisbury Plain" there was not enough light to erase all of mankind's superstitious relics such as Stonehenge, *The Ruined Cottage* finds that there is too much light, if it is not chained to a market of exchange. If the sun's gift to man is not checked, then all experience will be wasted energy and wasted time, but even the language used to talk about the sun's wasted resources, *stone-crop* or *honeysuckle* (a reminder of Wordsworth's frequent suckling babes), hints at something useful and nourishing within the excess.

Wasting (is) the Gift

Wordsworth's heliotropism identifies Nature's gift as largely wasteful even as language unconsciously pulls that gift into an economy where its waste can be quantified and rationalized. Making the unutterable into language, naming the useless growth a stone-*crop*, forces the gift of Nature into a system of substitution where it no longer functions as a pure gift. Bataille equates giving with the acquisition of power (203), yet

while Margaret does achieve a memorial power that she does not have economically, Bataille's preferred method of spending is giving, which the poem re-envisions as merely another form of exchange. The creation of artifacts that Margaret engages in has no place in even Bataille's universe of excessive spending and waste. In his introduction to general economy, he admits that he will be "leaving aside pure and simple dissipation, analogous to the construction of the Pyramids" (187). He envisions a rational economy within an irrational universe, but the creation of historical remnants with no use or price value is something he must jettison from both. The waste of the monument provides Margaret with a potential non-economizable form of protest, but her monumentalizing power comes from a miserly withholding rather than active creation. Thomas writes, "ruin is a surplus, and a superfluous, object: it is without a use or function in the present, except in so far as the meaning of a ruin can be adapted to the needs—often political ones—of a particular present" (181). The superfluousness of the artifact is, in fact, negated by particular uses in the present, which put it back into circulation. Margaret's non-use, non-spending seeks to preserve the surplus and to refuse the cultural imperative to spend her monumentality, a non-act that would fit uneasily into Wordsworth's earlier protest poetry or the political poetry that critics like McGann seem to hold out as Wordsworth's road not taken.

Margaret's waste is usually interpreted through her poor maintenance of her home and a failure to properly care for her child, though another key moment of waste that often goes unnoticed is her apparent hoarding of her husband's gold. Whether one sees Robert's abandonment as a moral failing or a maneuver out of necessity, Wordsworth

certainly presents it as a dramatic gesture, even as it seems to halt any dramatic action from taking place afterward. Wordsworth writes of Robert:

> He left his house; two wretched days had passed,
> And on the third by the full break of light,
> Within her casement full in view she saw
> A purse of gold. "I trembled at the sight."
> Said Margaret, "for I knew it was his hand
> That placed it there, and on that very day
> By one, a stranger, from my husband sent,
> The tidings came that he had joined a troop
> Of soldiers going to a distant land.
> He left me thus (261-69)

Margaret's description provides a parallel to the poet's discovery of the ruined cottage earlier in the tale, a remnant that suggests more than the eye can see. In this case, Margaret does not care for the money at all, but wishes to call back the person for whom it was exchanged, and Wordsworth provides no indication that Margaret spends Robert's enlistment money on her family or any kind of exchange at all. Economic concerns haunt the story as critics like McGann, Liu and Simpson have noted, but Wordsworth refuses to make exchange an explicit event in the poem's narrative, even when money is literally discussed. There is no discussion of the food or supplies that the money might provide, and even Robert's transaction is obscured by his sudden absence and literal substitution by the purse. It is possible, given Margaret's eventual death, that she refuses to accept the gift and chooses to turn the purse into a non-circulating reminder of her husband, like his clothes or his spinning wheel. With the image of the purse, Liu believes "*The Ruined Cottage* can then at last dedicate itself to the full recognition, and so reception, of the gift" (356), but Margaret appears unwilling to accept the exchange act of her husband.

By seemingly letting the money go to waste, and later, her entire trove of possessions, Margaret stands in opposition to a national economy that has victimized her

and her family. Her conjuration of Robert's absent hand placing the gold on the casement recalls Adam Smith's "invisible hand" at work. The hand represents in Smith an invisible labor behind the scene of a domestic investment that creates value for the (national) public good in spite of that value being "no part of (the investor's) intention" (35). By not showing Margaret's use of the money, Wordsworth portrays his character as a protest against the national economic machine. Wasting wealth is a powerful social maneuver, according to Mauss's anthropological research, whose ideas form a significant part of Bataille's concept of general economy. Bataille sees general economy as a "Copernican revolution: a reversal of thinking—and of ethics" (187), providing a unique interpretive lens for understanding Margaret's perceived victimization. Margaret's attempt to *waste* takes her closer to the power of the sun than the pedlar's attempt to bring it into an economy of artifacts, for she realizes that "energy, which constitutes wealth, must ultimately be spent lavishly (without return)" (184). If there is any virtue in her actions, it comes only from the perspective of general economy. Bataille identifies victimization as the effect of a limited economy: "It causes us to *undergo* what we could *bring about* in our own way if we understood. It deprives us of the choice of exudation that might suit us" (185). From the perspective of a general economy, Margaret does not "waste time" in her mourning and wandering as the pedlar suspects, but she chooses the power of excess and waste over the power(lessness) of economic agency. Like the sun, she luxuriates in spending without looking to profit.

By not using the money, Margaret creates an *ad hoc memento mori* for Robert, and her treatment of the purse serves as a template against which to judge the poet-narrator's approach to the ruined cottage earlier in the poem. Though it follows the

discovery of the naked walls, Robert's money presents a possible redemptive iteration of the scene, and its imagery even invokes the resurrection of Christ. The Christological meaning of the passage is evident most notably in the disappearance of Robert before "arising" on the third day.[31] On a simple level the revelation of the purse offers (or could have offered) a measure of financial redemption to the desperately poor family. Feeling a strong need for income at the time in his own right, Wordsworth could conceivably understand how the loss of Robert, despite the heartache, could involve a profitable substitution for Margaret's family in strictly financial terms. However, in the story of Christ, what is left behind after the Ascent is not a substance, but a promise. The indication of the substitution comes in the form of angels defined by their celestial clothing: "two men stood by them in shining garments" (Luke 24:4), a man "clothed in a long white garment" (Mark 16:5), "two angels in white" (John 20: 12). Matthew records that the "angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sate upon it. / His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow" (28: 2-3). These figures echo the ghostly materiality of clothing that circulates through the poem, its ability to give substance to an absence, in essence to phenomenalize absence like an angel. The reworking of these figures of transcendence into a purse of gold transforms Robert's abandonment into a promise of return, which underwrites the near-religious zeal with which Margaret anticipates his return.[32]

A notable difference between the poet's discovery of the ruined cottage and Margaret's discovery of the money is that Margaret understands the meaning of the coins intuitively before the stranger is sent to explain Robert's whereabouts, while the cottage walls appear to be secretly conferring away from the poet. The poet makes no attempt to

guess at the cause or meaning of the ruin before him, but also what Margaret "knows" does not follow a strict understanding of the verb. Her faith is enough, and it causes her to tremble just as at the sight of the angel in the tomb, "for fear of him, the keepers did shake, and became as dead men" (Matt. 28.4). Wordsworth is perhaps also referring to Paul's letter to the Philippians where he instructs them, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence; work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. / For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (2.12-13). The biblical verses that resound in the passage present an absence that is not to be understood only as an absence, nor is it to be understood as an exchange. The angelic couriers and Paul desire that their witnesses no longer worry themselves with presence or absence and instead hold fast to a promise that does not submit to notions of material exchange, for the fulfillment of this promise is heavenly and transcends the economies of scarcity. Wordsworth's imagery plays on Christ's promise of heavenly wealth earlier in Matthew: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through, and steal. / But lay up for your selves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through, nor steal: / For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also (6: 19-21).[33] The gospel goes on to identify two competing economies, saying that "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon" (6.24). Wordsworth's poem presents a similar bind, though the economy of God is transformed into the historical redemption offered in an artifact. The problem of overlapping economies is solved in Matthew by an act of will: "The light of the body is the eye: If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light" (6.22). Margaret's

eye becomes singular in its obsessive labor for redemption, but her refusal to commit her eye to serve Mammon and participate in the socio-political realities around her has tragic consequences. The forgoing of any terrestrial exchange even leads her to deny her infant the gift of a mother's nourishment. Her new way of seeing is all sacrifice.

This scene is virtually identical in MSS B and D, but in MS E (1803/4), Wordsworth revises the scene to include a new image of a promise that transcends materiality:

> Within her casement full in view she saw
> A letter folded up, which she forthwith
> Open'd, and found no writing, but therein
> Pieces of money [wrapp'd up],
> Silver and gold (597-600)

The revision presents the paradox of a letter with no writing. Calling the non-letter a letter treats his sacrifice as too great for words, unutterable in human terms like the miracle of the resurrection. His lack of reassurance to Margaret only further establishes his commitment to his sacrifice, for explaining his desertion would have given her an argument with which to quibble. In *The Gift of Death*, Derrida speaks of an individual's responsibility to another as the choice to sacrifice other possible responsibilities to other possible subjects, a choice which transcends any linguistic attempt to rationalize it. "I can never justify this sacrifice," he writes, "I must always hold my peace about it. Whether I want to or not, I can never justify the fact that I prefer or sacrifice any one (any other) to the other. I will always be secretive, held to secrecy in respect of this, for I have nothing to say about it" (70-71). By evoking the ethics of a divine secret, or promise, the scene makes the past unanswerable to the present by means of the most common of commodity forms, money. The suggestive substitution of money for angelic heralds in the scene

encourages the interpretation that the divine unanswerability of this artifact paradoxically lies within its economic movement, its spectral ability to be material and immaterial at the same time.[34] If loss is merely evidence of a divine gift, artifacts, and by extension writing, merely indicate absence that will be redeemed in the future. Initially the cottage wall is read as evidence that "she is dead," but Margaret's experience with the enlistment money might teach the onlooker to read it as evidence that "she is risen." Faith becomes the basis for artifactual experience rather than mechanical exchangeability. From one perspective such faith is no more than the mystification of exchange, but from another it reveals the excess which haunts exchange and which, in different ways, Margaret and Robert figure forth.

Faith is self-sacrifice as Margaret's apparent madness demonstrates. The consequences of Margaret's belief are evident in the pedlar's final explanation of how he finds peace despite the disquieting story he has related to the poet. Dissatisfied with the epitaphic ending of MS B, Wordsworth added a "Reconciling addendum" which further instructs the poet and reader how to find more than loss in the ruined cottage:

> I remember that those very plumes
> Those weeds, and the high spear-grass on that wall,
> By mist and silent rain-drops silvered o'er,
> As once I passed did to my heart convey
> So still an image of tranquility,
> So calm and still, and looked so beautiful
> Amid the uneasy thoughts which filled my mind,
> That what we feel of sorrow and despair
> From ruin and from change, and all the grief
> The passing shews of being leave behind,
> Appeared an idle dream that could not live
> Where meditation was (512-523)

Again, the pedlar insists upon "*those* very plumes" and "*those* weeds" on "*that* wall," asserting the same temporal consistency that he sees in Robert's coat and Margaret's

nursing bench. The plumes and weeds demonstrate a different temporal sameness than the cottage, one based on vegetable regeneration cycles rather than creation and disintegration, but the difference is covered over, or clothed by the rain, a blessing from Nature that allows the pedlar to see the ruin as an image of calm rather than a representation of loss. The experience approaches the aestheticization he earlier invokes when playing truant with his tale by viewing the cottage as a painting, but aesthetic enthrallment by itself is not enough to conquer loss.[35] The promise of turning sorrow into an idle dream is nothing more than just that, a promise, and one that the pedlar chooses not to indulge in fully. He will not muse or meditate on the gifts that have been offered to him. He passes the spear-grass whose "silvered" quality recalls the image of the speck of glass in "Incipient Madness," turning down the moment of reflection. The silvered grass shines like the angelic currency left behind by Robert, and one does not question angels. Rather, the wetness of the grass calls back to the poem's beginning when the speaker is glad to see the pedlar's hat "bedewed with water-drops" because it means he will find a drink to slake his thirst (50). Not focusing on loss, the pedlar re-envisions the exterior world as something that will *eventually* slake his grief.

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[1] This chapter addresses and cites MS B of the poem unless otherwise noted. It is the first to be titled *The Ruined Cottage* by Wordsworth and reflects an anxiety carried over from "Salisbury Plain" about the place of artifacts in his poetry. Line numbers for the various versions of the poem comes from Wordsworth, *The Ruined Cottage*, ed. James Butler, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1979.

[2] According to Gill, the changes in Wordsworth's poetic outlook with the composition of *The Ruined Cottage* were heavily influenced by his new friend Samuel Coleridge, whose philosophical passions began to add a new depth to Wordsworth's writing (135-137).

[3] I use the line numbers from Butler's edited reconstitution of the poem in his appendix (468-69).

[4] The speaker's interaction with the glass can also be read alongside Lacan's concept of the "mirror stage" in the development of the subject. The dependent relationship that Wordsworth's narrator develops with the speck subverts the ego's mastery over itself, a consequence similarly found in Lacan's formulation (76). Also, see my discussion of the mirror stage in Chapter 2 (112-123).

[5] In Kristeva's presentation of the subject's evolution, the psychoanalytical object is traditionally the "object of desire as it is elaborated within the Oedipal triangle. According to that trope, the father is the mainstay of the law and the mother the prototype of the object. Toward the mother there is convergence not only of survival needs but of the first mimetic yearnings. She is the other subject, an object that guarantees my being as subject. The mother is my first object-both desiring and signifiable" (32). Kristeva's theoretical complication is to ask, "Do we not find, *sooner* (chronologically and logically speaking), if not objects at least pre-objects, poles of attraction of a demand for air, food, and motion?" (32). She discovers within the "very process that constitutes the mother as other, a series of semi-objects that stake out the transition from a state of indifferentiation to one of discretions (subject/object)" (32). These "semi-objects" force the feeling of abjection onto the subject, a pre-linguistic sense of difference that Kristeva believes the subject re-experiences throughout life when faced with external objects that recreate a similar rejection. In the case of Wordsworth's glass pane in "Incipient Madness," the non-linguistic debt of the artifact repeats the affective problems arising from the "semi-objects" of the early maternal relationship.

[6] My reading of the passage is indebted to Andrzej Warminski.

[7] Cf. Swann: "In psychoanalytic terms, the babe's triumph is also its betrayal into the strange incontinence of desire, into an abandoned and never satisfied craving for phantasmic signs" (87)

[8] For an in-depth discussion of the poem's various stages of composition, see Butler's introduction to the Cornell *Ruined Cottage* 3-35.

[9] In *Wordsworth's Profession* Pfau places the poem in fraught relation to its cultural background and says that the poem itself "appears close to understanding its relationship, an aesthetic product, to the macroeconomy of representation in which it is embedded," merely close because "*as a cultural artifact*" (his italics), it is caught between representing and resolving the "antagonisms that circumscribe the psyche of its readers" (116). Though Pfau is more interested in the concept of aesthetic value, he captures the ambivalence of the economy of artifacts in Wordsworth's early poetry: how does one psychologically address external history if it is so confined in a system of materiality?

[10] See Butler's note to MS B, p. 44.

[11] The adjective *naked* was an alteration to the original lines describing the walls.

[12]In *Paradise Lost*, the word *ruin* appears multiple times in Milton's description of the original sinful act.

[13] The personification of the ruin is a peculiar instance that personalizes the object only to withdraw its gaze from interacting with the poet-narrator directly. Marilyn Gaul has discussed Wordsworth as mainly a poet of *things*, which can acquire "speaking faces," as opposed to *objects*, which cannot communicate, but only be talked about (54). The ruin as artifact plays with this distinction. It does not speak to the poet, but there is a definite feeling in the poem, beginning with its personification, that it could, or should, tell its story. The poet's instant recognition of the walls as potential witnesses in part explains the ruin's fascination of the two speakers.

[14] Satan "to the border comes / Of Eden, where delicious Paradise, / Now nearer, Crowns with her enclosure green, / As with a rural mound the champain head / Of a steep wilderness" (4.134-135).

[15] The complex allusions to Milton's fallen angels in Wordsworth's opening lines have been covered well by Alison Hickey (27).

[16] See my second chapter 141-143.

[17] In *The Romantic Fragment Poem*, Marjorie Levinson discusses a similar paradox in the ruin's value to Wordsworth and the reader: "The ruin, having sharply declined in real value (as that phrase is routinely

understood in a commercial context), has appreciated just as sharply in spiritual, moral, and imaginative—that is, poetical value." (222). Levinson does not specifically address the temporal disjunction of the opposing values being applied, but she does note that ruin's newer value as poetic object is a "retreat from the abrasions of unconsecrated historical existence" (222).

[18] Along with Manning's *Reading Romantics: Texts and Contexts*, Kenneth Johnston's *Wordsworth and* The Recluse and Joel Faflak's *Romantic Psychoanalysis: The Burden of the Mystery* are good sources for further psychoanalytical readings of the text.

[19] In "Adventures on Salisbury Plain" the vagrant's tale plays with a similar metonymy when she introduces the rich man who will seize all of her father's property: "Then rose a mansion proud our woods among, / And cottage after cottage owned its sway, / No joy to see a neighboring house, or stray through pastures not his own, the master took (299-302). *The Ruined Cottage* takes the rhetorical stance even further, suggesting that the one's death is in effect the death of one's property.

[20] The frequent prosopopeia of "Salisbury Plain" is converted in Wordsworth's less supernaturally infused poem to a more subtle expression of the mind's relation to its objects.

[21] Cf. the feeling of omphalos Hartman identifies in the poem (137).

[22] Wordsworth's view on the nature of language is often traced to his comments in *Essays upon Epitaphs* (1814) where he offers "'language-as-incarnation' as a replacement for the eighteenth-century notion of 'language as dress'" (Ferguson xvi), but that later movement in Wordsworth's thinking is inchoate in *The Ruined Cottage* and Richard's letters as writing appears to be a counterfeit artifact. For a reading of language-as-incarnation in Wordsworth's *Essays upon Epitaphs*, see Frances Ferguson's *Wordsworth: Language as Counter-spirit*. For readings of Wordsworth's complicated use of clothing and incarnation as means of interpreting the past, see Warminski's essay and the first chapter of Cynthia Chase's *Decomposing Figures: Rhetorical Readings in the Romantic Tradition.*

[23] Regarding the poem and scarcity, see Peter Larkin.

[24] The evolution of Wordsworth's artifactual imagination toward a clothing metaphor recurs in Book XII of *The Prelude* (1805) precisely when Wordsworth returns to the scene of Salisbury Plain. He writes that he wandered "through those vestiges of ancient times" (12.318), playing on the etymological origin of *vestige* in the Latin *vestis* or clothing. The idea of clothing as artifact continues as he "had a reverie and saw the past, / Saw multitudes of men, and here and there, / A single Briton in his wolf-skin vest / With shield and stone-axe stride across the wold" (12.320-322). The clothing—or the vesting—of the forgotten Briton finds a psychologized position inside a reverie in which the distant past can be shaped through the labor of clothing the past. Later as he discusses the "lines, circles, mounts, a mystery of shapes," that in "Salisbury Plain" create a sublime moment of astonishment, the poet reiterates his mental state: "I was gently charmed, / Albeit with an antiquarian's dream" (12.348-34.). Wordsworth recognizes the pleasure in clothing the past, but the labor of clothing absence is a dream that ends when one closes the debt and returns to the (ostensibly) real present.

[25] Against the grain of criticism that sees the pedlar as merely a sympathizer, Swann asks, "Is the pedlar toying with Margaret?" (86). More directly addressing the issue, Marlon Ross writes, "What we recognize when we uncover Wordsworth's relation to the female figures who inhabit his landscape is that the poet exploits the socio-historical experience of women's subordinate position, transforming that culturally fabricated status (a socio-historical fact) into a natural and essential place (transcendent idea)" (391)

[26] Liu adopts Mauss's concept of gift exchange in his reading of the poem (353-358).

[27] For Liu's discussion of the Calvert legacy in particular, see 335-341.

[28] Liu believes the epigraph sets up a misapprehension of what it means to give in the poem, instantiated in Robert's inability to receive aid or charity from others and corrected by the pedlar's ability to receive the gifts of nature easily (356).

[29] The herb takes its name from its habit of forming around rocks and old stone structures.

[30] For an in-depth discussion of Bataille's theory of general economy, see *Bataille* by Fred Botting and Scott Wilson.

[31] The word *trembling* suggests Kierkegaard's discussion of the Abraham and Isaac story as an interesting text to juxtapose with Wordsworth's, especially considering the theme of sacrifice. Derrida's reading of Kierkegaard in *The Gift of Death* also addresses the meaning of religious trembling in the face of divine authority and, importantly to this chapter, suggests such a relationship as the only possible act of giving as such.

[32] Averill sees Christological echoes elsewhere in what he calls "an unusual moment in the early, 'semi-Athiest' Wordsworth" (133). In lines added to MS D, the pedlar alludes to Christian in his entranced vision of Margaret merely sleeping in wait for "when he shall come again / For whom she suffered" (374-375). Averill writes, "The phrase, 'he shall come again,' while it refers to Margaret's husband, has resonances of resurrection and apocalypse. Similarly, 'for whom she suffered' recalls Christ's sacrifice for mankind" (133). The imagery is free floating prohibiting Averill from making a clean case for who is renewing the Christian promise for whom, though he theorizes that the pedlar is simply testing the Christian promise as a path through suffering.

[33] I am influenced in this reading by Derrida's discussion of celestial capital, in which he says the verses from Matthew "more than imply the pricelessness of celestial capital. It is invisible. It doesn't devalue, it can never be stolen from you. The celestial coffers are more secure, unbreakable, out of reach of any forced entry or ill-conceived gamble on the market" (98).

[34] For my discussion of commodity fetishism and spectrality in Marx, see chapter 2 129-130. Speaking of a table that becomes a commodity, Marx writes, "It changes into a thing that transcends sensuousness" (163). For Derrida's reading of the "supersensible thing" or the "sensuous non-sensuous" as specter, see Derrida's *Specters of Marx*, 148-155.

[35] Though, it has been read that way. Manning sees the addendum as a close to the "tragic rhythm of engagement, arousal, and catharsis" (27). Averill sees a poetic project "about the pleasures of tragedy" that eventually incorporates the calm of the spear-grass vision as the "earned result of an investigation into the very sources of his poetic excitement" (116, 141). M. H. Abrams is delightfully blunt: "The preoccupation is with a radical opposition in ways of seeing the world, and the need to turn from one way to the other, which is very difficult, but works wonders" (377). Even in Averill's progression, one senses the labor that goes into redemptive moments, for the poem is haunted by economic production that will *earn* the poet calm after "all passion spent" (140-141).

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Chapter 4

Scraps of Treasure: Artifacts, Style and Influence in Hawthorne

There are no such things as the Elgin Marbles.
-Melina Mercouri

Artifacts without History

In a September 29, 1855 entry to his *English Notebooks*, Nathaniel Hawthorne records his thoughts after an initial trip to the British Museum: "The fact is, the world is accumulating too many materials for knowledge. We do not recognize for rubbish what is really rubbish; and under this head must be reckoned almost everything one sees in the British Museum; and as each generation leaves its fragments and potsherds behind it, such will finally be the desperate conclusion of the learned" (365). The American author's irritation at the rampant preservation of and reverence toward material history is peculiar, given the noted antiquarian themes of his work. Profiting from artifacts is one thing, but revering them is quite another. As he moves through the museum, he is finally overcome by civilization's urge to hoard each age's materials, and presumably with the burden it places on the present, declaring that he had

"wished that the whole Past might be swept away—and each generation compelled to bury and destroy whatever it had produced, before being permitted to leave the stage" (367).

It is perhaps unsurprising that a nineteenth-century American traveler, cognizant of his own country's recent birth, would express displeasure at the ruins of previous generations, and especially unsurprising for an American writer looking to establish his

artistic identity while at the same time helping to create a national artistic character. However, in 1855 Hawthorne had already found success as an author in America with his succession of novels, *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851), and *The Blithesdale Romance* (1852). Hawthorne's fantasy of a completely buried past would presumably at some point include the destruction of his works as well, a fate that his work itself at times invites. In the prefaces to the *Scarlet Letter* and his 1846 collection of tales and sketches, *Mosses from an Old Manse*, Hawthorne explicitly compares his publications to artifacts, but rather than using such associations to underline the timelessness of his writings, he promotes them as artifacts circulating in a large marketplace, ready to provide a pleasure that others, with their presumed historical importance, are not.

In the prefatory sketch to *Mosses from an Old Manse*, titled "The Old Manse," Hawthorne presents a narratorial persona unhappy with his career and hopeful that his recent move into an old manse—in whose study Emerson wrote *Nature*, as the narrator makes clear—will grant him new luck, perhaps an "intellectual treasure...well worth those hoards of long-hidden gold, which people seek in moss-grown houses" (4-5). His representation of himself as a resident of the Manse is a fiction in the sense that, unable to keep up the rent, he had moved back to Salem in October 1845 and only turned in the sketch to his editor months later, twelve days after his fateful term began as surveyor at the Custom-House.[1] When his next line begins, "Profound treaties of morality;—a layman's unprofessional, and therefore unprejudiced views of religion;—histories (such as Bancroft might have written, had he taken up his abode here, as he once purposed) bright with picture, gleaming over a depth of philosophic thought" (5), the reader might

with good reason believe that the volume he is reading contains the "gleaming" treasures that Hawthorne hoped to find and read inside the old Manse, only to be startled with a dash and turn, "these were the works that might fitly have flowed from such a retirement. In the humblest event I resolved at least to achieve a novel" (5). The shift in imagery suggests that he does not hope merely to *discover* a source of enlightenment, but to actually produce his treasure. Hawthorne's figurative move from discoverer of treasure to creator of wealth reflects a change in America leading up the 1850s by which, as David Anthony as shown, gold was slowly evolving from a kind of treasure to a currency (9). Anthony finds that the transition was reflected in American literature through the representation of professional men no longer dependent on luck or good fortune for success, but business and competition (4).

Hawthorne's success in the "Old Manse," however, lay between the two poles of Anthony's plot. His novel, he hopes, "should evolve some deep lesson, and should possess physical substance enough to stand alone (5), a punning indication that he not only wishes to succeed in besting his literary competitors, but also to produce a book that will literally stand upright by itself (a reference to the thickness of *Mosses from an Old Manse*). The joke also puts his book in relation to the old manse itself, which does not "stand" like "ordinary abodes," which are open to any traveler (3). Instead it stands in "glimmering shadows that lay half asleep between the door of the house and the public highway" and that "were a kind of spiritual medium, seen through which, the edifice had not quite the aspect of belonging to the material world" (3). While the title of the collection *Mosses from an Old Manse* might suggest the abode as a metaphor for the book, in the space of a few pages, Hawthorne has gone further to place his haunted book

and haunted house inside an economy of treasure and currency. Further suggesting that a book as artifact is the treasure that he seeks is Hawthorne's detail that the house's "occupants, at various epochs, had left brief records and ejaculations, inscribed upon the walls" as if monumental literature can be written simply by writing on a monument.

In a letter to his editor Evert Duyckinck on July 1, 1845, Hawthorne indicates that the prefatory sketch should be a "frame work" for the collection overall (105), and he aims to "make the scene an idealization of our old parsonage, and of the river close at hand, with glimmerings of my actual life" (105). Hawthorne puts off his editor for months, however, unable to come up with his framework, and in a December 24 letter of the same year complains that he realizes to the point of distraction that he is "not writing the true thing" and fears he "ceases to effervesce" (136). When he finally puts the sketch together, he writes, "It is truth, as you will perceive, with perhaps a gleam or two of ideal light thrown over it" (152). In the sketch, the glimmering and gleaming that Hawthorne hopes to throw over the truth of his experiences is literally applied to the Manse upon its first introduction to the reader as he tries to create a certain sense of the past by a play of light over an object rather than through narrative.

In the sketch itself, as he leads the reader outside the grounds he shows an interest in cataloguing the pieces of material history that litter the landscape.[2] For example, he notes the piece of land where an Indian village used to stand, "identified by the spear and arrow-heads, the chisels, and other implements of war, labor, and the chase, which the plough turns up from the soil" (10). "I enriched myself with some very perfect specimens," Hawthorne notes, putting his antiquarian experience in terms of treasure, and he describes the "exquisite delight, too, in picking up, for one's self, an arrow-head that

was dropt centuries ago, and has never been handled since and which we thus receive directly from the hand of the red hunter" (11). This half-spectral exchange "builds up again the Indian village, amid its encircling forest, and recalls to life the painted chiefs and warriors, the squaws at their household toil, and the children sporting among the wigwams" (11). His vision recalls Alison's view of Rome, bringing the past back to life from its relics, but more than Alison, Scott and Wordsworth, Hawthorne places those artifacts and that vision into a history that will necessarily include him and his work as well.[3] After his imaginative recreation, he writes, "I can hardly be told whether it is a joy or a pain, after such a momentary vision, to gaze around in the broad daylight of reality, and see stone-fences, white houses, potato fields, and men doggedly hoeing, in their shirt-sleeves and homespun pantaloons" (11), a moment of melancholy that is quickly corrected—"But this is nonsense. The old Manse is better than a thousand wigwams" (11). The historical substitution of the Manse for the wigwams is a cultural victory, Hawthorne assures the reader, though not simply because the Indian land has been taken over by white Americans, who appear to have nothing to celebrate in their daily hand-to-mouth reality. The *Manse*, the structure and the book, is the cultural treasure that Hawthorne believes in as it allows him to participate in a trans-historical cultural economy that his fellow men have no place in.

The idea of creating profitable cultural monuments obsesses Hawthorne in the introductory sketch. Even the summer-squashes of his garden "presented an endless diversity of urns and vases, shallow or deep, scalloped or plain, moulded in patterns which a sculptor would do well to copy, since Art has never invented anything more graceful" (14). The idle thought becomes the author's own motivation for art, and "[i]f

ever Providence (but I know it never will) should assign me a superfluity of gold, part of it shall be expended for a service of plate, or most delicate porcelain, to be wrought into the shapes of summer-squashes" (14). Even as he praises the hand of nature and its bounty, the natural world is not the template he puts forth for art. Rather his fantasy betrays knowledge that the production of antiquities and artifacts is at heart an economic process.

As he takes the reader inside the Manse, he finally finds the antique literary works that would presumably serve as the model for his. Some of these "antique" books were "of a size proper to be carried in the large waistcoat-pockets of old times; diminutive…and abundantly interfused with Greek and Latin quotations. These little old volumes impressed me as if they had been intended for very large ones, but had been unfortunately blighted, at an early age of their growth" (19). His suggestion that a book could grow organically, like a squash, again shows anxiety about how one creates a literary artifact of any worth since these commonplace books did not seem to prosper. Even as he sighs over their failure to have grown to completion, ironically he has now mentioned the books within his own large volume, which through simple enumeration engulfs the literature of the Manse's library transforming the "dreary trash" that would have been "worth nothing at an auction" into his own pages (18): "Latin folios," a "dissertation on the book of Job," a "folio Body of Divinity," all become re-circulated in Hawthorne's prose. Similarly, he finds "old newspapers, and still older almanacs," which—like the arrow-head summoning up the wigwams—"reproduced, to my mental eye, the epochs when they were issued from the press, with a distinctness that was altogether unaccountable" (20). Despite being discursive by nature, Hawthorne seeks to

turn the writings into artifacts like the arrow-head, calling them "bits of looking-glass...with the images of a vanished century in them" (20). In fact, one does not author newspapers and almanacs, according to Hawthorne, but it is the "Age itself that writes" them (20). Returning to his previous dismissal of the bound volumes, he decides that they, too, are enchanted artifacts: "A bound volume has a charm in my eyes, similar to what scraps of manuscript possess, for the good Mussulman. He imagines, that those wind-wafted records are perhaps hallowed by some sacred verse; and I, that every new book, or antique one, may contain 'Open Sesame'—the spell to disclose treasures, hidden in some unsuspected cave of truth" (21). Though reduced to material scraps, the manuscripts retain for the Muslim reader of Hawthorne's imagination the ability to offer value and meaning. His own enumeration of the texts in the Manse's library, none of which are opened and read to the reader, reflects an approach similar to the Muslim's.

The moment in the library where books briefly become mystical artifacts hangs over the end of the preface when Hawthorne laments that the "treasure of intellectual gold, which I had hoped to find in our secluded dwelling, had never come to light" be it a treatise, history, or novel and that all he can offer the reader is a book of tales and sketches that have blended into the circulating artifacts of the Manse (34). In a reversal of the original surprise by which the idea of a found literary treasure became the hoped for literary production, Hawthorne ends the sketch by asking the reader to pretend he is a guest in the Manse's study, where sitting at an "antique elbow-chair, an heirloom of the house," he will be presented by Hawthorne with a "roll of manuscript, and intreat his attention to the following tales" (35). Rather than choose a role as a treasure-hunter or producer, Hawthorne envisions himself as someone who can transcend the entire

economy by producing treasures, not through popular readership, but by an act of asserted antiquarian importance. It is as if he offers the reader an "heirloom" that he just created. His strategy is not unlike the ability of Scott, whose work Hawthorne greatly enjoyed, to capitalize on the narratives of history, but Hawthorne's perspective is more expansive. Perhaps as an American with a shorter national past to draw from, he does not demand particular historical meaning from the discovery or production of a *worthy* artifact. Any "bound volume," new or antique, creates history, and therefore value, in its very nature.

The value of materiality and textuality in the preface is seemingly fluid, responding only to the narrator's whims. Millicent Bell explores the uneasy relation of Hawthorne's writing, a-programmatic as it is, to the later style of realism, noting that the materialism of Hawthorne's preface has an "ambiguity" that has not been explored fully (4). With little expectation that Hawthorne's work will be made coherent with a realist approach, Bell still offers, "We may even find grounds in a more thoroughgoing materialism than his own for rejecting the unconfident sense that an impermeable barrier divides the real from the fantastic" (19). In the "Old Manse," Hawthorne's materialism skirts a realist paradigm due to his sense that materials are always about to be commodified artifacts. Walter Benn Michaels has shown that the effect of realism is determined by a Marxist commodification of personhood in the novel since like commodities, realistic characters "come to look neither like things as such nor like things that represent human labor but like things that are somehow human" (26).[4] Hawthorne's materialization of texts in his preface looks to separate them from human labor as well, but he splits the thing/labor dichotomy to create artifacts rather than realistic detail.

When Michaels asks for "an example of a thing whose identity involves something more than its physical qualities" besides commodities, his answer is writing, because "for writing to be writing, it can neither transcend the marks it is made of nor be reduced to those marks" (21). Hawthorne's answer in "The Old Manse" is "artifacts," which are not merely things, but also cannot be fully transcended to recreate a past world.

As Meredith McGill has shown, Hawthorne's presentation of himself in his prefaces as unloved by his audience and the marketplace is largely a fiction. However, though he published many tales and sketches, "the form of their circulation in newspapers, periodicals, and annuals left him possessed of a reputation that he could not easily turn to profit" (223). Desperate for money from his work in a publication system that seemed rigged against him, Hawthorne develops a business model that incorporates his authorial relation to his readers, in effect attempting to change market realities from inside his work. "What becomes invisible to a critical narrative that presumes a history of neglect," McGill writes, "is that the fiction of obscurity itself is one of the means by which Hawthorne, who is thoroughly, and in many ways successfully embedded in the literary marketplace, *renegotiates* a relation to the reading public" (226). Monumentality becomes a way for Hawthorne to encourage the reader to buy his work, but it is a special kind of monumentality that he envisions, one requiring little evaluative labor from his reader.

In the preface, just as Hawthorne collected the different works of the library, he is (re)collecting the events of his time at the Manse. He returns to the grounds surrounding the house with a reminder to the reader that he is not simply narrating a tale, but placing a host of experiences and memories on display. After a day spent in the library with the

reader, he claims, "Tomorrow for the hill-tops and the wood-paths!" only to start the next paragraph with a new narrative, "Or it might be that Ellery Channing came up the avenue, to join me in a fishing-excursion" (21). The decision to highlight the non-naturalistic approach to narrative is immediately followed by his self-conscious nature writing, in which the natural forms around him are routinely revealed to be literary artifacts. Following the Assabeth, he notes that a "more lovely stream than this, for a mile above its junction with the Concord, has never flowed on earth—nowhere, indeed, except to lave the interior regions of a poet's imagination" (22). Even as he utilizes his poetic powers, Hawthorne wishes to make the reader aware of the cultural lens through which the landscape is refracted. Not only is the reader experiencing the imaginative creation of Hawthorne (who has made clear in the tale that he is a novelist), but he suggests that the empirical scene itself is somehow a creation of a poet.

His indication that he benefits in his description from a poetic approach that he may be importing continues as he explains that the "slumbering river has a dream-picture in its bosom," and he asks coyly, "Which, after all was the most real—the picture, or the original?—the objects palpable to our grosser senses, or their apotheosis in the stream beneath?" (22). The river falls also into Hawthorne's tendency to "think of his mind as a sluggish river on whose unrippled surface the world was perfectly reflected," an example, Sandra Tomc claims, "of Hawthorne's persona as a genteel man of leisure" (781). His experience of the landscape as half poetic commodity indicates that Hawthorne's representation of pure leisure is disturbed by a need to demonstrate literary worth to the reader. The strategic stance would indicate that Hawthorne's gentility is part of a hybrid branding effort to incorporate commercial value into class value. Tomc identifies a

similar phenomenon in nineteenth-century literature at large: "Refurbished for America's new meritocratic society, the idleness ethic of the antebellum years was implicated less in the maintenance of styles of patrician privilege than, bizarrely, in the formation of the new ideals of mobility and acquisition: once associated with the 'gentleman author,' idleness was now a mark of the new entrepreneurial-style professionalism demanded by the expanding commercial book industry" (781).

The sketch embodies the concept of "repose" that Meredith McGill finds so central to Hawthorne's authorial persona (218-269). The key element in his presentation of repose is its "powerful compromise with his middle-class readers, offering them fanciful speculation that is tempered with but not overwhelmed by didacticism" (233). Indeed the lazy meandering around the Old Manse and its grounds offers only hints of a deeper reality than the pleasant sensations he records. Any class difference that may be felt in his rather aristocratic abode is routinely dispersed by his frequent explanation that he is merely a visitor there and simply enjoying a setting whose trees will echo what he wants to hear, "Be free! Be free!" (25).

The act of becoming free could not be easier, Hawthorne suggests to his readers. They need simply to let themselves be lulled into unconsciousness, for the "great want which mankind labors under, at this present period, is—sleep!" (29). Naturally, the Manse offers a place for "weary and world-worn spirits" to fall asleep as if his "precincts were like the Enchanted Ground, though which the pilgrim travelled on his way to the celestial City" (28-29). His offer extends to an array of possible readers/guests, who are so vaguely and expansively drawn so as to appeal to the self-regard of nearly anyone:

> him, whose career of perpetual action as impeded and harassed by the rarest of his powers, and the richest of his acquirements?—for another, who had thrown his

> ardent heart, from earliest youth, into the strife of politics, and now, perchance, began to suspect that one lifetime is too brief for the accomplishment of any lofty aim?—for her, on whose feminine nature had been imposed the heavy gift of intellectual power, such as a strong man might have staggered under, and with it the necessity to act upon the world (29)

Hawthorne is attempting to replicate (and sell) the peace of the Manse, acting like a "powerful opiate" on his visitors (29), and in effect to lull them into space of inactivity so that he may ply his trade not in the manner of competition, but in the manner of an antiquarian showing off simple relics and musty books whose interest need not be plumbed that deeply. In fact, Hawthorne promises these readers that such a cessation of the mind and body is the "only method of getting rid of old delusions, and avoiding new ones—of regenerating our race, so that it might in due time awake, as an infant out of a dewy slumber—of restoring to us the simple perception of what is right, and the single-hearted desire to achieve it" (30). The passage is a precursor to the author's later desire to empty the British Museum of its contents. Wiping away the detritus of culture leaves Hawthorne's proffered book-artifact in an unusual space in which it is privileged for a reason other than its relation to the past, which he wishes to dispense with altogether. Whereas the artifacts of Scott and Wordsworth are haunted, and often spectralized by their relation to past events or persons, Hawthorne seeks to create an artifact that is valuable simply because it is valuable. The problem of tautology is held at bay by the promise of the author—who suspiciously seems to be the only one awake in his vision of mass unconsciousness—regarding the material worth of the relics he possesses.

Hawthorne's fantasy of artifact-by-authority is predicted earlier in the text by an image of the nation's power to create money from raw resources. Enjoying Ellery's conversation, he calls his companion's effusions "lumps of golden thought, that lay

glimmering in the fountain's bed," which nevertheless could only prove profitable "[c]ould he have drawn out that virgin gold, and stamped it with the mint-mark that alone gives currency" (24-25). The power to grant instant circulatory power to his own lumps of thought compels Hawthorne's presentation of his work as artifacts. Yet, he differentiates the text-artifacts that he offers from those of his home's previous tenant, Emerson, for he has seen "minds, of a certain constitution," "[y]oung visionaries—to whom just so much of insight had been imparted as to make life all a labyrinth around them" and "[g]ray-headed theorists—whose systems, at first air, had finally imprisoned them in an iron frame work," as they have wandered in the community looking for further enlightenment from the author (30). These suffering acolytes, too, have been granted treasure, but it is a "glittering gem" that must be taken back to Emerson as if he were a "lapidary, to ascertain its quality and value" (31). Emerson's philosophical treasure, like Grose's sketches, requires ever more explanation and ever more labor, as opposed to Hawthorne's promise of pure laborless value.[5]

Identifying *Nature* as an important pre-text for Hawthorne's preface, Larry Reynolds has persuasively argued that Emerson's powerful relation to Hawthorne in the text can be put into Lacanian terms. Reynolds contends that "Emerson, through the power of his writings, had made it impossible for Hawthorne to have an original relation to nature, even though, ironically, Emerson advocated just such a relation" (62). Hawthorne's rambles around the natural setting outside of the Manse rather demonstrate an integrated relationship "between nature and a human past" (66). Hawthorne's journey on the river with Ellery, in Reynolds's reading, shows Hawthorne re-examining his undermining of Emerson's philosophical stance throughout the rest of the sketch (66-67).

"Expressed in psychological terms," Hawthorne writes the last part of the sketch in order to undo, or at least re-imagine, his move from "a maternal prelapsarian Eden to a paternal, social world, dominated by language, law, and social institutions," where the Name of the Father "has been imposed by Emerson" (67). Immersed in language as he is, Hawthorne cannot find a truly adequate way to "represent this development in language...for the former state once lost can only be articulated in terms of the latter" (67). Turning to Kristeva briefly, Reynolds cites *Revolution in Poetic Language*, indicating that the type of "'second' return" that Hawthorne experiences on his journey with Ellery "involves the negation or transgression of conventional linguistic structures," a radical, not fully controlled style that he reads in Hawthorne's repeated evocation of the "wildness" of the scene around him (67-68).

The concept of abjection from Kristeva's later *Powers of Horror* might as aptly be read in conjunction with the text, especially in Hawthorne's explicit characterization of his readers as a slumbering infant, who will not simply wake up, but experience a (re)birth as the regeneration of the race.[6] From such a perspective, Hawthorne is a purveyor of the abject, lulling his readers/guests into a pre-linguistic, pre-cultural state, astonished like the viewer of Stonehenge at night. Like Wordsworth's traveler on the plain, Hawthorne's guests experience their return through artifacts—in this case the womb-like Old Manse and its myriad of relics. The maternal one-ness of infancy is not Hawthorne's goal, for he merely focuses on the production of laborless, obvious relics. If Emerson represents, as Reynolds suggests, the Law of the Father and the demands of a linguistic existence, Hawthorne represents his manse/writing to his guests/readers as a sense of difference within the maternal. He promises not only to remove the "old

delusions," but to avoid "new ones" as well. He hopes his readers will linger in abjection, experiencing the imminence of subjectivity without concern for the power struggles against the Law of the Father. As the accumulation of artifacts demonstrates in the text, one can dally in such repose simply by letting the realm of artifacts sweep through one's view, like books being catalogued rather than read.

Hawthorne's projection of himself as a slightly differentiated maternal figure to his reader follows Leland Person's investigation of the author's writing his wife, Sophia, out of the introductory sketch even though she figures prominently in his early Notebook drafts. Most vividly, in the Notebooks "he idealizes himself and Sophia as a new Adam and Eve" before he "elides Sophia's presence from this Eden and figures himself, by her omission, as a bachelor Adam who enjoys an immaculate creative relationship with Mother Nature" (52). As the text "recurs often in the Preface to questions about origins and originality, roots and influence," Person traces these to an "acute anxiety of influence as he comes to terms with his own masculine and literary originality, his own muddy, if not obscene, rootedness" (50).[7] Moreover, Sophia's presence would distract, or detract, from Hawthorne's powerful position in his vision of the sleeping, abject world. Removing himself from the maternal-paternal binary, Hawthorne's presence can transcend the Unconscious-Linguistic dichotomy of the Lacanian psychoanalytical framework, and his work-as-artifact can continue to grant the reader a gentle repose.

Poetry as the Common English Artifact

Hawthorne's de-historicization of the artifact remains fantastical despite the benefits his preface suggests. The past simply does not recede from consciousness as

quickly as the author would like, and no matter the strength of the opiate, Hawthorne's readers will presumably have to read his book while awake. The commonplace book may be a worthy artifact that resists the reader's contemplation because its Greek and Latin appear to many American readers to be a strange communication, like the strange marks at Stonehenge, but Hawthorne obviously cannot write in unknown code. Part of his strategy, then, is to make his language recognizable without invoking history or origins, which can be obfuscated.

As he and Ellery enjoy their excursion on the river, Hawthorne experiences a moment out of Wordsworth, though it is filtered through Thoreau:

> The pond-lily grows abundantly along the margin; that delicious flower, which, as Thoreau tells me, opens its virgin bosom to the first sunlight and perfects its being through the magic of that genial kiss. He has beheld beds of them unfolding in due succession as the sunrise stole gradually from flower to flower; a sight not to be hoped for unless when a poet adjusts his inward eye to a proper focus with the outward organ (30)

His experience of the bed of lilies on the bank of the river appears to allude to Wordsworth's "Daffodils," which he could have read in the poet's 1837 *Complete Poetical Works*, edited by Henry Reed. He and his wife were known to be appreciative readers of Wordsworth, and their library accounts of the Boston Athenaeum show that they checked out Reed's edition (Kesselring 64). The tone of Wordsworth's poem, the lightness and freedom evoked as he "wandered lonely as a cloud" (1), certainly matches the free-moving spirit of Hawthorne's sketch, especially the river scene with its expressive response to the natural scenery around him. "I gazed—and gazed but little thought / What wealth the shew to me had brought" (11-12), writes Wordsworth, an apt description of Hawthorne's languid trip in which he enjoys the freedom of Nature without interposing moral or philosophical lessons. The final line of the Hawthorne

passage is the most direct recollection of the poem when in conclusion Wordsworth tries to explain the wealth that he has been given. Speaking of the daffodils, Wordsworth writes in *his* final stanza:

> For oft when on my couch I lie
> In vacant or in pensive mood
> They flash upon my inward eye
> Which is the bliss of solitude,
> And then my heart with pleasure fills,
> And dances with the daffodils (13-18)

Wordsworth's imaginative experience of the scene with his "inward eye" serves as a template for Hawthorne's consideration of how the scene in front of him would affect a poet's inward eye. Wordsworth even distances himself from his poetic gazing upon the flowers in the second stanza, withdrawing from the first person and writing, "*A poet* could not but be gay / In such laughing company" (9-10, my italics). Though critics have noted the poetic expressiveness in the second part of "Old Manse," they have not fully explained why the narrator, too, pulls away from the scene to describe "a poet" or a "poet's imagination," or later reads the scene's beauty as "its poetry" (24). Such withdrawal is in keeping with what McGill calls Hawthorne's pose of "obscurity" as well as with his desire to present himself without active countenance, an antiquarian writer merely presenting a scroll of worthy, if confused, origin. Though he later expresses admiration for Emerson's poetry in the sketch (31), Hawthorne invokes a system of translation from outward to inward eye that seems anathema to Emerson's famous invocation in *Nature* of a purer access to Nature: "I become a transparent eye-ball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me. I am part or particle of God" (10). He mentions Thoreau as the intermediary to this vision, but his subsequent recourse to the view of a generic "poet," suggests that even Thoreau's poetic

meditation upon Nature is already the result of Wordsworth's influence.[8] Even without the invocation of Wordsworth, Hawthorne, as the author, is transplanting Thoreau as the author of the poetic vision; they are his words recorded. The succession of the sun's rays opening the flowers as they *steal* from one to another makes sport of Hawthorne's lifting the image from his acquaintance, naturalizing it as if a gift from nature. The claimed origin of the vision predates Thoreau, however, and the echo "steals" Wordsworth's work without acknowledgement.

The influence of Wordsworth's poem in the passage presents a problem for the literary artifact that Hawthorne has promised his reader, for it alludes to another author promising a similar repose. And the *wealth* that Wordsworth receives as a gift from Nature is not as involved in the realm of artifacts as the treasure the Hawthorne promises. Indeed, the literary artifact could be Wordsworth's poem itself—part of the cultural waste that Hawthorne proposes throwing away—and unlike the dusty relics that Hawthorne glances at and disposes of in front of the reader, this literary artifact comes from a competing author in the marketplace who has an advantage. Besides his priority, Wordsworth enjoys wider, transatlantic popularity and an easier path to American publication than Hawthorne thanks to literary piracy. As Susan Manning points out, it would be odd if Hawthorne's work did not seem haunted by English Romantics and Victorians. She notes, for example, that *The Scarlet Letter* is "pervaded by displaced echoes of Dickens and Trollope; how could it *not* be, in the work of one struggling to make a living as a professional author in America in the absence of international copyright, and against competition from established English novelists whose already successful works could be bought cheaply in pirated editions by American readers?" (26).

Joel Pace and Matthew Scott write in the introduction to *Wordsworth in American Literary Culture* (2005) that to "write after Wordsworth is to be aware of his way of describing subjective experience in poetry" (1). Pace, Scott, and many of the authors in their collection, move away from a model of influence based on Harold Bloom's *Anxiety of Influence*, which they find too monolithic in its vision of transatlantic literary culture in the early nineteenth century. Pace and Scott prefer to view the "course of descent" through Michel Foucault's model, in which we should "not be deceived into thinking that this heritage is an acquisition, a possession that grows and solidifies" and should instead be aware that our search for descent "fragments what was thought unified; it shows the heterogeneity of what was imagined consistent with itself" (cited Pace and Scott 5). It is ironic that the Foucauldian model attempts to move away from a past that can be put into terms of possession or commodification while Hawthorne in "Old Manse" encourages artifactual commodification, even as his actions toward his own literary influence displaces and troubles the literary artifact in order to keep the reader in repose.

The wealth brought to Wordsworth's speaker is unknowable at first, and it is only later that his inward eye can enjoy the poetic moment and feel the sublime unity with Nature that is the poem's proffered "treasure." Even if one reads the poem's opening lines as Wordsworth's interposition of the subject's imagination, mimicking Nature as it wanders (and wonders) even before the daffodils appear, the poem's later presentation of the poet on the couch suggests temporality and memory are important to poetic wealth. On the other hand, Hawthorne promises his readers that time will figure little in their enjoyment of a newly regenerated subject. He promises to have the inward/outward eyes attuned in his writing so that he can present pure artifactuality to the reader. Thus, the

world around the Old Manse is already poetry as he describes it. It is unsurprising that at the end of the preface he figures the collection as a scroll, a fictive antiquity—without real historical progression.

The unacknowledged, or at least highly filtered, allusion to Wordsworth demonstrates Hawthorne's search in the preface for an artifact that feels new. Poe's review of Hawthorne's *Mosses* places Hawthorne's style in relation to what he calls the "true originality," which is favored by readers he argues because it consists in "bringing out the half-formed, the reluctant, or the unexpressed fancies of mankind, or in exciting the more delicate pulses of the heart's passion, or in giving birth to some universal sentiment or instinct in embryo, thus [combining] with the pleasurable effect of *apparent* novelty, a real egotistic delight" (191). What Poe describes without acknowledging it is also an *apparent* antiquity in true originality as it corresponds to something that has come before, even if half-formed or unexpressed. Hawthorne's fantasy of an artifact that does not have to be explained would seem to have an effect on the reader described by Poe. Valued as at once new and recognizable, it would "egotistically" reflect their desires without the problems of history and temporality, through which the novelty—or perhaps the *currency*—might be erased. The half-heard echo of Wordsworth fits into Hawthorne's authorial presentation through its uncanniness, treated as nostalgia. The imprecision of the reference follows Hawthorne's own experience of re-reading Wordsworth, which he presents in the *English Notebooks* as merely an encounter with unthreatening reverberations. Visiting the English poet's home at Grasmere, he notes that upon some slate "there is an inscription by Wordsworth, which I think I have read in his works" (249), a recognition free of anxiety as he calmly unites the new experience

with past knowledge.[9] Wordsworth's slate memorial at Grasmere offers a fitting example of the artifactual status that Hawthorne envisions for his work, a specimen with half-understood value that is not threatened by absence and loss

Hawthorne's earliest believed reference to Wordsworth's work gives further insight into the transatlantic literary culture that he and the poet share. It is an epigraph to the early and unpublished *Seven Tales of My Native Land* reportedly from the English poet's "We are Seven" that has not been identified by scholars (Wineapple 59). Posterity only knows of this epigraph thanks to Elizabeth Hawthorne's memory of her brother's collection put together soon after his graduation from Bowdoin. Hawthorne, angered by publishers' unfavorable responses, abandoned the project and claimed to have burnt the manuscript (Wineapple 62). The suggestion that a quotation from the British Poet Laureate could properly introduce an American writer's collection of stories about his home nation fits well with Hawthorne's ambivalence toward America as a political and literary project. While Hawthorne's reference to the poet plays with national boundaries, language's inability to describe the heterogeneous concept of community is actually a theme of Wordsworth's poem. The speaker cannot convince a young child that, because of the death of two of her siblings, the family's children now total five and not seven. While he locates the dead siblings in Heaven, the little girl does not share his logic, pointing out that "[t]heir graves are green, they may be seen…Twelve steps or more from my mother's door" (37, 39). The confrontation is replayed by the title of Hawthorne's collection and its epigraph, which deal with nativity and origin rather than existence. Ironically, the skeptical speaker of "We are Seven" allows the girl's two siblings away at sea to remain part of the familial circle. Separated from England by the sea and

generations of descendants since the American Revolution, Hawthorne is not quite willing to dissolve the familial bond yet.

Besides the abandoned *Seven Tales of My Native Land*, even within the contents of *Mosses from an Old Manse*, Hawthorne again inserts the poet's presumed Englishness into a context more transatlantic than nationalistic. In "P.'s Correspondence," P. is the narrator's friend whose mental problems have caused him to confuse the past and present, and his own New England environs with those of London. P.'s discussion of the British Romantics humorously kills off the only major British Romantic poet still alive in 1845, Wordsworth, and discusses others, such as Byron, Keats, Shelley and Coleridge, as if they are still alive and writing. The correspondent who offers P's writing to the public notes that his friend "had always a hankering after literary reputation, and has made more than one successful effort to achieve it" (362), lines that apply to Hawthorne as well. P.'s correspondent notes that his friend experiences a "world of moonshine," but despite the scattered take on reality the narrator claims the "pious pleasure in editing (it) for the public eye" (361). P.'s moonshine existence predicts moonshine's importance to the romance writer's fancy in the preface to *The Scarlett Letter*, "The Custom-House," through which objects begin to come alive and haunt the writer. The connection to the *Scarlet Letter*'s preface means that P. cannot merely be written off as a mad excrescence with which Hawthorne is toying. P. embodies an anxious outgrowth of Hawthorne's theory of romance, but perhaps one which approaches even nearer to the limits of pure Imagination than the author would like to think is possible.

Like the scene from *The Scarlet Letter*, thought's ability to spiritualize materiality preoccupies P. He begins by lamenting the past's obstinate material presence: "Old

associations cling to the mind with astonishing tenacity. Daily custom grows up about us like a stone-wall, and consolidates itself into almost as material an entity as mankind's strongest architecture" (362). The material of the mind, however, moves and slips as one ages. "Ah well!" he sighs. "I am verging, I suppose, on that period of life when present scenes and events make but feeble impressions, in comparison with those of yore; so that I must reconcile myself to be more and more the prisoner of Memory, who merely lets me hop about a little, with her chain around my leg" (362-63). With the word *verge* we have the second image that will return in Hawthorne's moonlit study in *The Scarlet Letter*—where the "haunted verge" of the mirror takes the already haunted scene even closer to the imagination. P. has verged into that reflected moonlight simply through growth and his attempts to make it as a writer, and the Actual that haunts him is very specific, made up as it is of poetry he has read. He puts forth a fearful expression of poetic haunting that reveals the anxiety latent in any instance of literary influence. He writes his friend:

> What a strange substance is the human brain! Or rather,—for there is no need of generalizing the remark,—what an odd brain is mine! Would you believe it? Daily and nightly there come scraps of poetry humming in my intellectual ear—some as airy as birdnotes, and some as delicately neat as parlor-music, and a few as grand as organ-peals—that seem just such verses as those departed poets would have written had not an inexorable destiny snatched them from their inkstands. They visit me in spirit, perhaps desiring to engage my services as the amanuensis of their posthumous productions, and thus secure the endless renown that they have forfeited by going hence too early. But I have my own business to attend to... (379)

Like the "battered boy" passage from Wordsworth's "Salisbury Plain," this one focuses on the brain's material relations to the memory, and again similarly, the subject here is troubled by the eruption of the past in his memory, though the trauma describes bits of poetry rather than a physical act of violence. The scraps that hum present a catachresis

that instantiates the inspired materiality that P. detects in his poetic influences. Though the trauma here is played for laughs because of the mind being affected, it does result from a kind of violence. P. has killed off his rival influences only to have them return as spirits to instruct his pen. His inability to keep track of the influencing and the influenced lead him to remark, "Were it only possible to find out who are alive, and who dead, it would contribute infinitely to my peace of mind" (377). P.'s worldview resembles the realm of repose from Hawthorne's preface in which artifacts circulate so freely that past and present become entangled. While the Hawthorne of the preface sees potential fortune in such a perspective, the later sketch in the collection demonstrates the threat to his authorial understanding of himself that it poses. Without historicization, the anxiety of influence can become unmanageable without a schema in which to orient the value of literary productions.

Hawthorne's "New" Historicism

Hawthorne famously asserts in the fictionalized introductory chapter of *The Scarlet Letter*, "The Custom-House," that the inspiration for the story comes from his 3-year stint as Surveyor in the Salem Custom-House, a political position from which he was removed upon the election of Zachary Taylor in 1849. The narrator discovers the story of the scarlet letter among some old government documents, and as in the scene in the Old Manse's library he makes clear that these are not treasures. He labels the initial collection that he finds in the second story of the Custom-House simply "rubbish" and with a bit of melancholy and smugness writes that it is "sorrowful to think how many days, and weeks, and months, and years of toil, had been wasted on these musty papers, which were now only an encumbrance on earth, and were hidden away in this forgotten

corner, never more to be glanced at by human eyes" (29). Like the relics from the library in the Old Manse, these texts, too, can be dismissed concerning their contents. Obliquely, he invokes a fear that his literary texts—"reams of other manuscripts...filled with the thought of inventive brains" (29)—will also be subject to "oblivion," and without "serving a purpose in their day, as these heaped-up papers had, and—saddest of all—with-out purchasing for their writers the comfortable livelihood which the clerks of the Custom-House had gained by these worthless scratchings of the pen" (29).

The scene makes a theme of the concept of value and its perplexities. Materials can be worthless while also earning their producer a decent living, or vice versa. Hawthorne adds one more possible register of value to the literary and labor market values already invoked by noting quickly that all this rubbish is "[y]et not altogether worthless, perhaps, as materials of local history" (29), a turn in his thinking that will eventually lead him to find the scarlet letter, around which he can weave a type of local history. In the meantime, he suggests that in the piled up Custom-House papers "statistics of the former commerce of Salem might be discovered, and memorials of her princely merchants,—old King Derby,—and old Billy Gray,—old Simon Forrester,—and many another magnate in his days; whose powdered head, however, was scarcely in the tomb, before his mountain-pile of wealth began to dwindle" (29). The piles of merchant wealth present a counter image to the worthless government documents, in "barrels, piled one upon the other" (29), though Hawthorne already hints at the possible transference of value through which the piles of material wealth of the merchant families can only decrease as the piles of government documents only increases through time. Part of Hawthorne's disdain for the merchants is born out of class, for these families are not

English gentry, but social climbers who have bought and sold their way into an American upper class. Even as Hawthorne manages to look down his nose at these families with their confused aristocratic claims, he looks to translate the refuse from their commercial success into his own brand of literary (and presumably commercial) worth. As in the preface to the *Mosses from an Old Manse*, the treasure Hawthorne seeks is really the treasure he will produce.

In the Custom-House, where the nation regulates its imports and exports, Hawthorne is more acutely aware that artifacts have their own economies of value, or markets. He regrets the loss of pre-Revolutionary records because "those papers must have contained many references to forgotten or remembered men, and to antique customs, which would have affected me with the same pleasure as when I used to pick up Indian arrow-heads in the field near the Old Manse" (29). In the call back to his previous preface, Hawthorne in true antiquarian fashion recognizes no disciplinary distinction between reading old records and examining an arrowhead. The word *custom* reminds the reader that Hawthorne's contemplation of these artifacts is set in building where foreignness is assessed and taxed before it is allowed to circulate in the national economy. As with his comparison of the piles of merchant wealth to the piles of government documents, Hawthorne comes closer and closer to treating the past like a foreign country, to paraphrase L. P. Hartley, and treating material history as commodities that he can circulate for his own gain. The wish for an artifact that is not there perhaps best exemplifies the artifact's importance in Hawthorne's authorial presentation. While he certainly could write a narrative illuminating the cultural practices of the past, he fetishizes the material fragments of history that offer a value that language, memory, and

fancy by themselves cannot. As in "The Old Manse," his antiquarianism is presented as an enumeration of texts that need no further investigation: it suffices that he is "unfolding one and another document, and reading the names of vessels that had long ago foundered at sea or rotted at the wharves, and those of merchants, never heard of on 'Change, nor very readily decipherable, on their mossy tombstones" (30). His list ends with a privileged material object in the antiquarian perspective he has presented so far, the artifact that presents nothing specific, the artifact presented to the reader after its pastness has all but been demolished. Though he apologizes that such uninteresting fare results from his power of fancy being "sluggish with little use," the routine is not substantially different from the one in his study in the Old Manse (30).

His fetishization of the artifacts in the Custom-House connects to his concept of the romance writer's ability to inspire material objects with a kind of life. With the moonlight serving as a catalyst for fancy, the "romance-writer" has an opportunity to "get acquainted with his illusive guests" (35), the room's material decorations that become spiritualized:

> There is the little domestic scenery of the well known apartment; the chairs, with each its separate individuality; the centre-table, sustaining a work-basket, a volume or two, and an extinguished lamp; the sofa; the book case; the picture on the wall; all these details, so completely seen, are so spiritualized by the unusual light, that they seem to lose their actual substance, and become things of intellect" (35).

The invitation to see into the writer's study in the "Custom-House" is not simply to be lulled to sleep, but to enter a world of specters. Everything acquires a new meaning in this light: "[n]othing is too small or too trifling to undergo this change, and *acquire* dignity thereby. A child's shoe; the doll, seated in her little wicker carriage; the hobby-horse;—whatever, in a word, has been used or played with, during the day, is now

invested with a quality of strangeness and remoteness, though still almost as vividly present as by daylight" (35 my italics). Whereas the Custom-House's function is to translate remoteness into a localized, national economy, the romance writer appears to do the opposite by imputing to the objects around him a strangeness that they normally do not have. His assertion that the process *acquires* and *invests* new value reveals that he has not left behind the piles of wealth and artifacts that interested him earlier. Romance presents a new economy in which value can be judged.

Like the artifacts offered to the reader at the end of "The Old Manse," the spectralized objects around the room evince a pleasantly haunted effect. Hawthorne explains, "Ghosts might enter here, without frightening us" (35). "Deep within the haunted verge" of the "looking-glass," "we"—author and guest—do discover a "form, beloved, but gone hence, now sitting quietly in a streak of this magic moonshine, with an aspect that would make us doubt whether it had returned from afar, or had never once stirred from our fireside" (36). The room's spectralized artifacts eventually lead to a feeling of pastness that takes the form of an ambiguous, beloved shape that has paradoxically returned but never left. The author, sitting in the study, might be seeing himself in the ghostly, reflected form, an identification comparable to the Lacanian mirror stage in which the subject becomes alienated from itself as it becomes both subject and object. In Hawthorne's formulation, however, the strange newness of alienation is something to be sought by the romance writer, and it puts him in relation to the strangely new artifacts of his apartment, all of which could serve as the beloved form in the mirror. The homogenizing force of the romantic mood, which was not the mood of "The Old Manse," creates a realm in the mirror made up of only circulating artifacts. Unlike the

experience of Wordsworth's traveler on Sarum's Plain, however, Hawthorne in his preface is not troubled by such a vision, for as a professional writer in the mature marketplace, he relishes the object's commodification.

The familiarized strangeness of the items in Hawthorne's moonlight stems from their lack of an identifiable past with which to threaten the viewer, and they resemble the specters one might expect to encounter after emerging from a slumber that has wiped away the past. The fantastic realm in his study is the famous "neutral territory" that Hawthorne demarcates "between the real world, and fairy land, where the Actual and the Imaginary may meet, and each imbue itself with the nature of the other" (35), but it is also the land of Marx's commodified table as discussed in earlier chapters. In Marx, commodification transforms the table into "a thing that transcends sensuousness" (163), an idea that Derrida takes even further, saying that commodified material in Marx "is metamorphosed into a supernatural thing . . . [it is] a thing in flight that surpasses the senses" (150).[10] The figured objects in the room thus reflect the social relations Hawthorne has earlier addressed in his discussion of the barons of commerce. The economy of romance contains all the competing forms of value that trouble the author in the various piles of "wealth."

Hawthorne distinguishes the profitability of the "neutral territory" from his early flailing attempts to write *The Scarlet Letter*. The characters Hawthorne wishes to write into his narrative cannot initially be re-inspired by his imagination: "They would take neither the glow of passion nor the tenderness of sentiments, but retained all the rigidity of dead corpses, and stared me in the face with a fixed and ghastly grin of contemptuousness defiance" (34). The corpses, however, do not remain dead but mock

their author for laying waste his power for the safety of a government sinecure: "The little power you might once have possessed over the tribe of unrealities is gone! You have bartered it for a pittance of the public gold. Go, then, and earn your wages!" (34).[11] The romance writer's ability to spectralize materiality, by reanimating corpses, has begun even before he finds his way to the "neutral territory" of his moonlit study, but in his office as a public servant he feels unable to capitalize on his powers. He claims a torpidity of the soul while working at the Custom-house that has left his imagination a "tarnished mirror" (35), obscured by the financial concerns that have called him from the profession of writing. The re-animated figures that mock him, though, bear an uncanny resemblance to the artifacts of the "neutral territory" in their haunting presence. The tarnished mirror of his imagination and the study's looking-glass appear to be similar instruments approached with different attitudes. If the content of his characters' rebuke is anything to go on, the relative failure of the imagination in that case is his involvement with "public gold," indebted to a nation as he regulates its economy rather than participating in it. He seems to catch something from the "almost torpid creatures of (his) fancy," for he feels a "wretched numbness held possession" of him and the "same torpor...accompanied me home, and weighed upon me," he writes, in his study where soon he will be describing the "neutral territory" (34-35). Ellen Weinauer sagely notes that Hawthorne's references to witchcraft in the opening chapter present him often as "not the witch but the victim of witchcraft, not the demonic possessor but the demonically (dis)possessed" (94). The numbness that takes "possession" of Hawthorne after his failed attempts to write, however, actually originates in the reanimated characters that he has written. In effect, he possesses himself through his writing, and

when he returns to the "neutral territory" of the Manse, he brings a spectral, romantic presence with him already.[12]

With the author's financial anxieties hanging over the introduction, possessing oneself is also a matter of putting that possession on the market. In her reading of the "neutral territory" scene, Teresa Goddu writes that the author's "formulation of romance converts a material economy into a symbolic one" (49) and that "[d]espite his efforts to obscure the relationship between these two economies, in order to establish his romance as separate from the commercial marketplace, Hawthorne recognizes their intimate relationship" (49). The obfuscatory strategy appears to be a kind of smuggling from one economy to another, in effect creating one larger economy, unchecked by party, national, class, or even temporal concerns. In the introduction to the novel, he represents romance writing and national economy as realms that cannot touch as much as he might try to connect them. As he possesses himself through his writing, he becomes a figure who can pass through boundaries without interference. Weinauer shows that the alleged witchcraft practiced by women in Salem's past, and alluded to in Hawthorne's text, is often a charge against women for claiming ownership and property rights. The contest between claims of possession would catch the eye of Hawthorne, tasked in his Custom-House post with sorting out legal and illegal possession, as would the accusation against Anne Turner, a colonial murderess mentioned in the novel, that she was also a "witch, a trafficker in necromancy."[13] Hawthorne's preface presents romance as the necromantic trafficking necessary for the modern market.

Style: Smuggling the Past

The theme of smuggling is woven through "The Custom-House," as Hawthorne's proximity to the act in his job as surveyor attracts him to the alluring transgressive power of those who seek the market by means extraordinary. In Hawthorne's preface, commodities are often "missed" by the inspectors with whom Hawthorne worked "when a wagon-load of valuable merchandise had been smuggled ashore, at noonday, perhaps, and directly beneath their unsuspicious noses" (17). Rather than being punished, the criminality of Hawthorne's compatriots seemed to "require an eulogium on their praiseworthy caution, after the mischief had happened; a grateful recognition of the promptitude of their zeal, the moment that there was no longer any remedy" (17). Even at the gates of the nation's economy, goods find their way into the country without government approval, and so seemingly inevitable was smuggling that the mere appearance of monitoring the gates sufficed as well as doing the job.

The appearance of a nationally regulated economy encouraged government oversight into international trade, which took the form of congressional legislation that could go as far as the Embargo Act of 1807, the Non-Intercourse Act of 1809, or Macon's Bill no. 2 and ban international trade with a certain nation. A passage from the Non-Intercourse Act, cutting off trade with France and Britian, demonstrates the expansiveness of the nationalistic approach to international trade regulation: "That it shall not be lawful for any citizen or citizens of the United States or the territories thereof, nor for any person or persons residing or being in the same, to have any intercourse with, or to afford any aid or supplies to any public ship or vessel...which shall, contrary to the provisions of this act, have entered any harbor or water within the jurisdiction of the United States or the territories thereof" (579). The language of the law, passed in the

build up to the War of 1812, conflates commerce and discourse in the word *intercourse*, which expands congressional imagined power to the realm of language itself, as if the government could control its citizens' interaction with even foreign thought.

Hawthorne suggests that smuggling, or working within an illegal economy, is about the appearance of regulation as much as secrecy. Hawthorne's self-fashioned appearance in "The Custom-House" as an upright inspector would then come into question as well since he seems in the preface as desirous of a eulogium for not only his watchfulness, but also for his unceremonious dismissal from his post with the changing of the political climate. In his letters, he admits that his literary pursuits perhaps lead him astray from the vigilance asked of him: "My office (the duties of it being chiefly performable by deputy) will allow me as much time for literature as can be profitably applied" (153).

Hawthorne's spirit—no matter his attachment to his government post—also belonged to pirates and smugglers from an early age. Brenda Wineapple notes that after his father, a merchant marine, died in March 1808 aboard the Surinam when Hawthorne was only three years old, Hawthorne desired to be a sailor until he was sixteen and "his earlier compositions were said to have been sea stories about bronzed pirates and hardy privateers, perhaps modeled on Byron's *Corsair*" (21). Goddu has written on the Hawthorne's connection to piracy in her investigation of his work's relation to the slave trade, in particular in his editing of Horatio Bridge's *Journal of an African Cruiser* (1845), which "gives an account of a Navy cruiser policing the slave trade and U.S. commercial interests along the west coast of Africa" (Goddu 52). Using Hawthorne's letters to Bridge, Goddu shows how the author enjoyed the office of an editor and its

freedom from literary pretensions because it allowed him to circulate his name in literary circles without fully declaring himself an author (since the texts carried his name, as editor, on the title pages). Goddu writes that "[a]ppropriating Bridge's journal as well as his persona, Hawthorne authorizes himself" (53), adopting the work of someone else and perhaps "editing" with a heavy hand. Even as Hawthorne's editing identifies him with Bridge who is offering regulation of the American economy, Goddu notes that Hawthorne's editorial presence begins to take on the vexed relation of a pirate or slaver, a "sailor whose profit necessitates and justifies the crime" (64).

Hawthorne also edited the papers of Benjamin Frederick Browne, who sailed as a privateer during the War of 1812 only to be captured and held prisoner in Barbados and Dartmoor, where much of his text is set. Goddu does not go into depth about Hawthorne's interaction with the Browne papers, but they also suggest an interest in the legal and illegal commercial aspects of the work under review. Not only was Hawthorne editing the papers out of interest in the subject matter and a desire to earn some editing fees, he had a political debt to pay Browne, who as postmaster, wrote to President Polk on October 28, 1845 to recommend Hawthorne for the surveyor post in Salem.[14] In a January 24, 1846 letter he writes that they belong in the Library of America series: "My own opinion is, that they have quite sufficient interest and novelty (especially the portions relating to the mode of life and economy of the prison) to entitle them to a place" (139). His admiration leads to, he claims, a light editorial touch, which "has consisted in here and there a verbal correction, and in marking out many passages that it seemed advisable to omit" (139). Hawthorne's editing process shares commonality with the prison economy that he finds so interesting. Browne mentions the skills that allow his

fellow prisoners to make their fortunes on the black market. One "could counterfeit any man's handwriting, and so exactly imitate steel-plate engraving, that it was extremely difficult to distinguish between the imitation and the genuine. He was very fluent in the use of language, possessing, what sailors call the gift of gab, in perfection" (225). Another could "counterfeit the notes of the Tavistock and Plymouth banks so well, that a great many were passed to the market-people, who came to the prisons. He was also adept at coining" (227). These men realize the importance of rendering a genuine appearance in order for something to circulate, and Hawthorne's aim to have no noticeable effect on Browne's papers mimics the ability of these men to alter something rude and unmarketable in order to let it pass freely in the marketplace.

Such craft is also the means by which Hawthorne hopes to pass off Surveyor Pue's manuscript that he finds in "The Custom-House" as a novel that will obtain literary and economic success. Pue, like Hawthorne, spent a portion of his time at the Custome-House with "researches as a local antiquarian and other inquisitions of a similar nature" (31). While some of Pue's research was useful in Hawthorne's writing of "Main Street," he thinks the rest may be "equally valuable" or "not impossibly may be worked up, so far as they go, into a regular history of Salem" (31). Otherwise, he offers them to anyone willing to take "the unprofitable labor off my hands" (31). As in "The Old Manse," the labor of antiquarianism is presented, in the reader's case, as a waste if it goes too far in its serious endeavor to describe the past. The key to an arresting artifact is the feeling of enchantment, rather than the need for education. When he finds the scarlet A, he writes, "Certainly there was some deep meaning in it, most worthy of interpretation, and which, as it were, streamed forth from the mystic symbol, subtly communicating itself to my

sensibilities, but evading the analysis of my mind" (32). The mysticism of the symbol recalls his assertion in "The Old Manse" that all books are in fact potentially mystical relics and his approval of the enchanted Muslim's approach to texts. These artifacts are able to *evade* authority, in this case the rational, historicizing part of Hawthorne's mind. Indeed, his "eyes fastened themselves" upon the scarlet letter, and he cannot turn them aside (32). Even in the first of his "hypotheses"—that the "letter might...have been one of those decorations which the white men used to contrive, in order to take the eyes of Indians" (32) — his first thought involves the artifact's role in the distraction of the subject. While the story he thinks it might tell is one of a murderous, cultural intrusion by Europeans, it also presents a novelty to assuage the weight of history. The artifact's distracting tendency is further emphasized when he puts the cloth to his chest and feels a "sensation not altogether physical, yet almost so, as of burning heat; and as if the letter were not of red cloth, but red-hot iron" (32). The artifact's power to inflict pain recalls the power of memory in "Adventures on Salisbury Plain" to strike like a griding iron inside the sailor's brain, but Hawthorne reduces trauma to fetishized interest.

Here, the strategy of the "new" artifact that Hawthorne adopts in "The Old Manse" begins to gives way to an acceptance of history that is dismissed in the earlier preface. Because of his "absorbing contemplation" with the letter, Hawthorne nearly neglects its context, which is literally wrapped inside: the "small roll of dingy paper, around which it had been twisted" where is "recorded by the old Surveyor's pen, a reasonably complete explanation of the whole affair" (32). The creator of treasure becomes the curator, or rather takes on his "true position as editor, or very little more" (8). Whereas the scraps of poetry that hum in P.'s ear cause him anxiety and trouble the

new literary artifact that Hawthorne envisions, Pue's manuscript allows him to offer an artifact while claiming its historical character, simultaneously authenticating his tale while declaring its strange origins. He even offers to put the evidence for his tale on display: the "original papers, together with the scarlet letter itself,—a most curious relic,—are still in my possession, and shall be freely exhibited to whomsoever, induced by the great interest of the narrative, may desire to see them" (33). Hawthorne's offer to show his antiquities "freely" partakes in a bit of misdirection, for the reader is already reading—and presumably has bought—what he is selling. He has smuggled his book into the marketplace without any true demand for authenticity having to be met. As editor, he admits rather slyly to "his dressing up of the tale," to the extent that he may have used "nearly or altogether as much license as if the facts had been entirely my own invention," but he asserts the "authenticity of the outline" (35).

Hawthorne's fictionalized creation of historical value for his book is an attempt to grant the book monumentality while still allowing room for the originality that Hawthorne, like his critic Poe, values. In his placement of Hawthorne's work in relation to the market place, Michael Gilmore imagines exchange as primarily concerned with openness and the gaze: "This is the situation of all persons in commercial society: they must enter the marketplace and submit themselves to the scrutiny and evaluation of others" (75). From a different perspective, one might argue that the black market would avoid this gaze by all means, or invite the gaze only to dissemble. As "editor," Hawthorne claims an antiquarian relation to his work that allows any perceived strangeness or foreignness to be explained as the natural effect of an imported commodity from the past. While Gilmore claims that the narrative of *The Scarlet Letter* teaches,

"Truth is one value sacrificed in the marketplace" (88), Hawthorne's movement from creator of an artifact in "The Old Manse" to an editor of a manuscript in *The Scarlet Letter* does not reflect a concern for truth, but rather a simple desire to be in the marketplace at all.

In the narrative itself, the scarlet letter, it turns out, is not entirely about the recreation of history. After the letter becomes accepted as part of Hester's identity in the Puritan community, the narrator explains that "the scarlet letter had the effect of the cross on the nun's bosom," for it granted her "sacredness, which enabled her to walk securely amid all peril," even if she had "fallen among thieves" or, as was reported, she was shot by an Indian's arrow (106). The symbol's universal circulatory power is awesome, but the initial ascription of its power to religion turns out to be short-sighted as her association with thieves and Indians suggests that she is simply not restrained to the same sanctified market as the rest of her community. Recalling the arrowhead of the Manse, the repeated image of the Indian's creation of artifacts here identifies Hester's power over markets to be linked to the artifact that she carries on her clothing. The mark of the state declares her as citizen and other at the same time, making her more available to a wider market, and it turns Hester into a moving relic through its circulatory freedom. She is "withered" until she is nothing more than a "bare and harsh outline," though in her "marble coldness" she remains "statue-like" (107). She becomes the inspired statue figure seen in Scott and Wordsworth, and her new value transcends the setting in which she is placed.[15] It is after her circulatory power is made evident that Hawthorne writes that the "world's law is no law for her mind," for "[i]t was an age in which the human intellect, newly emancipated, had taken a more active and wider range than for centuries

before" (107). Hawthorne might as well be talking about the French Revolution as seventeenth-century England, for then, too, "men of the sword had overthrown and rearranged nobles and kings" and "rearranged...within the sphere of theory...the whole system of ancient prejudice, wherewith was linked much of ancient principle" (107). Her power to enter markets is also her power to transcend historical boundaries.

As a free-floating artifact she allows the same kind of anachronism that Hawthorne seeks in his reformation of the literary marketplace. The imagination of a transatlantic literary market cannot be asserted in an epigraph, but requires a gifted smuggling operation that transcends national boundaries even as it appears to consolidate them. In the critical tradition, Hawthorne's perpetuation of national divisions signifies an interest in a uniquely American tradition, but this interest might be as easily attributed to the critics as to the author. Henry James may put this critical perspective most bluntly in his classic study on Hawthorne when he says, "Something at last might be sent to Europe as exquisite in quality as anything that had been received, and the best of it was the thing was absolutely American; it belonged to the soil, to the air; it came out of the very heart of New England" (James 111). Sacvan Bercovitch in *The Office of* The Scarlet Letter finds a definite national impulse in the text, the end of which "was a quasi-dialectic between exclusion and expansion that established, defined, and processually secured the boundaries of union, a 'new nation' replete with mythic past and 'manifest' future" (Bercovitch xv). While Lauren Berlant admits that in Hawthorne's writing process "there is no inevitable 'America,'" she still represents Hawthorne's epistemological goal as "what it means to be an American citizen" (Berlant 16).

A man of letters, Hawthorne also seeks what it means to be an American stylist, especially with the burden of so much English *intercourse* being published within the nation.[16] But as with Hester's citizenship, Hawthorne suggests that American style, however original it aspires to be, remains integrally embedded in wider frames of circulation. Unsurprisingly Wordsworth returns as one of the key literary commodities smuggled into his text. *The Scarlet Letter* is infused with Wordsworth's style even as it establishes an American story. Manning has recently put forth "stylistic analysis" as a means of studying transatlantic literary culture and the effects of Wordsworth's verse in that culture. Taking her lead reveals that the English poet's lyrical ballad "The Thorn" plays a crucial role in the methods and choices of Hawthorne's novel. (22).[17] In fact, Scott Harshbarger cites a letter to Wordsworth from Hawthorne's sister-in-law Elizabeth Peabody that shows Wordsworth's poetry might have been in the forefront of his mind as he contemplated his "American" novel: "When I asked him what he did—he said he was from sunrise to sunset quarreling with sea captains & owners—about measuring out their cargoes of salt & coal & potatoes—according to the laws—and then he went home to his room and read Wordsworth. What an alternation!" (cited Harshbarger 126).

Up to a point, Wordsworth's influence on Hawthorne is often noted by critics. Morris Murphy finds echoes in *Twice Told Tales*, particularly references he hears to Wordsworth's "Immortality Ode" (364). He also repeats Carl Pfeiffer's contention that Wordsworth was a possible model for the poet figure in Hawthorne's "Great Stone Face." Pfeiffer finds so many echoes in Hawthorne's sketch that "[n]o sentence from the description of the Poet is inapplicable to Wordsworth" (107). More recently, Pace notes similarities between Wordsworth's "Thorn" and Hawthorne's *Mr. Higginbotham's*

Catastrophe in the texts' exhibition of imagination's power to make folk tales real for an entire community, and he contends that "Hawthorne gives a nod toward Wordsworth when he notes that the 'village poet...commemorated the young lady's grief in seventeen stanzas of a ballad'" (Pace).[18]

These diffuse examples of borrowings operate along the lines of the allusion in "The Old Manse." The echoes of Wordsworth and, in particular, his poem "The Thorn" in *The Scarlet Letter* represent a more fully developed authorial strategy. In "The Custom-House," Hawthorne appears to offer a brief, covert (or smuggled) allusion to Wordsworth when he laments that he could not while in his government post manage to write the narratives of a "veteran shipmaster, one of the Inspectors, whom I should be most ungrateful not to mention" (36). "Could I have preserved the picturesque force of his style," writes Hawthorne, "and the humourous coloring, which nature taught him to throw over his descriptions, the result, I honestly believe, would have been something new in literature" (36). In his description of the road not taken, one hears an echo of Wordsworth's preface to *Lyrical Ballads* in which he takes "common" events only to "throw over them a certain colouring of imagination whereby ordinary things shall be presented to the mind in an unusual way" (597). Following Wordsworth's example further than he would care to admit, Hawthorne goes on to take a common history and makes it strange for the reader.

Hawthorne's novel begins to echo Wordsworth's "Thorn" late in "The Custom-House" when the narrator, upon discovering the scarlet cloth reports that "by an accurate measurement, each limb proved to be precisely three inches and a quarter in length" (31). A similar hunger for exactitude guides Wordsworth's speaker to report near the

beginning of the poem that the thorn is "[n]ot five yards from the mountain path" (27), and the muddy pond "three yards beyond" (29).[19] Moreover, between the pond and hill of moss often sits, the speaker claims, a "woman in a scarlet cloak" (63). Echoes of Wordsworth's poem continue in Hawthorne's story proper, in particular when the narrative moves to the forest where the author is tasked with describing Nature. Waiting on Dimmesdale to return from a journey, Hester and Pearl, her daughter, "sat down on a luxuriant heap of moss; which, at some epoch of the preceding century, had been a gigantic pine, with its roots and trunk in the darksome shade, and its head aloft in the upper atmosphere" (162). "The Thorn" opens with a similar image of wild plant life, the thorn bush, brought low through the years, which "like a rock or stone…is o'ergrown / With lichens to the very top, / And hung with heavy tufts of moss" (12-14). More of the language finds its way into Hawthorne's continued description of his scene which contains "here and there a huge rock, covered with gray lichens" (Hawthorne *Scarlet* 162). Hawthorne's dead tree, a "heap of moss," is described in nearly identical terms as the supposed grave of the infant in Wordsworth's poem, which is a "beauteous heap, a hill of moss" as "luxuriant" as Hawthorne's collapsed pine since it boasts "all lovely colors that were ever seen" and a "mossy network… / As if by hand of lady fair / The work had woven been" (Wordsworth "Thorn" 36, 39-42).

These women in scarlet whose guilt the village crowd gossips about continually also give birth to haunting children. Martha Ray's child is said to haunt the spot as a reflection in the muddy pond (214-220); and the appearance of Hester's daughter, Pearl, in Hawthorne's story is capable of a "freakish" gaze in which her mother beholds "not her own miniature portrait, but another face in the small black mirror of Pearl's eye" (86,

87). Hester's fear that her guilt-ridden pregnancy led to her child's demonic cast echoes the lament in "The Thorn" that a child ever held communion with Martha's crazed mind (144-145). Hester considers murdering her daughter as well as herself in order to "send Pearl at once to heaven, and go herself to such futurity as Eternal Justice should provide" (145). Her desire to commit infanticide echoes Martha Ray's rumored crimes, and Hawthorne's wording, too, harkens back to Wordsworth's lines that "some had sworn an oath that she / Should be to public justice brought" (221-222). In both texts fantasy and superstition are never completely dismissed. For example, Wordsworth's speaker has "heard the scarlet moss is red / With drops of that poor infant's blood," a phenomenon that supports the rumor of infanticide (209-210). Similarly in the novel, Pearl finds fallen partridge-berries "red as drops of blood upon the withered leaves" (178). The image continues the resonances of Wordsworth's poem in the story, but Hawthorne's use of free indirect discourse leaves it uncertain whether Pearl or the narrator is being fanciful.

Treating style as a commodity that can be smuggled into American literature rather than the artifact of a literary predecessor offers Hawthorne the opportunity to open his world to an array of literary influences while appearing to acknowledge temporal and national distinctions. His strategy reveals that the smuggler is the actual surveyor of the market. An eye for what will circulate is more effective than the eye of authority, which becomes a tool to the effective stylist. Hawthorne's new stylistic approach mimics the surveying receipts that he used in the Salem Custom-House.[20] The receipts offer a template with blanks, the filling of which transform the foreign goods into American commodities, the form forcing everyone and everything into a repeatable structure that turns raw goods into nationalized commoditites. In essence, Hawthorne is serving as his

own Custom-House by using Wordsworth's tropes to fill out his official, national template, and not only does he assume the power of a national register, he is allowed to do so with without making it public. He is at once the customs officer and the smuggler of a national tradition that depends as much upon the commodification of the literary artifact as the material artifacts that it commemorates.

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[1] See April 15, 1846 in *Letters* (152).

[2] James Kiel provides an interesting reading of the sketch as an indicator of Hawthorne's early habit of performing an archaeology of past texts to create his own. I look to complicate Kiel's examination of intertextuality by focusing on the materiality inherent in Hawthorne's archaeological preoccupation in the text.

[3] Please see chapter 2 for my discussion of Alison (105-106).

[4] For Michaels, naturalism finds its sources in the person's articulation of self as commodity: "Commodity fetishism involves ascribing to things the attributes of persons. For writers like Mitchell and Gilman, however, fetishism cannot consist in an extension of personhood to commodities, since the only way a person can get to be a person in the first place is by articulating in his or her nature the double nature of the commodity" (26).

[5] See chapter 1 35-38.

[6] *La Révolution du langage poétique* was translated into English in 1984, *Pouvoirs de l'horreur* in 1982.

[7] Person sees a possible biographical reason for the sketch's odd use of paternity and maternity: "In part, I think, exploring the possibility of autogenesis enables Hawthorne to replicate his own single parentage (by his mother) in the only way available to him as a man—by projecting himself as a bachelor father. He compensates for the absence of a father in his life by being mother and father—an autogenetic father—in his art" (50).

[8] On parallels between the sketch and Thoreau's *Walden*, see Courser. See, too, Lance Newman's enlightening essay on the heavy influence of Wordsworth's work on Thoreau's poetry.

[9] The reference comes from "Inscription: Intended for a Stone in Rydal Mount," most likely read by Hawthorne in the 1837 *Complete Poetical Works* (334). The poem begins: "In these fair vales hath many a Tree / At Wordsworth's suit been spared."

[10] See my earlier discussion of Marx's table in chapter 2 (129-130).

[11] Ellen Weinauer considers the intersection of witchcraft and authorship in Hawthorne's use of such tropes.

[12] On the artist as commodity in Hawthorne, see Goddu "Hawthorne."

[13] Cited by Weinauer, the quotation is taken from a discussion of Turner in Reid.

[14] See *Letters* 140n.1

[15] See my discussion of inspired statue figures of Scott in chapter 1 (65-68), and animated ruins in Wordsworth in chapter 2 (121-124).

[16] Wineapple reports, while in college, that Hawthorne adored the works of John Neal, who was an ardent promoter of an American literature to replace the influence of England's culture of letters (59).

[17] Manning begins her article with a compelling reading of Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" alongside a passage from Margaret Fuller's *Summer on the Lakes* (1844), noteworthy for Manning's assertion that for Fuller, an acquaintance of Hawthorne, it seems that Wordsworth and Nature are "the same" (21).

[18] Darrel Abel notes that Pearl appears to be a "child of Nature" like Wordsworth's Lucy.

[19] The historical source for Hester's A is commonly believed to be a passage from Joseph B. Felt's *Annals of Salem, from Its First Settlement* in which those found guilty of adultery or polygamy are "to sit an hour on the gallows, with ropes about their necks,—be severely whipt not above 40 stripes; and forever after wear a capital A, two inches long, cut out of cloth coloured differently from their clothes, and sewed on the arms, or back parts of the garments so as always to be seen when they were about" (cited Ryskamp 271). This is undoubtedly correct, but in his depiction of an interaction with a strange relic, Hawthorne's use of measurements, like the color of the cloth, is a stylistic choice.

I quote and cite lines from the version of "The Thorn" found in the 1837 *Complete Poetical Works* edited by Reed (148-150).

[20] See figure 5 in Appendix.

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Appendix

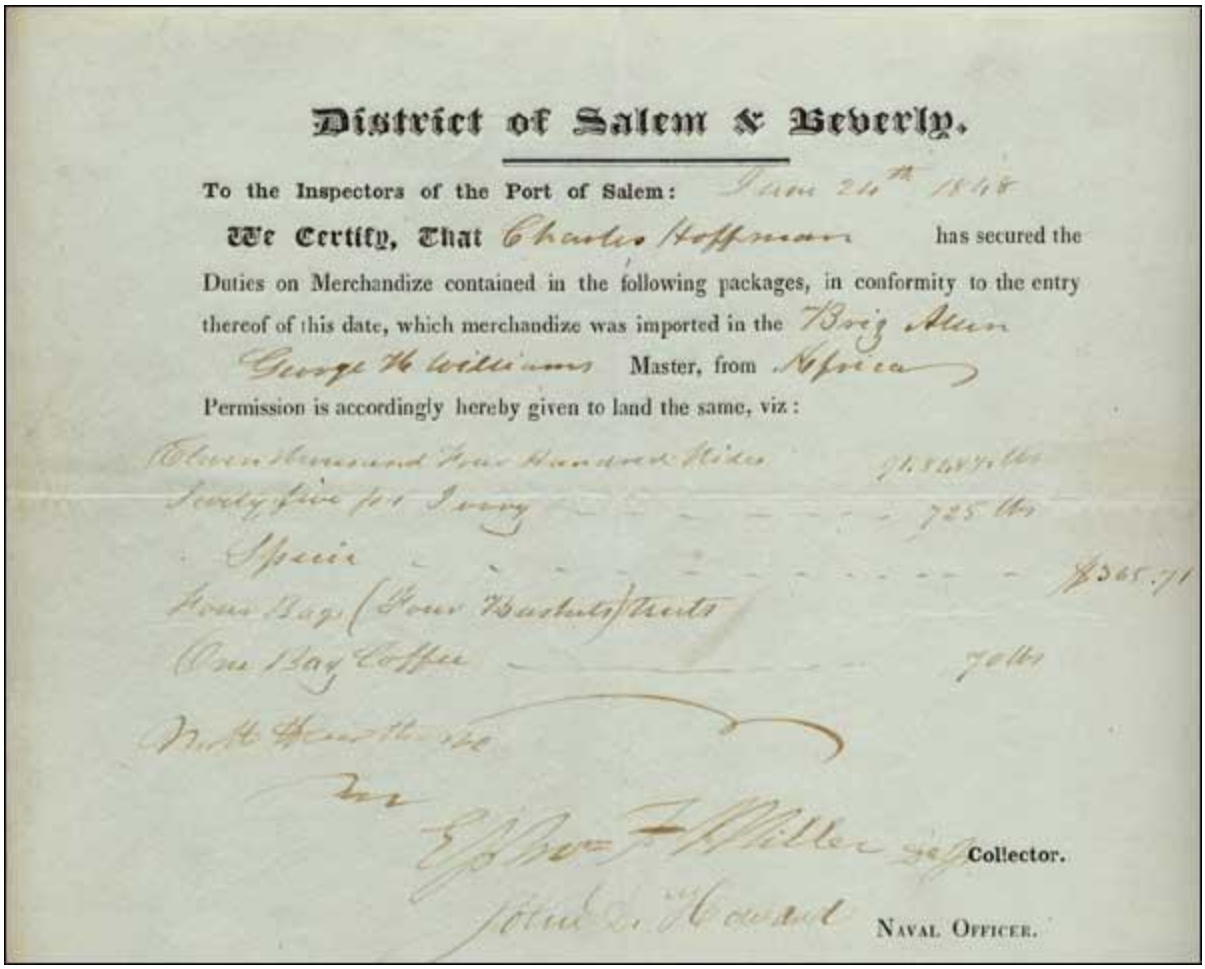
S.E. VIEW of EDINBURGH CASTLE.

Figure 1. From Francis Grose's *Antiquities of Scotland* ([xxv])

Figure 2., left, David Teniers The Younger, *The Smoker*, late 1630s (Los Angeles, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, William R. Hearst Collection)

Figure 3., right, David Teniers the Younger, *The Smoker*, 1643 (Munich, Alte Pinakothek). Photo: Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen.

Figure 4. David Teniers, the Younger, *Village Wedding Feast.* N.d. (London: Bridgewater Gallery).



District of Salem & Beverly.

To the Inspectors of the Port of Salem: June 21st 1848

We Certify, That Charles Hoffman has secured the Duties on Merchandize contained in the following packages, in conformity to the entry thereof of this date, which merchandize was imported in the Brig Alert George H. Williams Master, from Africa

Permission is accordingly hereby given to land the same, viz:

Eleven Thousand Four Hundred Hides 11,400 lbs
Seventy five for Ivory 725 lbs
Specie $365.71
Four Bags (Four Bushels) Nuts
One Bag Coffee 70 lbs

N. H. Hawthorne

Collector.

Naval Officer.

Figure 5. "Salem Custom House Receipt from June, 1848." Signed by Nathaniel Hawthorne, the receipt reports that an African ship is carrying hides, ivory, nuts and coffee.

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