

TO ENLIST OR NOT, FOR THE EMPIRE:
THE CITIZENS OF THE BRITISH ISLES AND STORIES OF WAR
FROM THE FOUR KINGDOMS 1798-1853

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Abstract

I examine the British military activities to reconsider how people of the British Isles formulated concepts of citizenship and nationhood during the earlier half of the nineteenth century. Arguing that literary history of British Romanticism should give stronger recognition to Britain's internal and external colonies, I investigate how Jane Austen, Maria Edgeworth, Sir Walter Scott, and Charles Dickens incorporate dissenting voices in their fiction to problematize the British Empire's nation-building process driven by militarism. I aim to offer a postcolonial, feminist, and ecocritical interpretation of the canonical British writers against the conventional narrative of literary history that reads mass mobilization during anti-French military conflicts as a nation-forming experience.

My first chapter on Austen's *Mansfield Park* (1814) examines Fanny Price's desire to participate in the British imperial project. Because overseas military activity is inaccessible for women, Fanny's admiration for her brother's naval accomplishment is mixed with envy and suspicion about the foreign elements that British officers may bring back to England. I suspect that Austen projects her own relationship to her brothers to that between Fanny and William. Austen supports the Royal Navy as a loving sister, yet she withholds a wholehearted consent to British imperial activities as an English gentlewoman. Austen's admiration for Captain Charles Pasley's *Essay on the Military Policy and Institutions of the British Empire* (1811) suggests her own frustrated aspirations.

My second chapter investigates Edgeworth's colonial antimilitarism revealed in her Irish national tale, *The Absentee* (1812) and her story for children, "The Prussian Vase" (1801). As an Anglo-Irish woman writer, Edgeworth negotiated clashing demands of gender, class, and national/ethnic loyalties during the French Revolution, the 1798 Irish Rebellion, and the Napoleonic Wars. When Anglo-Irish aristocrat Colambre pushes

away Pasley's *Essay* to read the family genealogy of Grace Nugent, this gesture translates as Edgeworth's own repudiation of Britain's colonial expansionism. A truly responsible Anglo-Irish gentleman prioritizes Ireland's domestic prosperity over British imperial military conflicts. Edgeworth's children's tale "The Prussian Vase" (1801) provides an earlier example of her antimilitarism in ambiguous treatment of the young Polish count in the Prussian court, whom I view as Colambre's (negative) prototype.

My third chapter on *Guy Mannering* (1815) reassesses the traditional militaristic evaluation of the historical novel of Sir Walter Scott's brand. I reevaluate Scott focusing on his colonial consciousness. The hybridity of Julia Mannering, an English girl born and raised in India, undergirds my reading. The novel's soldier-artists and the imperial cultural artifacts they produce are scrutinized under the critical eyes of the Colonel's daughter. On the other hand, the Scottish-born, Dutch-bred soldier Harry Bertram debunks the military participation's empty promise of equal status with England for Scottish or other non-English British subjects.

My final chapter examines William Cobbett's *Rural Rides* (1830) and Dickens' *Bleak House* (1853) to consider how nineteenth-century British press journalism and the realist novel challenge British imperialism and its military. Deeply influenced by Cobbett's radicalism and antimilitarism, Dickens condemns the ruling class that, preoccupied with affairs overseas, neglect the domestic affairs. Dickens associates the military with qualities detrimental to personal and national prosperity. Britain's future depends on the middle-class domesticity personified by Esther Summerson and her physician husband Allan Woodcourt. Focusing on the characters returning to Britain such as Mrs. Bagnet, I explore how Dickens redefines femininity and masculinity to offer a renewed vision of domestic and national duty.

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Introduction

To Enlist or Not, for the Nation: War, Novel, and National Subject

In his foundational analysis on the historical novel, György Lukács points to mass armies raised during the French Revolutionary and the Napoleonic Wars as the incubator of national feelings (23). To persuade such an unprecedented number of unprofessional recruits of the necessity of the war, nation-states had to devise a “propaganda” that “connect[ed] up the war with the entire life and possibilities of the nation’s development” (23-24). Thus, war, nation, military participation, and narrative were inextricably intertwined in Lukács’ formulation of the national historical consciousness that saw its literary crystallization in Scott’s historical novels. Lukács’ brilliant interpretation of the connection between the turn-of-the-century pan-European armed conflicts and the birth of national feelings, however, is incomplete in assuming organizational parallels across different national armies and near-homogeneity among soldiers’ experiences. Even more significantly, an analysis structured around the experience of soldiers excludes that of people who did not or could not be a part of that national mass.

A very different narrative of the history of the nineteenth-century novel emerges when voices of the people who lived through the wars are more closely, and widely, considered. Building on Lukács’ insight, I bring to attention the fictional representation of those who voluntarily or involuntarily kept distance from the military during the earlier half of the nineteenth century. In doing so, I investigate the British Empire’s

nation-building project from minorities' perspectives. Viewing anti-French military conflicts as the main manufactory of British national identity is a well-established scholarly tradition, as demonstrated by Linda Colley's claim in *Britons* (1992) that "a broad sense of British national identity was forged" through a series of such efforts from the 1707 Act of Union to Queen Victoria's accession to the throne in 1837 (1). Yet it is crucial to remember Catriona Kennedy's point that "[u]nlike France and Prussia, Britain during this period saw neither the introduction of mass conscription nor the expansion of political rights, but the size of the armed forces did increase massively through voluntary enlistment into the regular army and the proliferation of national defence units" ("John Bull" 127-28).¹ Britain's policy of voluntary enlistment demands more nuanced revision of Lukács' thesis that European national identities arose through mass-scale male military participation.

The exact nature of enlistment is central to understanding the British subject being officially formed at the beginning of the nineteenth century when Ireland, a century after Scotland's union with England in 1707, was finally absorbed by the British Empire in 1801. Thus, the assumption of voluntary military participation should be interrogated on multiple levels. Who can fight for the British cause in the British military, and who cannot? Who would want to be a part of such efforts, and for what motives? Who refused to participate in the wartime resistance against the French for what reason and what

¹ Colley stresses that Britain's escape from "substantial invasion" of the homeland and mass conscription "merely made responses to the wars more unabashedly chauvinistic" (3-4). Colley's focus is on "the active cooperation of large numbers of Britons" as she endeavors to give clearer representation to "*apparently* more conventional voices" rather than "dissenting voices" (5, Colley's emphasis). I trace the diverse literary manifestations of the latter in canonical authors.

pretext did they offer for their non-participation? Did the British government explicitly or tacitly promise any return for the shedding of blood, and if so, was the promise fulfilled when the war was over? What transformation did British society undergo as a result of continued military conflicts during which different identities were oppressed, negotiated, and/or reshaped?

My exploration of early nineteenth-century British nationalism through novelistic representation of British people's wartime experiences elaborates on the questions on "the origin and spread of nationalism" Benedict Anderson pursues in *Imagined Communities* (1983). In Anderson's influential account of the birth of nationalism, the novel and the newspaper play a pivotal role in breeding national feelings in the age of imperial expansionism and colonial oppression. As the age of "religious modes of thought" and dynastic monarchy waned in the eighteenth century, nation offered a new mode of inserting oneself into the larger spatial community and temporal continuity (11-12). Anderson's nation is "an imagined political community" in that its members feel and believe in the presence of their unacquainted countrymen; it is "both inherently limited and sovereign" because it has physically "finite, if elastic, boundaries" and arose from the debris of a "divinely-ordained hierarchical dynastic realm" (6-7). Significantly, he defines nationalism in terms of violence; it is a "fraternity that makes it possible . . . for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings" (7). My chapters, on the other hand, look at nation, its membership, and (un)willingness to exercise or face the ultimate violence from the perspectives of people who did not or could not subscribe to Britain's patriotic propaganda during its anti-

French military conflicts yet demanded their place in British society. I expand upon the postcolonial, feminist perspectives pioneered by literary historians in the 1990s. Beginning with Katie Trumpener's *Bardic Nationalism* (1997), efforts to legitimize, or even centralize, Romantic voices from social and geographical peripheries gained ground. Marlon Ross' *The Contours of Masculine Desire: Romanticism and the Rise of Women's Poetry* (1990) and Anne. K. Mellor's *Romanticism and Gender* (1992) unearthed overlooked women writers. Continuing their critical spirit, I examine the relationship between military participation and citizenship through fictional characters who have an uncomfortable relationship to the military due to gender, nationality, class, or traumatic wartime experience.

Each of the first three chapters features a representative author of England, Scotland, or Ireland during the Napoleonic Wars. As an English writer with two brothers successful in the navy, Jane Austen glorifies the Royal Navy's triumphs against France. At the same time, she suspects foreign influences the soldiers from abroad may bring back. Such a contradiction is embodied by Fanny Price in *Mansfield Park* (1814) who, excluded from military aspirations as a woman, imagines an alternative imperial pursuit in colonial management in Antigua. On the other hand, Anglo-Irish woman writer Maria Edgeworth judges Britain's military turn from the Irish colonial perspective. Blaming the absentee Anglo-Irish landlords for the Irish peasantry's predicament, Edgeworth in *The Absentee* (1812) refuses to send her aristocratic protagonist Lord Colambre to the European battlefield. In *Guy Mannering*, Sir Walter Scott ruminates on the disintegration of Colonel Mannering's Anglo-Indian military household and its incomplete

reconciliation on return to Britain to debunk the myth of military participation as a mechanism for national integration and recognition.

The final chapter juxtaposes Charles Dickens's *Bleak House* (1853) and William Cobbett's *Rural Rides* (1830) to examine the mid-century British Empire. Cobbett's denunciation of corporal punishment against common soldiers and military corruption in *The Soldier's Friend* (1792) made him a political refugee. Cobbett's radicalism was inseparable from his critique of the military from the beginning of his writerly career. Tracing imprints of Cobbett's politics including that on gender in *Bleak House*, I examine how its censure against the British government interweaves antimilitarism, radicalism, and feminism as it challenges the British Empire's military expansionism that prioritizes exploitation worldwide over the welfare of its weakest citizens.

Anderson regrets in his "Preface to the Second Edition" that contrary to his intention to emphasize "the New World origins of nationalism," the European peripheries' "ethnolinguistic nationalisms" earned the most spotlight (xiii). Writing on the nineteenth-century British novel and nationalism inevitably reproduces such "Eurocentric provincialism." Although my texts are mostly set in the British Isles, my dissertation elaborates Anderson's tenet that the Americas' nationalisms surfaced from conflicting interests between European colonial administrators and creole capitalists apprehending "'lower-class' political mobilizations" (48). A contemplation on antimilitaristic undercurrents in Britain's domestic and overseas colonies entails attending to the grievances of people negatively affected by its militaristic policy: women, children, colonial subjects, racial others, the poverty-stricken working class, and

traumatized soldiers. Ina Ferris writes of the Irish national tale that “[t]o present [Ireland] as a grievance, however, is to write Ireland less as a problem to be resolved than as a claim that demands to be heard” (*The Romantic National Tale* 50). My chapters address those people’s demand “to be heard.”

1. The Empire and the Novel: Stories from Three Kingdoms, or Four Nations

The political entity called the United Kingdom in the early nineteenth century resists a smooth definition. Ireland’s annexation opened the new century, with the violently-put-down armed insurrections of 1798 fresh in the Britons’ memory. It was the heyday of cultural nationalism, with Edinburgh eclipsing the English metropole as the cultural and intellectual capital of the British Empire. Refugees of European conflicts—the Seven Years’ War and the French Revolution—found a new home on British soil while interactions (including slave trade) with the past and current colonies of North America, India, the Caribbean islands, and Australia brought people, goods, and thoughts that the expanding militaristic empire absorbed in a frenzied race to industrialization and urbanization.²

Decolonization following World War II brought with it the disintegration of the British Empire, and hence attempts at revision of British historiography. J. G. A.

Pocock’s 1975 article “British History: A Plea for a New Subject” reveals the New

² According to Kathleen Wilson, eighteenth-century England was already famous for “providing refuge for groups persecuted elsewhere in Europe (Huguenots, Walloons, Gypsies, Sephardic Jews, for example)”; regarding colonial relations, it was simultaneously a “mother country” and a “destination” for people involved, or trapped, in the wide British imperial network encompassing not only Europe, North America, and West Indies but Africa, East Asia, and East Indies (43).

Zealand-born historian's embitterment facing the dissolution of the Commonwealth; the English people are ready "to declare that neither empire nor commonwealth ever meant much in their consciousness, and that they were at heart Europeans all the time" (26). Against this European turn, Pocock undertakes to construct a British history that begins with renaming the British Isles "the Atlantic Archipelago" and is "pluralist and multiculturalist" (29, 39). His "post-Commonwealth" British history is not only "extra-European" but "highly anti-nationalist" (Pocock 43).

If the fate of a nation-state and polity is still a valid milestone of periodization, 2016 saw a definitive moment in Westminster's decision for BREXIT. Concerns over impending insularity and the possible disintegration of the United Kingdom (especially with Scotland's dissent over leaving the EU) yielded an outpouring of works reconsidering the idea of Britain. A noteworthy outcome of such efforts, Naomi Lloyd-Jones and Margaret M. Scull's edited collection *Four Nations Approaches to Modern 'British' History: A [Dis]united Kingdom?* revisits Pocock's article. Lloyd-Jones and Scull's collection expands upon Pocock's legacy to attain "polycentric narratives" encompassing English, Irish, Scottish, and Welsh experiences to conceptualize "a practicable, sustainable 'four nations history' for the modern period" (5). This approach acknowledges both "the separate national histories" of respective nations and "the complications arising from the fact of their forming a larger polity, represented in and governed by a united parliament" (Lloyd-Jones and Scull 5-6).³

³ Lloyd-Jones and Scull credit Hugh Kearney for giving currency to the term (5).

The temporal and geographic scope articulated in this dissertation's title, *To Enlist or Not, for the Empire: The Citizens of the British Isles and Stories of War from the Four Kingdoms 1798-1853*, demands clarification here. My focus on English, Irish, and Scottish novelists leans toward the three kingdoms approach, a method that, according to Ian McBride, was more widely adopted by early modernists including Pocock himself ("J. G. A. Pocock" 34).⁴ I merge the three kingdoms approach with the four nations approach with multiple revisions. Because my main texts were published from 1801 to 1853, this dissertation eludes the generally accepted periodization which holds that the early modern ends with the 1789 French Revolution. Eighteenth-century overseas military conflicts that Britain participated in such as the Seven Years' War are referred to as integral to comprehending the British national formation, yet I take up an event that occurred on British soil, the Irish Uprising of 1798, as my starting point; my discussion closes with *Bleak House*, a British novel addressing the British question and published in 1853 on the eve of another important overseas military expedition of the Crimean War. Rather than pursuing either the three kingdoms approach or the four nations approach strictly, I follow the footsteps of scholars who combined and reinterpreted the two approaches flexibly as well as fruitfully.

⁴ McBride regrets that the three kingdoms approach perpetuates the "persistent neglect of Wales" ("J. G. A. Pocock" 34). Deliberate military non-participation affords as much food for thought as participation, yet nineteenth-century fiction written in English unfortunately provides scanty Welsh representation of both military compliance and resistance. Historians have noted and tried to explain Welsh underrepresentation in the military. Patrick Walsh attributes the arduousness of discerning a "distinctly Welsh contribution to the fiscal-military state" to Wales' earlier and more comprehensive absorption to England (87). Linda Colley attributes Wales' relative unresponsiveness to "the call to arms" during the Napoleonic Wars to agricultural predominance, Welsh monolingualism and absence of "the strong military tradition" (301).

In examining novels by Austen, Edgeworth, Scott, and Dickens, I employ what I call the “four kingdoms” approach. My fourth kingdom designates the empire of the United Kingdom of Britain. My method revises what R. R. Davies calls a “supra-national perspective” (qtd. in Lloyd-Jones and Scull 7), a version of the four nations approach that “almost” views Britain as a fifth nation (Lloyd-Jones and Scull 7). I discuss Dickens’ most urgently inward-looking novel as his exemplary novel on the empire hoping that this perspective may “serve as a superstructure for understanding how these collectivities operated as a whole,” to echo Lloyd-Jones and Scull’s evaluation of Davies (7). The Empire and the inhabitants of its diverse distant, marginal territories are constantly kept in view as I interrogate the role of military (non)participation in fashioning a national subject. Consequently, my take on the British literature of 1801-53 reaches beyond the British Isles.

The breadth of the imperial network formulated and facilitated by the military necessitates as well as justifies such an interpretation of the geographical scope of nineteenth-century British literary history. Spaces that characters left behind or have not visited may dominate a character’s mental landscape. Edward Said brought to scholarly attention the importance of space in the early nineteenth-century novel, asking “How do writers in the period before the great age of explicit, programmatic colonial expansion—‘the scramble for Africa,’ say—situate and see themselves and their work in the larger world?,” and initiated postcolonial readings of *Mansfield Park* (*Culture and Imperialism* 81). Since then, critics have debated what the Bertram siblings’ placidity over the Antiguan plantation says about Austen’s stance on the atrocities of slave labor and

contemporary efforts to overthrow the injustices. Likewise, *The Absentee* can be better understood when the larger European context is considered. I read the national tale in juxtaposition with Edgeworth's earlier story for children set in Prussia under Frederick the Great (England's ally during the Seven Years' War). Titled "The Prussian Vase" in *The Moral Tales* (1801), the story features a captured Saxon artist, a Prussian-educated Polish count, and an insulted Jewish father. In *Guy Mannering*, Colonel Mannering's and Julia's emotional and mental landscapes shaped by their life in India render the father and daughter misfits in England, which brings them to Scotland. Dickens condemns Mrs. Jellyby's African missions as domestic neglect and celebrates Woodcourt's medical exertions in India and China as training that benefits British domestics.

Whereas Pocock's legacy does not necessarily align with postcolonialism, I examine the early nineteenth-century British novels from a postcolonial perspective. The writers I discuss are largely of Anglo-Saxon ethnic origin and wrote in English. Despite their apparent status as European beneficiaries of colonialism, they identified with colonized people for various reasons or at least criticized the detrimental consequences of colonialism. My focus on these writers' fictional and journalistic representation of the military highlights their engagement with colonial conditions within and outside Britain that, in turn, shaped British society with lasting effects. Even when the geographical setting of a text is confined to the British Isles or Europe, the relationship between nation-states is interpreted in colonial terms by contextualizing it within an intra-European history of conquest or a larger global network of imperial expansionism, which is not limited to the British brand. Casting British novels in the European context exposes that

the colonial relationships governing the period were multilayered. McBride argues of Ireland, the territory with the strongest colonial consciousness within the British Isles, that its eighteenth-century experience “is most easily understood in relation to the chronology of European warfare” (*Eighteenth-Century Ireland* 25). The global colonial condition can be explored through European military institutions and its European participants because the experience of internal colonization enabled Scottish and Irish subjects to project their history to external colonies.

Military scholars have noted that early nineteenth-century European military institutions underwent a definitive change in creating national armed forces as they shifted from cross-border enlistment and recruitment within Europe, a normative eighteenth-century practice. According to Kevin Linch, the period between 1793 and 1815 marked a “fundamental shift in the composition of Britain’s foreign contingent” because recruiting colonial subjects rather than other Europeans became more acceptable with the changing political and cultural atmosphere (51-2). As Nir Arielli and Bruce Collins demonstrate, however, “the break with the early modern past was not sharp and universal,” especially when it came to “the mobilization of the colonial peoples” such as the British Army in India which was not only “the largest regular army in the world” in the nineteenth century but “consisted of volunteers who were not citizens” (4-5).

Scott and Edgeworth confronted the idea of military service as a citizen-forming mechanism, which confirms both authors’ colonial consciousness.⁵ When the supposedly

⁵ Scott and Edgeworth’s colonial consciousness informed the form of their novels, the product of Romantic cultural nationalism. It is no accident that Scott and Edgeworth provide footnotes in their novels whereas Austen and Dickens do not. Whereas Anthony Grafton announces that footnotes in the nineteenth century lost their “prominent role of

national armies have been destroying and rebuilding national frontiers worldwide for decades, *Guy Mannering* interrogates foreign enlistment and foreignness in the military and beyond. *Guy Mannering* was composed during the final days of the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815) and its major events occur in the early 1780s, presumably in “November/December 1782” in the middle of two colonial wars overseas: the American War of Independence (1775-83) and the Second Anglo-Mysore War (1780-84) (Garside, “Picturesque Figures” 163). Anticipating militarism’s post-Napoleonic war loss of ground, *Guy Mannering* is crowded with discontented soldiers of diverse national extractions who are serving or have served in the British military: English, Scottish, Scottish-Gypsy, Irish, and Swedish. Their motivations are also diverse, from a young English aristocrat’s adventurous unruliness and foreign-born mercenaries’ search for employment or glory to unwilling impressment of the evacuated gypsy and the tavern musician with an Irish accent.

These characters’ military careers reflect how multilayered works of colonial forces are intertwined with the illusion of military service as precondition of national belonging. It is effectively encapsulated by the Scottish-born, Dutch-educated soldier Henry Bertram/Vanbeest Brown’s complaint of British military service as disingenuous “trap-doors and back-doors” to full British citizenship that English people leave open for outsiders, especially colonial subjects (112). Edgeworth in *The Absentee* takes an even

the tragic chorus” of the eighteenth century (229), Alex Watson urges scrutinizing the Romantic footnote as “a fresh angle” from which to “reconsider Romanticism” (4). Watson’s postcolonial reading of Scott and Edgeworth reminds a reader that, writing from colonial (semi)peripheries, they had to explain themselves to English readers in a way often unnecessary for Scottish or Irish readers.

more radical route and refuses to send her colonial subjects, both an aristocrat and a peasant, to Europe to fight in Britain's war against France. In Arielli and Collins' words, "the transition from subjects to citizens has been gradual and uneven"; as opposed to the traditional idea of "citizen-soldiers" dating from the Roman period, colonial and non-colonial "subject-soldiers" drawn from outside the imperial mother-nation were an unneglectable reality in any nineteenth-century European armed force (6-7). Scott and Edgeworth's perspectives from the colonies warily appraise nationwide mobilization as a measure of colonial absorption rather than national integration.

2. Reimagining the National Citizenship: Militarism, Gender, and Empire

As already mentioned, *Guy Mannering* is overhung with Britain's North American and Indian colonial wars in the 1770s. *Bleak House* is often considered to be set in the early 1830s. The temporal scope of the novels I analyze nearly coincides with what Karen Hagemann and Jane Rendall call "the age of the Wars of Revolution and Liberation," the period that starts with the American War of Independence (1775) and closes with the Latin American Wars of Independence in 1830 (1, 3).⁶ In David A. Bell's analysis, "the age of democratic revolutions" also saw the rise of militarism as the distinction between the military and the civilian grew sharper (31). Chris Rosedale

⁶ Regretting that military historians' research on mass mobilization rarely look at the "civilian side," Hagemann and Rendall stress the importance of investigating how "individuals and groups from different class, race, ethnic, and regional backgrounds resisted war participation, military occupation, colonization and slavery, actively and passively" to better comprehend "the causes and nature of popular support for and resistance to warfare" (5-6). I further pursue Hagemann and Rendall's point that a more comprehensive incorporation of hitherto overlooked gender issues is crucial to this end.

defines militarism as “the system through which military values and practices are embedded within ordinary social relations, and through which societies legitimate and carry out organized political violence” (68). As Britain engaged in military conflicts worldwide, requiring arduous nationwide support, militaristic values penetrated diverse social dimensions. Perceiving the penetration, British writers alarmed warning signs.

I employ gender as a crucial analytic category for the early nineteenth-century British novel’s representation of military participation and militarism, following Joan Scott’s suggestion in her seminal essay “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis” (1986). Rather than treating my texts as materials for “case studies,” I endeavored to devise a “synthesizing perspective” that reinterprets the three kingdoms/four nations approaches by engaging gender as one of the foundational factors of the social and national structure (Scott 1055). While both approaches prioritize polity in their discussions, my chapters make a feminist intervention into the debate on citizenship, warfare, and nation by investigating how social contradictions surrounding a woman’s condition are differently experienced depending on her national, ethnic, and class background. As Scott stresses, “[a]n interest in class, race, and gender” evidences scholarly dedication to inclusive history that excavates “stories of the oppressed” and analyzes the dynamics of such oppressions building on “scholarly understanding that inequalities of power are organized along at least three axes” (1054).

Some early nineteenth-century women writers already practiced such a three-dimensional approach in analyzing the society they inhabited. Women writers including Austen and Edgeworth learned to sympathize with the suppressed colonized regardless of

national origin through their own experience with patriarchal oppression, which prompted them to seek for alternative modes of grasping an individual's worldly place other than as a national subject. Such imaginative alternatives ranged from a female citizen-patriot to a cosmopolitan entrepreneur; some women writers became revolutionary feminists themselves, such as Mary Wollstonecraft. Whether as writers of fiction or social/literary criticism, the wartime women writers spoke to and about the war from women's perspectives, which renders gender an indispensable analytic category of turn of the nineteenth-century Britain. Their pen's geographical and discursive scope expanded in tandem with the empire's territorial enlargement. As enumerated by Jane Rendall, nineteenth-century women read and wrote on as diverse subjects as "a patriotic understanding of imperial destiny, an emphasis on the mission of Christian civilization, a vision of an empire of commerce and exchange, or one of potential opportunity for both philanthropists and emigrants," actively recasting contemporary concepts of gender amid the frenzy of imperial expansionism ("The Condition of Women" 105).

Gender as an analytic category yields deeper insights when its operations are examined in juxtaposition with other categories such as class and ethnicity. Austen's *Mansfield Park* and Edgeworth's *The Absentee* reflect upon the Royal Navy and the British Army respectively. In contrast to *Guy Mannering*, which features two soldiers as protagonists, the marriage plot takes the central ground in the women writers' works. Yet both the English and the Anglo-Irish marriage plots are entangled with the authors' evaluation of the British military institution and its activities home and abroad. Each writer's evaluation of the military is shaped both by her gender and by the way she

situates herself in Britain's imperial network. In considering the domestic implications of the military career, the Anglo-Irish woman writer's criticism targets the burden that the demand for manpower imposes on colonial subjects. On the other hand, the English woman writer's concern lies with uneven distribution of the fruits of imperial activities along gender lines even as she acknowledges the parallel between oppressions suffered by property-less English women and slaves in Antigua.

The contrast between their perspectives is most distinctly revealed in their reactions to Sir Charles William Pasley's *An Essay on the Military Policy and Institutions of the British Empire* (1810). In the *Essay*, Pasley advocates the need to build a stronger land force to expand and secure British territories. He suggests that this can be achieved without altering the British constitution or enlarging its already massive military institution (12, 501-2). Kathryn E. Davis argues that Pasley's ultimate concern is "the relationship between the nation and the formation of the private citizen"; he is writing for and appealing to "the individual, liberally educated private citizen" to "grow in self-governance" (54). Thus, the *Essay*'s "praise of British liberty and moral responsibility and the criticism of commerce and the institution of slavery" reverberates in Austen's novels from *Mansfield Park* (K. Davis 53). In contrast, Edgeworth feels threatened by Pasley's colonial aspiration. Her Anglo-Irish protagonist Colambre quietly refuses to read more than a paragraph of Pasley's *Essay* or enlist for the British army, despite recommendations for both from Count O'Halloran, a disciplined, admirable man-of-arms. As Mary A. Favret notes, Pasley looks to the supply of "colonial bodies" to revamp the British military (35). Edgeworth's attachment to Ireland and position as a landlord make

Pasley's project unacceptable. Edgeworth discerns that the Irish people, especially the peasantry, are excluded from the number of "private citizens" that Davis believes Pasley is speaking to; they are colonial subjects exhorted to fill the inglorious ranks.

The women writers' preoccupation with the all-male institution of the military evidences that exploration of citizenship and gender demands scrutiny of the concept of masculinity. Anna Clark observes that the link between citizenship and military service forged during the revolutionary wars prompted recasting of "masculine honor"; the ensuing Napoleonic Wars saw the emergence of a contrasting "notion of citizenship based on national belonging" (11). The latter in Britain was headed by Edmund Burke whose familial reconfiguration of national belongingness, Clark explains, entailed a "profoundly undemocratic" definition of citizenship because "[c]hivalrous masculinity was reserved for the aristocratic few" (12).

Scott's engagement with chivalry is probably best known to the modern reader through the medieval *Ivanhoe* (1819), yet his *Waverley* novels explore soldierly honor and masculinity just as seriously against more modern settings of the eighteenth-century. *Guy Mannering* presents an erotically charged male confrontation scene in lieu of medieval knights on horseback:

As he appeared through the morning's mist, Brown, accustomed to judge of men by their thewes and sinews, could not help admiring his height, the breadth of his shoulders, and the steady firmness of his step. Dinmont internally paid the same compliment to Brown, whose athletic form he now perused somewhat more at leisure than he had done formerly. (133)

Unlike a typical medieval knights' confrontation scene in a triangular relationship, a female presence is entirely missing in the two men's mutually approving gaze of the other's male body. For Brown as a soldier of obscure birth (unaware of his identity as Harry Bertram of Ellangowan yet) and the well-off borderland farmer Dandie Dinmont, the other man's healthy, robust physicality signals and confirms the new acquaintance's credibility. *Guy Mannering* appreciates the male body fit for the physical demands of military service and borderland farming as a prerequisite of national belonging.

Yet as the novel unfolds, the missing female presence here translates as an affirmation rather than alienation of femininity. Outspoken, memorable female characters assert their presence throughout the narrative. The female body in a medieval romance's love triangle serves either as a coveted prize or a channel of vicarious erotic fulfillment. As Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick has demonstrated, building on René Girard, Gayle Rubin and others, the erotic triangle is a historically "sensitive register precisely for delineating relationships of power and meaning, and for making graphically intelligible the play of desire and identification by which individuals negotiate with their societies for empowerment" (27). Yet Scott's depiction of the male bond resists trafficking in women. Bertram courts Julia against her father's will, and their engagement alienates the Colonel in his "Bungalow, with all convenience for being separate and sulky when [he] chuse[s]" rather than bonding the soldiers (355).

C. M. Jackson-Houlston stresses that "although Scott could not be described as a feminist," his "humane attitudes and subtle handling of material that he shares with his more gender-radical contemporaries" deserve a more thorough investigation (5). His

gentler treatment of female characters and incorporation of numerous “assertive women” questions Romantic gender norms, as in *Guy Mannering*’s tall, impressive gypsy matriarch Meg Merrilies and headstrong Julia. Scott, however, goes further. As Jackson-Houlston points out, Scott’s protagonists including Harry Bertram “avoid committing serious acts of violence”; Bertram’s distaste at salmon-hunting and sympathy for the suffering badgers hints at Scott’s disapproval of the military, wartime masculinity that equates manhood with insensitivity to acts of violence (6-7). As Scott, writing during the prolonged, burdensome war, problematizes Romantic masculinity, British ways of interacting with the human and non-human world are disputed.

Scott’s engagement of chivalrous-militaristic masculinity in the Indian-Scottish colonial context challenges British imperialism. As Clark summarizes, the Western conceptualization of citizenship can be traced back to ancient Greek polis’ direct democracy run by men of property and the Roman republic’s indirect democracy where freemen earned the right to vote in exchange for military service; the Roman Empire widened the door to citizenship by allowing it to men from outside Rome (7). It is no accident that Scottish-born soldier Harry Bertram who complains about military service as “trap-doors and back-doors” to British citizenship chooses to pursue the “unusual track which leads through the eastern wilds of Cumberland into Scotland” with “a desire to view the remains of the celebrated Roman Wall” on his way to meet Julia Mannering (118).⁷ Pondering from the “extremity of [Roman] empire,” Bertram speculates that “[i]n

⁷ Praising Rome’s incorporative colonial policy was indeed Irish Protestants’ tactic against England’s attempts at more exhaustive colonial administrative measures, as shown in a 1698 letter by Sir Francis Brewster (“a merchant, economic writer, and Irish M.P.”) and addressed to a member of the House of Commons (McBride, *Eighteenth*

future ages, when the science of war shall have changed,” more recent military constructions of “Vauban and Coehorn” will lose glamor unlike the Roman Wall.

Guy Mannering depicts a world of cultural diversity headed to devastation by the European forces’ imperial rivalry. Through Bertram’s Dutch upbringing and other characters’ Dutch references, Scott brings to the readers’ attention the existence of other European empires. Modern global empires are not only violent but mediocre and doomed; Bertram’s glorification of the Roman “fortifications, their aqueducts, their theatres, their fountains, all their public works” that “bear the grace, solid, and majestic character of their language” is the Scottish man’s condemnation of British imperialism expressing his colonial consciousness. Despite the “volume of Shakespeare [he carries] in one pocket,” he suspects the nature and durability of England’s cultural dominance over its territories outside the British Isles (117).⁸

What is only implied by Bertram is given a distinct voice through Julia, whom I establish as a feminine/feminist critic incorporated in the novel to foreground the military theme. My scrutiny of the military in relation to citizenship, rather than perpetuating marginalization of the feminine and femininity, aims to uncover the variously interlaced, mutually transformative ways the perception and performance of gender operated across

Century Ireland 167). Brewster applauds “the Wisdom of the *Romans*, in making the Privilege of a *Roman* Universal, through their whole Conquest” (qtd. in McBride, *Eighteenth Century Ireland* 167, original emphasis). The tactical overlap implies that due to shared religion with the English establishment, the Scottish colonial situation was closer to that of the Irish Protestants than that of the Irish Catholics.

⁸ Samuel Baker suggests that Scott “ironises Bertram’s encomium” on the Roman fortification, given the Shakespearean play in his possession (75). I propose that a closer scrutiny of Julia’s art criticism supports, rather than undermines, Bertram’s skepticism for modern Western empires.

binarism in building, resisting, and revising British nationhood. In other words, my analysis of the military as the site where discourses on citizenship unfold recognizes women who were officially and unofficially involved with the military, such as soldiers' wives and daughters, as a legitimate part of the institution. Military service often left a permanent change in family dynamics; the family dynamic in a military household, in turn, left a militaristic mark on nineteenth-century British civilian society. Julia's disagreements with the authoritarian Colonel Mannering demonstrate how Mannering's attempted militarization of the familial relations undermines his patriarchal authority and destabilizes his English aristocratic household. When guilt-ridden Mannering learns that the prospective son-in-law whom he objected to has survived the duel with him, he is happy to let Julia marry him, especially given Bertram's newly-revealed high birth. The aristocratic soldier's chivalrous masculinity loses validity in the light of the liberal citizenship in which an ideal man is expected to "govern himself, to control his anger and passions" as a self-sacrificing father (Clark 12).

Bleak House expands upon the theme in a less tragic tone in its portrayal of the Bagnets but the whole novel probes deeper and wider interconnections of tragedy between seemingly disparate members of society. In the wake of the sweeping epidemic leading to Jo's death and Esther Summerson's disfigurement, the novel emerges a comprehensive, scathing estimation of the empire-obsessed British ruling class' irresponsibility. *Bleak House*'s representation of domesticity borrows extensively from military values, implying that England is a part of the massive military camp that is the British Empire. Dickens' vision of social reform that famously begins from home is

heavily influenced by military vocabularies. Importantly, military-borrowings happen in households portrayed in a positive light. Esther obsessively repeats “duty!” and Mr. Bagnet—though playfully—insists on domestic “discipline.” The domesticity *Bleak House* promotes is soldierly even while the narrative advocates the urgency of healing the nation’s wounds from internal and external conflicts. Such a contradiction reveals Dickens’ belief that addressing Britain’s domestic predicament demands a drastic overhaul of its value system beginning from the domestic sphere; an individual’s efforts and virtues matter (e.g. John Jarndyce’s humanitarianism), but they are an insufficient measure of social redress.

Sedgwick nods to the military as one of “the many, crucially important male homosocial bonds that are less glamorous to talk about,” yet it is understudied in her work due to “the erotic and individualistic bias of literature itself, and the relative ease . . . of using feminist theoretical paradigms to write about eros and sex” (19). My analysis of the military and its activities as the breeding and testing ground of the national value system across the gender binary is predicated on a more expansive definition of the military that actively embrace its non-combating associates such as soldiers’ family members and providers of supplies and labor (including “domestic” works of cooking and washing) necessary to the institution’s maintenance. In doing so, I uncover how early nineteenth-century British writers endeavored to imagine a community transcending the institutionalized male homosocial bond epitomized by the military and ingrained in the operations of the British Empire. Their reconceptualization of the national community involved recasting of gender and promotion of the domesticated, middle-class virtue of

professionalism. Press journalism, often of a radical brand, spearheaded the call for transformative actions and left an indelible imprint on the mid-century realist novel.

3. The Novel and the Radical Press: Narrating the Nation at War

The novels of the first half of the nineteenth century afford a prime site for investigating the complex, interwoven workings of military service and British national belongingness. The novel and the newspaper, the two media that Anderson holds accountable for the birth of modern nationalism, saw explosive growth and developed unprecedented intimacy with each other during this period. Literary journals established at the beginning of the nineteenth century accrued momentous influence over literary production, which fostered the emergence of professional critics who, in turn, underwrote the journals' authority. As the century progressed, the distance between the novelist and the critic grew closer. Unlike Austen or Edgeworth, the iconic Victorian novelist Charles Dickens often serially published his novels in periodicals—Anderson simply calls these “newspapers”—and contributed articles to them (35n61). Scholars have noted that those periodicals were sometimes supervised by Dickens himself under nearly absolute leadership. Melisa Klimaszewski, for instance, admits that the “dominant critical tendency” sees him as “an inflexible editorial bully” even as she excavates the collaborative aspect of Dickens' journalism through his Christmas numbers (3).

The final two chapters of this dissertation are devoted to three monumental male writers, Scott, Cobbett, and Dickens. If Scott is Dickens' role model as a novelist, Cobbett was the one for his journalistic career. Dickens' dual career as a journalist and

novelist reflect the critical interplay between nation/empire building and the development of the British novel during the first half of the nineteenth century. Rather than valorizing the canonical power of the male pen, however, my choice of closing the dissertation with the three men comes with a recognition of foundational female contribution to the nineteenth-century British literary creation and criticism. Scott's avowal of his indebtedness to Edgeworth's national tales in his postscript to *Waverley* (1814) is well known, and as Robert Tracy suspects, Lady Sydney Owenson is probably another major influence ("Maria Edgeworth" 23). Women writers also made a breakthrough in journalistic careers. Mary A. Waters charts how the political turmoil of the French Revolution gave rise to the emergence of "the professional woman literary critic" who wrote for livelihood (3). Their writings, however, were not admitted by the literary review journals closer to the mainstream; the *Edinburgh Review* first published a review article by a woman only in 1833 and the *Quarterly Review* in 1835 (Rendall, "Blue Stockings and Reviewers" 370). Ferris' *The Achievement of Literary Authority: Gender, History, and the Waverley Novels* traces how such journals, with their policy of "selective evaluation," strove to preserve the republic of letters as "space for gentleman" amid expanding female literacy (25, 28). Nevertheless, women literary critics, including Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-97), Anna Letitia Barbauld (1743-1825) and Harriet Martineau (1802-76), found venues in journals such as the *Analytical Review*, the *Monthly Review*, and the *Monthly Repository*, all owned by the Dissenters (M. Waters 85).⁹ Accordingly,

⁹ As Dickens' contemporary, Martineau was one of the active contributors to *Household Words* (1850-59). Her first contribution to *Household Words* titled "The Sickness and Health of the People of Bleaburn" (serialized from May 25, 1850 to June 25, 1850) is a short story portraying efforts at hygienic improvements orchestrated by a woman named

they “drew on Dissenting culture and its attendant middle-class values of sensibility” as they engaged the Romantic literary discourse’s task of charting national literature and “extend[ed] the British literary canon” to novel and drama (M. Waters 15-17). As the field of literary criticism operated along and against gender politics, it absorbed, revised, and disseminated middle-class values, especially professionalism.

The military was indeed a widely adopted profession in nineteenth-century Britain, and military service a form of labor. Aeron Hunt proposes to “reconsider Victorian war stories as accounts of work as much as of war” and examines how Victorian war memoirs “register grievances” to “make claims on their communities, assert continuity with them, and insinuate demands” (397). Her central text is Mary Seacole’s *Wonderful Adventures of Mrs Seacole in Many Land*. Published in 1857, the autobiography escapes my chapters’ temporal scope, but Hunt’s approach speaks to them just as well because of the ubiquitous presence of veterans throughout the nineteenth century and before. As Cornelia Pearsall observes, Victorians inhabited “a nation and a period constantly at war, defined traditionally as declared armed conflict between nations or states” (945). This condition was shared by those who lived through the French Revolutionary Wars and the Napoleonic Wars; my chapters thus examine literary works produced amid constant warfare in which countless civilians served the military and returned as veterans. Anticipating Seacole’s real-life assertion of a female veteran status

Mary Pickard Ware as typhus sweeps Yorkshire in 1811 amid the Napoleonic Wars, a historical background Martineau emphasizes from the beginning (193). Similarly, *Bleak House*’s probable setting of the early 1830s situates it in the middle of the 1832 cholera pandemic.

through the economic contribution of her supplies and labor of medical service, Scott's and Dickens' fictional female military associates discuss their military experience.

Alongside officers of elevated status, Austen, Edgeworth, Scott, and Dickens place common soldiers or officers struggling to maintain the façade of respectability, which reflects the military's varied class composition. When military service is discussed as a profession, however, it is largely from a middle-class perspective and the military profession's social implication is examined in juxtaposition with other gentlemanly professions. In *Guy Mannering*, the aristocratic Colonel muses thus after meeting the Edinburgh lawyer Pleydell: "I have no great opinion of the long robe in any country, but there are good men in all professions" (210). Yet the narrator assures the reader that Pleydell may "with equal reason wonder that from India, believed to be the seat of European violence and military oppression, had arrived an officer of distinction, open to compassionate liberal balance" (210-11). In *Bleak House*, Jarndyce meditates aloud a more generally applicable insight on a profession during his visit to recently bereaved children of the sheriff's officer: "The man was necessary, . . . If we make such men necessary . . . , we must not revenge ourselves upon them. There was no harm in his trade. He maintained his children" (242). However, the predatory lawyer Vholes' unethical exploitation of his naïve client Richard Carstone, coupled with his insistence on having three daughters to maintain, casts a doubt over the practicality of Jarndyce's idealism over an individual's share of reproach in their professional practices.

The novel's elevation of the man of medicine in Woodcourt indicates that *Bleak House* does assign higher ethical value on the restorative profession than others. Sylvia

Pamboukian writes of Woodcourt and *Little Dorrit's* Physician that they represent “a version of the medical professional capable of healing the diseased systems of modern life” (50). The medical profession carries metaphorical as well as literal significance. Social realism and domestic fiction meet in *Bleak House* as Dickens endeavors to rehabilitate Britain’s domestic condition by renegotiating masculinity and femininity. Ultimately, Dickens suggests that the author should be the doctor of the society. As a doctor, he diagnoses the British national illness by describing London’s horrid hygienic and environmental degradation.

Works Dickens produced in his public, diagnostic capacity becomes, in Ian Duncan’s words, “a present voice, the medium of a spirit” (193). They evoke Thomas Carlyle’s argument in *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History* (1840) that the present-day author is a secular prophet, the role that Dickens enthusiastically embraced (Duncan 194). Worried over his gentlemanly status, Scott concealed the *Waverley* novels’ authorship. Aware that Scott’s bankruptcy was attributable to his distancing from financial aspects of his literary productions, Dickens chose to aggressively assert his authorship through “a fierce concentration of functions—not just author but journal editor, public speaker and advocate for the rights of authors” and gained public influence “scarcely accessible” for “a man without a university education” (Duncan 192-3). His iron leadership discussed earlier springs as much from his desire to achieve financial success as from the aspiration to become a public figure whose opinion on national issues is listened to. *Bleak House* is much better understood when Dickens’ career as journalist is kept in view.

I examine the connection between *Bleak House* and Dickens' journalism in two ways: the radical journalist Cobbett's influence on Dickens and parallel references in contemporary journals including Dickens' *Household Words*. An ex-soldier and agriculturalist, Cobbett vigorously and profusely produced political tracts condemning the British government's post-Napoleonic Wars economic policy and advocated antimilitarism. He saw in the war the cause of rural disintegration and economic downfall, the subject of his *Rural Rides*. The creative interconnection between Dickens and earlier radical writers including Cobbett has been gaining the attention it deserves in the past decade. Sambudha Sen examines the imprint of radical culture on Dickens' aesthetics. Gregory Vargo traces the "generative exchange" of "middle-class and radical writers," borrowing Alex Woloch's frame of reading the realist novel through spatial asymmetry between the protagonist and minor characters (2, 7). Vargo argues that Woloch's approach effectively illuminates radical writings because they employ "the poetics of minoriness to meditate on inequality and political exclusion" (8). As I chart the minor characters' peripheral but resoundingly subversive stories in *Bleak House*, I consider aesthetics as the shared ground between Cobbett's and Dickens' dissent to pursue how Cobbett's anti-military radical protest underlies Dickens' revision of femininity and masculinity.

In investigating *Bleak House* in relation to contemporary journals, I draw from Elaine Freedgood's *The Ideas in Things: Fugitive Meaning in the Victorian Novel* (2006) which uncovers hidden or forgotten meanings of things occupying the Victorian realist novel's fictional terrain. The "thing" leading my metonymic reading of *Bleak House* is an

umbrella, one of Mrs. Bagnet's inseparable travel companions. An umbrella embodies the human attempt at self-preservation against atmospheric challenge. The militaristic empire and its accelerating industrialization are critically assessed as human, land, water, and air consisting the British Empire realign against Mrs. Bagnet's (usually furled) umbrella. Contemporary periodicals' discussion of the umbrella's historical usage and technological improvement informs my analysis of the significance of the umbrella in the hands of a soldier's wife who, as her husband boasts, traveled from "another quarter of the world—with nothing but a grey cloak and an umbrella" and made her "way home to Europe" (441).

Significantly, the umbrella in the mid-nineteenth century bears an iconic status in personal hygiene and public health, one of the root-causes of *Bleak House*'s indictment of the British establishment. Whereas Jonas Hanway (1712-86) faced derision for reputedly being the first British man to carry an umbrella in public, the umbrella manufacturer William Sangster in 1855 prides himself on how umbrella enhanced "the public health, by preserving the bearer from the various and numerous diseases superinduced by exposure to rain" (5). Long normalized by *Bleak House*'s time, carrying an umbrella was initially an act of non-violent but radical resistance that had great, lasting, and beneficial consequences for the British people. Pamela Gilbert argues that the national narrative constructed from the perspective of "working-class radicals" viewed the cholera epidemic of 1832 as an occasion for "negative social control" enabling "the upper classes to seize working-class rights, voices, and even bodies" (52). Through cholera, "activists and pro-labor organizations and press" condemned "the irresponsibility of the wealthy," a

position *Bleak House* fully endorses (Gilbert 61). As his horror of the violent mass in *Barnaby Rudge* (1841) and *A Tale of the Two Cities* (1859) demonstrate, Dickens' radicalism eschewed physical conflicts. Yet within that limit, Dickens sought radical reforms.

Mrs. Bagnet's association with radicalism brings to attention its connection to antimilitarism and feminism, the two driving concepts of the earlier chapters' discussions on national belonging in early nineteenth-century British novels. Often described as "soldierly," the masculine woman cautions Trooper George against enticing her husband back to the army. While her complaints do not amount to negation of the entire British imperial project, the absence of any living example of a successful military career in *Bleak House* echoes Mrs. Bagnet's objection to the military profession.

Jill Liddington writes that "[a]ny history of peace politics which ignores the issue of gender and peace . . . remains inadequate and misleading; so is any history of feminism in Britain which omits peace ideas and campaigns" and traces the history of British women's organized antimilitarism back to 1816 when the Quaker-led London Peace Society was established (5, 14). Agreeing with Liddington on the fundamental interconnectedness between antimilitarism and feminism, I argue that the tension with militarism underpinned Western feminism from its inception. Writing during the French Revolution, Wollstonecraft in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) recognizes that her revolutionary remodeling of British middle-class femininity through reformed female education resembles military virtues. Thus, Wollstonecraft repeatedly denounces the standing army as model case of a profession "highly injurious to morality" because

“great subordination of rank constitutes its power” even as she idealizes a rational, disciplined, independent and physically fit woman similar to an ideal soldier (81).

It would be an overestimation to state that antimilitarism prevailed among the British people during their early nineteenth-century military conflicts with France. However, resistance to the war and military service existed in many different contexts and forms, creating a substantial undercurrent of objection. If successfully woven together, their voices of dissatisfaction may yield a persuasive, alternative imperial narrative of the four kingdoms.

Chapter 1

Aspiring Chevaliers in Mansfield Park: The Price Siblings, England, and Empire

While out for a walk in the shrubbery, Fanny Price and Mary Crawford discuss various ways of designating Edmund Bertram, their mutual love object. Against Mary's petulant comment that "[t]here is something in the sound of Mr. *Edmund* Bertram so formal, so pitiful, so younger-brother-like that [she] detest[s] it," Fanny protests at length:

"How differently we feel!" cried Fanny, "To me, the sound of *Mr.* Bertram is so cold and nothing-meaning—so entirely without warmth or character!—It just stands for a gentleman and that's all. But there is nobleness in the name of Edmund. It is a name of heroism and renown—of kings, princes, and knights; and seems to breathe the spirit of chivalry and warm affections." (176, Austen's emphasis).

Out of her love for Edmund Bertram, Fanny supports his name maintaining that Edmund is a name worthy of not only heroes but "kings, princes, and knights."

This seemingly innocent defense of Edmund and his name provokes a series of questions. What exactly does Austen intend by "a name of heroism and renown"? Who are the royal and martial figures associated with the name of Edmund in Fanny's affectionate declaration? Given the tumultuous flow of English/British history, which historical figures are deemed heroic and renowned, from Fanny's perspective? Does Austen endorse Fanny's criteria? In other words, what is Austen's stance regarding the

relationship between “a gentleman” and “nobleness” in the early nineteenth-century England, and what does Fanny’s support for “Edmund” reveal about her own place within the expanding British Empire? Seen in this light, the quoted passage reveals that Austen was part of the turn-of-the century debate around history, fiction, and nation that dominated the English political and literary scenes, although her novels spoke in a note different from her more straightforward contemporaries such as Maria Edgeworth and Sir Walter Scott, who are discussed in following chapters. With the warfare with France continuing, and colonial trade supplying the want of England, national security and prosperity depended on maintaining English maritime discipline. In *Mansfield Park* (1814), Austen overtly and intimately engages the theme of the navy and the British imperial expansion. The naval theme is further explored in *Persuasion* (1818), which, according to Tim Fulford, belongs to a group of texts that elevate “the chivalry of the ocean” over the unreliable “chivalry of the land” as the moral index for the English during the first half of the nineteenth century (“Romanticizing the Empire” 161).

In *Mansfield Park*, however, the presence of Edmund Burke, a near-contemporary namesake and prominent political ideologue of the time, invites suspicion regarding Edmund Bertram’s connection with chivalry. Fanny’s inclusion of chivalry in her defense of Edmund singularly resonates with Edmund Burke’s famous lamentation in *Reflections on the Revolutions in France* (1790) on Marie Antoinette’s tragedy, “the age of chivalry is gone” (170). While most of Burke’s contemporaries failed to grasp his full meaning and considered his lament either “beside the point” or “overheated and embarrassing,” Claudia L. Johnson insightfully notes that Burke’s vivid depiction of the violation of the

French queen denounces French people's effeminacy that could not even protect the helpless queen (*Equivocal Beings* 3-4). Burke evokes chivalry to stress the importance of preserving the proper order of society on the basis of patriarchal heteronormativity. Austen, in turn, juxtaposes chivalry with "warm affections" to underscore the affective aspect of Burke's military trope.

Linda Colley has argued that the nineteenth-century British national identity emerged through conflicts with France, especially the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. The majority of British men and women, in return for their wartime patriotic fervor, demanded "the right to participate in British political life" and "a much broader access to citizenship" (Colley 5). I read *Mansfield Park* as Austen's cautious exploration of the possibility of, and the range and nature of, female engagement with the nascent empire. The rise of this empire was made possible through mediating an array of conflicting interests— regional and national, local and global, foreign and domestic. Against such a background, I examine the way Austen appropriates chivalry for Edmund and Fanny to champion English women's potential for imperial engagement. As an integral feature of a chevalier, horsemanship demonstrated by William, Fanny, and Mary Crawford will be examined in the light of English chivalry as redefined by Austen. Such an approach, I argue, helps illuminate Fanny's sociopolitical position in relation to the Bertram siblings' much-debated "dead silence" over their Antiguan plantation and resituate *Mansfield Park*'s location within the postcolonial discourse.

1. Austen's *History of England* and Edmunds in *Mansfield Park*

In September 1814, two months after the publication of *Mansfield Park*, Austen wrote to her niece Anna Austen regarding the young girl's novel manuscript that "3 or 4 Families in a Country Village is the very thing to work on" (*Letters* 275). Austen herself remained true to this advice throughout her own career. Although Austen may not enjoy the reputation of being the most historically oriented author among the novelists who wrote and published during the decades following the French Revolution, she was not ignorant of or uninterested in history. Just before turning sixteen, Austen wrote *History of England from the Reign of Henry the 4th to the Death of Charles I, by a Partial, Prejudiced and Ignorant Historian* (1791). As Peter Knox-Shaw shows in detail, this short, witty historical work has been gathering increased scholarly attention (302-5).¹⁰ Against readings that view it merely as a "juvenile production," Mary Spongberg suggests that it was intended as a rebuttal of Burke's English historiography as presented in the *Reflections* (56). I agree with Misty Krueger that Austen was, at the same time, conscious of "argu[ing] for a powerful cause" to rescue her beloved Stuarts and their followers from the history written by "Protestant writers and Whig loyalists" from their own "prejudiced" perspective (244-45). Austen's calling herself "partial, prejudiced, and ignorant historian" in the title is a playful, almost daring gesture of an intelligent, talented teenage girl, not a result of modesty.

¹⁰ However, as Knox-Shaw's title indicates, his article aims to debunk the "myth" that Austen maintained pro-Stuart outlook into her adulthood.

A handful of well-known Edmunds can be gleaned from the kingly, princely and knightly ranks populating English history up to Austen's time.¹¹ In closest temporal proximity to the Regency England is Edmund the Crouchback (1245-1296), who, as the second son of a king, bears some resemblance with Edmund Bertram. Before him were three Saxon kings: Edmund the Elder and Edmund Ironside reigned over the English in 940-946 and 1016 respectively. Edmund Ironside, the last king of his line, was succeeded by the Danish invader, King Cnut. Prior to them, in 869, St. Edmund of East Anglia was martyred at the hands of Danish invaders.¹²

The Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1539 provides a critical historical context in appreciating the thematic relevance of the name Edmund to *Mansfield Park*. The king who ordered the Dissolution was none other than Henry VIII, and the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds was one of the victims. Austen as an adolescent shows no mercy toward Henry VIII in *History of England*:

The Crimes & Cruelties of this Prince, were too numerous to be mentioned, (as this history I trust has fully shewn) & nothing can be said in his vindication, but that his abolishing Religious Houses & leaving them to the ruinous depredations of time has been of infinite use to the landscape of England in general, which probably was a principal motive for his doing it, since otherwise why should a

¹¹ I referred to the index of Kenneth O. Morgan's *The Oxford Illustrated History of Britain* for the list of Edmunds in English history (Morgan 670).

¹² John Wiltshire also draws attention to Sir Edmund Verney (1590-1642), who was loyal to the Austen's beloved Stuarts, and Edmund Spencer the author of *The Faerie Queene* (1590) and speculates that Edmund in Clara Reeve's *The Old English Baron* (1778)—a "paragon of knightly virtue" who is in love with his cousin—reflects Fanny's secret desire for her cousin (141-43).

Man who was of no Religion himself be at so much trouble to abolish one which had for ages been established in the Kingdom. (*History* 13-4)

Although Austen deigns not to enumerate Henry VIII's "Crimes & Cruelties," dismissing them as "too numerous to be mentioned," she makes a pointed censure regarding the Dissolution.

Austen's enmity toward the Tudors is traceable in her more mature works. This enmity was continued and probably exacerbated by rapidly changing socioeconomic relations. Roger E. Moore observes that, in *Northanger Abbey*, Austen "engages with the conventions, tropes and poses of a powerful nostalgic tradition . . . that laments the socioeconomic impoverishment of the English nation occasioned by the loss of the religious houses" and questions the legitimacy of the wealth of the gentry who, like Tilney's, were the beneficiaries of the Dissolution (85). Indeed, as Marilyn Butler notes, uneven distribution of the nation's growing economic prosperity left the rural laboring population desolate and scantier; thus, "Jane Austen would have hated Cobbett's radical politics, but the fact on which he based them were within her daily view around Steventon and Chawton" (*Romantics* 103). In *Mansfield Park*, the textual presence of Shakespeare's *Henry VIII* "validates and deepens the work's engagement with the Reformation" (Moore 132). The fascinating but morally corrupt Henry Crawford is the novel's villain. Austen takes care that the reader does not miss the reference, connecting them in a single scene; Henry Crawford reads the play to perfection (278). Unlike "Edmund," the excellence of

the name Henry never gets discussed, notwithstanding the fact that it is the most frequent name to accede to the English throne.¹³

What is in “Edmund” that arouses Fanny’s ardent support? Among the historical Edmunds enumerated earlier, St Edmund bears the most immediate connection to Fanny’s warmth.¹⁴ St Edmund, in contrast to Henry VIII “who was of no Religion,” was a martyr who died for his Christian belief. At the same time, he was also a warrior who lost his life defending England against foreign invasion. According to Francis Young, St Edmund’s death is depicted as “an act of self-sacrifice for his people as well as an act of faithfulness to Christ” in many medieval accounts; his story survived in popular memory as “a king who died for his people” (159).

¹³ *King Lear* is another Shakespearean play that overshadows *Mansfield Park*; of Lear’s three daughters vying for the father’s favor, the only trustworthy youngest daughter is cruelly misunderstood. Moreover, it features a second son called Edmund, although he is villainous unlike other Edmunds discussed in this chapter. Clara Calvo contends that Austen splits the Shakespearian Edmund into two: Edmund Bertram the victim of primogeniture and Henry Crawford “the ambivalent villain” who sincerely loves and loses Fanny (93). More importantly, reading *Mansfield Park* in juxtaposition to *King Lear* facilitates decoding the significance of Fanny’s departure from the transparently truthful Cordelia. Because Fanny virtually lies to Sir Thomas when she hides her love for Edmund and occasionally expresses jealousy toward Mary, Calvo calls her “blemished, imperfect Cordelia” although she admits Fanny’s “redemptive power” (93). However, I believe that this “blemish” saves Fanny from being an uninteresting proto-Victorian prude and furnishes her with real flesh, blood, and desire.

¹⁴ I am here following Moore’s choice of St. Edmund as “a more likely candidate” for Fanny’s support for the name (131). Moore admits that St Edmund of East Anglia “would have had special appeal for Fanny” for his courageous defense against the “pagan Danes” yet he hesitates to establish a connection between Edmund Bertram and St. Edmund, writing “[o]f course we cannot be certain that Fanny has the medieval saint in mind when defending her cousin” (131-32). While Moore highlights Austen’s allusion to religious martyrdom, I instead am emphasizing St. Edmund’s patriotism and kingly sacrifice for his people. Other Edmunds, historical and literary, also deserve attention; Fanny states Edmund is a name of “kings, princes, and knights.”

Austen's oblique valorization of St. Edmund signifies her disapproval of the early nineteenth-century upsurge of Irish and Scottish cultural nationalisms which reiterated differences within the British Isles. Katie Trumpener insightfully analyzes how Mary's ignorant disregard for "the organic relationship between a people, their land, and their culture" is exposed when she has a harp transported to Mansfield Park in the middle of harvest season to stage herself as an Irish or Scottish type of "harp-playing heroines" (18-19). Trumpener contends that while other English novelists felt threatened by cultural nationalism heralded by Scottish novelists, Austen chose to "avoid any exoticizing of national difference" which is presented as "a kind of imperialism" on Mary's part (18). Clara Tuite extends the argument and suggests that Austen condemns the exoticism of Mary's harp "to overwrite local and regional difference through assimilation" so that Welsh, Scottish, and Irish identities can be "subsumed within a larger 'British' national identity" (*Romantic Austen* 150).

At the same time, as Claire Lamont observes, there is a strange absence of the word "British" in Austen's novel notwithstanding the absorption of Wales (1536), Scotland (1603), and finally Ireland (1801) into a united polity of the Great Britain: "[Austen], and the characters in her novels, almost always refer to themselves as *English*" (304, Lamont's emphasis). Austen's wariness toward Irish or Scottish nationalism, I contend, explains this absence and her support for the name Edmund. The cult of St Edmund in the late medieval period embraced both a local and a national dimension. As scholars have noted, veneration for St Edmund transcended the boundary of the regional and the

national.¹⁵ Significantly, despite Austen's pro-Stuart tendency, Edmund is not a Stuart name. Nor is it a name belonging to the Tudors, whom the young Austen hated for the sake of Mary, Queen of Scots.¹⁶ The choice of Edmund as the princely English name indicates Austen's wish to move away from the eras of internal, regional conflict within Britain arising from Scottish, Irish, or Welsh nationalisms. Privileging England as the fundamental essence of the British Empire, Austen imagines England/Britain resisting in unison an external, continental enemy.

The militaristic significance of the name Edmund is further augmented by the fact that the two king Edmunds who came after St. Edmund were also warrior princes renowned for their martial prowess. Edmund I not only regained territories his predecessor had lost, but "his reign marks the beginning of the 10th-century monastic revival in England"—again in direct contrast with Henry VIII ("Edmund I"). Edmund II earned his byname of "Ironsides" for his steadfastness in withstanding Danish aggression ("Edmund II"). Together, the three historical Edmunds suggest that patriotic defense of the nation is pivotal to Fanny's idea of "the spirit of chivalry." Through her defense of this kingly name, Fanny associates her cousin with the historical Edmunds, upholding the

¹⁵ Young minutely traces the scholarship regarding St. Edmund's influence using the scheme of the regional versus the national (161). Mark Bailey, for example, emphasizes the influence that the cult of St Edmund had on "binding regional identity" (qtd. in Young 161). Also mentioned by Young, Susan Ridyard on the other hand suggests that Danes acknowledged the king's "sanctity" because of "the function of St Edmund as a mediator, spiritual or political, between East-Angles and Danes" (Ridyard 217).

¹⁶ Margaret Doody suggests that Edmund is a name characterized by "its Anglo-Saxon staunchness" in "total contrast to Continental 'Maria' or Roman 'Julia'" (144).

agenda his historical namesakes represent—preservation of England against foreign influence.

2. Riding Like an English Gentlewoman

Chivalry, however, occupies a highly problematic ground in the political landscape of the early nineteenth-century Britain. According to *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)*, chivalry is a Middle English word derived from Old French *chevaleri* (“chivalry,” *OED*’s emphasis). Chivalry’s foreign origin renders it suspicious to the patriotic eyes in the years of conflicts with France. At the same time, the debate unfolded in a highly gendered language and, in turn, complicated the understanding of women’s place in the public sphere. As already mentioned, Burke’s turn-of-the century elegy on Marie-Antoinette and the death of chivalry powerfully resonated into the nineteenth century. The idea of chivalry was actively appropriated by the Britons of Austen’s time to serve middle-class interests. Gary Kelly demonstrates that the eighteenth-century Enlightenment “models and practices of civil society” were heavily indebted to an appropriation of “feudal and chivalric cultures” and that “aristocratic” chivalry was redefined to meet the “terms of contemporary upper middle-class culture” (“Jane Austen” 20). Within the context of the Enlightenment’s civilizing mission, women were not only awarded the role of the educator of over-rough masculinity but also given partial access to some of these societies “on equal social and intellectual terms with men” (Kelly, “Jane Austen” 21).

Although Austen kept aloof from “Enlightenment, ‘bluestocking,’ sentimental, and Revolutionary feminisms,” her novels also reject courtly culture which diminished

women to resort to either “intrigue and coquetry” or “indolence, immediate self-gratification, and self-centeredness” (Kelly, “Jane Austen” 23-24). Importantly, she agrees with the early feminist thinkers regarding the national urgency of strengthening English women’s bodies. Some Enlightenment and post-Revolutionary thinkers viewed debility of the female physique as a social malady inextricably tied together with national security. Mary Wollstonecraft, for one, declares in her *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) that her object in writing the treatise is “to persuade women to endeavour to acquire, strength, both of mind and body” (73). An avowed enemy of Burke, Wollstonecraft exposes chivalry propelled by the military culture of the late eighteenth-century as a flirtatious “gallantry” detrimental to the national well-being. Austen’s concerns overlap with Wollstonecraft’s in several respects, especially their suspicion of the army. In Wollstonecraft’s diagnosis, the standing army is at the heart of the English national disease: failing to be the disciplined protector of society and manliness, soldiers made “gallantry” the “business of their lives” (89). In turn, women, addicted to the luxurious lifestyle of “[r]iches and hereditary honours,” idle away their lives, bringing “a mixture of gallantry and despotism into society, which leads the very men who are the slaves of their mistresses to tyrannize over their sisters, wives, and daughters” (90). Incidentally, this description applies to the Bertram household almost to a word.

Mansfield Park often encourages a reader to consider the social implications of the Regency era’s resurgence of courtly love and chivalry in the context of nationalism and imperialism. Equestrian mastery is an essential component of chivalry. Horses and riding scenes in *Mansfield Park* are crucial in understanding why Fanny, not Mary, should be

Edmund's spouse. These scenes investigate the desired qualities of an English gentlewoman, which encompass class and gender questions, and ultimately extends to the task of searching for Englishness worthy of preservation in the face of rapidly changing national and imperial sociopolitical landscape.

Traditionally, the chivalric horsemanship is gendered masculine; a lady may ride a horse but that would not make her chivalric. Yet *Mansfield Park* engages with the growing significance of women's equestrianism in the early nineteenth century, which will arrive at its full bloom in the Victorian period, as delineated by Donna Landry; riding was an exercise that women of the gentry class could practice regularly, and competency in horse-riding was valuable for a woman in the marriage market (59-62).¹⁷ In the horse-riding scenes of Fanny and Mary, Fanny's apprehension and jealousy toward the more sexually enticing new acquaintance manifests through their competing claims over Edmund's mare. At the same time, readers are allowed an early glimpse of Mary's flaws. To gratify her "inclination to learn to ride," Mary neglects Fanny's feelings and convenience, thereby inflicting "[t]he first actual pain" on Fanny (56):

Miss Crawford's enjoyment of riding was such, that she did not know how to leave off. Active and fearless, and, though rather small, strongly made, she seemed formed for a horse woman; and to the pure genuine pleasure of the exercise, something was probably added in Edmund's attendance and instructions,

¹⁷ Landry cites extensively from Mrs. J. Stirling Clarke's *The Habit & The Horse; a Treatise on Female Equitation* (1860). Although Clarke addresses female equestrianism from the mid-Victorian perspective, the relevance of Mrs. Clarke's book to Landry's argument and overall coherency remain uninjured despite the time gap.

and something more in the conviction of very much surpassing her sex in general by her early progress, to make her unwilling to dismount. (57)

Reveling in vigorous physical activity, Mary does not know “how to leave off”; in a narcissistic whim to display to Edmund’s eyes her shapely body moving in conjunction with the mare, to which her sense of superiority over other women contributes, she is “unwilling to dismount.”

Austen is no opponent of young ladies’ physical exertions. In an oft-cited passage from *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) Mr. Darcy is “divided between admiration of the brilliancy which exercise had given to Elizabeth’s complexion, and doubt as to the occasion’s justifying her coming so far alone” on seeing her sweating and glowing from a long walk to visit Jane in her sickbed (Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, 23). Indeed, in *Mansfield Park*, Austen’s critical stance toward the enervated female body is delineated through the beautiful, indolent Lady Bertram in whom “female delicacy becomes pampered somnambulance” (Johnson, *Jane Austen* 98). Neither is Austen adverse to allowing women more physical exercise or enhanced spatial mobility. In *Persuasion*, Austen’s last completed work, Mrs. Croft proves herself more adept than Admiral Croft at managing the vehicle when she deftly evades multiple dangerous road situations “by coolly giving the reins a better direction herself” and “by once afterwards judiciously putting out her hand” (Austen, *Persuasion* 83). Austen tend to recommend, rather than frown upon, activities involving female exercise and mobility such as walking, riding, and driving the gig. Then what earns Mary Crawford the narrator’s disapproval?

Landry, for one, will suggest that Mary rides for “pleasure” not “health,” thereby forfeiting the only justification of horse-riding for a gentlewoman (66). I would further argue that the riding scenes are staged to justify Fanny’s eventual victory over Mary. Excepting servants, Fanny is situated on the lowest rung of the Bertram household. However, she is the only person who is attentive to the pain of lesser beings, even when suffering under her share of pain. Waiting for her turn to ride, Fanny muses that it is “rather hard upon the mare to have such double duty; if she were forgotten the poor mare should be remembered” (58). In contrast to Mary who does not bother to check the mare’s condition, Fanny is the first character in the narrative to bring the reader’s attention to the fact that the horse is also a sentient being. Some scholars, for example Katie Halsey, sense in Fanny’s commentary a “self-pitying tone” and “self-delusions” which tries to hide the disappointment she feels toward Edmund about being neglected for Mary’s sake (54). Landry also detects “[d]isplaced self-pity,” which escalates into “imagined self-mortification” as the coachman admires Mary’s aptitude as a horsewoman (65). However, I argue Fanny should be instead taken at face-value here. The brazenness of Mary’s remark which immediately follows the scene confirms Austen’s approval of Fanny’s discernment in relation to Mary’s conduct: “I knew it was very late, and that I was behaving extremely ill; and, therefore, if you please, you must forgive me. Selfishness must always be forgiven you know, because there is no hope of a cure” (58). Using her selfishness as a pretext, Mary knowingly abuses both Fanny and the mare.

Mary’s selfishness is potentially dismantling to society because of its tyrannical nature. At first glance, tyranny in *Mansfield Park* seems to be most explicitly explored

through the character of Sir Thomas, because Austen repeatedly emphasizes his children's fear of him. Yet female tyranny can be damaging as well. Trying to demonstrate the causality between physical weakness and irrational willfulness in women, Wollstonecraft writes that "artificial weakness produces a propensity to tyrannize, and gives birth to cunning, the natural opponent of strength, which leads them to play off those contemptible infantile airs that undermine esteem even whilst they excite desire" (75). *Mansfield Park* goes beyond recommending vigorous physicality for women. Austen's female tyrant is the athletic, intelligent Mary Crawford. Mary tyrannizes over Edmund and Fanny in a more sophisticated way, manipulating other people and toying with their feelings and thoughts. She not only unscrupulously approves of Henry's plan to make "a little hole in Fanny Price's heart" but later actively lends a hand by giving an unwitting Fanny the necklace Henry had originally given herself (192).

Significantly for a novel written during the time of conflicts with France, Crawford morality unfolds largely in relation to its French taint. Willful vanity and self-centeredness are Mary's defining characteristics, and they are alleged to be French stains in *Mansfield Park*.¹⁸ The most striking instance occurs during Mary's walk with Fanny,

¹⁸ *Mansfield Park* boils down to a story of a sexually promiscuous man trying to seduce an innocent girl and his accomplice targeting the girl's lover. In this respect, *Mansfield Park* reads very much like a domesticated version of an earlier French novel, Choderlos de Laclos's *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* (1782). Colleen Sheehan unravels the Machiavellian machinations that the morally corrupt Crawford siblings deploy to undermine the traditional, English morality supported by Fanny and Edmund (Sheehan 3). Regarding Austen's *Lady Susan*, Warren Roberts notices the possible influence of the "scandalous French novel"; he believes it is highly likely that Austen's émigré cousin Eliza de Feuillide introduced her to the plot, to say the least (128). Roberts believes that certain characteristics of Eliza, such as irreverence toward the clergy, were incorporated into Mary Crawford (147). While it is possible that any evidence of Austen's knowledge

when they discuss the name of Edmund. Mary likens herself to “the famous Doge at the court of Lewis XIV”; she “see[s] no wonder in this shrubbery equal to seeing [her]self in it” (175). As Michael Karounos explains, Mary’s selfish narcissism is glaringly associated with “the decadent manners of the French court” (725). Through the horse-riding scenes, Austen asks what an *English* gentlewoman ought to be like. Because Mary is knowingly defiant of the qualities expected of a respectable English gentlewoman, preferring to be irresponsible, unfeeling, and self-centered, the heiress—despite her excellent equestrian skills—is finally outstripped by the clumsier, destitute Fanny.

Mansfield Park and its notably demure heroine have elicited unfavorable responses from some modern critics who construed her constancy as presaging Victorian prudishness.¹⁹ For example, Johnson concedes that, unlike other Austen novels, *Mansfield Park* “sometimes comes close” to contemporary novels which feature “hideously sensitive ladies” or recurrently evoke “the figure of the persecuted and misunderstood heroine” (*Equivocal Beings* 18). Nina Auerbach condemns Fanny as “a spoiler of ceremonies,” “vampire,” and “[t]he female counterpart of Mary Shelley’s monster” (9-11). I, however, share Roger Sales’s position that Fanny deserves credit for her “strength and determination” in giving a definite negative to Henry Crawford’s proposal (111). Elaine Jordan similarly praises Fanny and reads Fanny’s rejection as a courageous feat (41). It is significant that Fanny is the only character in the novel to

of Laclos’ novel disappeared when her sister Cassandra destroyed her letters, the extent of Austen’s acquaintance of the novel is unclear due to lack of remaining evidence.

¹⁹ Joyce Kerr Tarpley considers *Mansfield Park*’s different manifestations of constancy in *Constancy and the Ethics of Jane Austen’s Mansfield Park* (2010) in terms of Christian ethics and sensibility. My use of constancy here is limited to her love for Edmund.

remain constant to her own heart against adversities, embodying one of the central values of chivalry as defined by Mark Girouard: “faithful love, however little requited” (19). In contrast, every other young person who forms a romantic attachment—Maria, Julia, Edmund, Henry, Mary, and Mr. Rushworth—satisfies him or herself with either taking the second choice or breaking up with the first, or the preferred, attachment. Fanny’s constancy reverses and parodies gender roles in chivalric literature and renders Fanny herself chivalrous.²⁰

3. Sailing Like a British Gentleman

While Fanny takes therapeutic rides in Mansfield Park, her brother William roams over the world as a member of the Royal Navy. Sir Thomas and his oldest son Thomas also sail to Antigua to inspect their colonial properties. In *Mansfield Park*, sailing is exclusively a man’s occupation. Yet Austen challenges the assumption that sailing qualifies a man to be manly and patriotic, and by extension, only a man can be manly, patriotic, and therefore heroic. A near consensus exists in Austen scholarship that she

²⁰ Contemporary audience may not always be the most perceptive readers of a literary text, but it is worth noticing that in contrast to modern scholarship’s tendency to find Fanny unlikeable, *Mansfield Park* and its heroine enjoyed an elevated place among Austen’s works in the nineteenth century, “by a majority” who “considered themselves in a select and discerning group” (Troost and Greenfield 19). Thus, *Mansfield Park* had a considerable influence on the subsequent generation of novelist. Kathryn Sutherland notes that Charles Dickens and Charlotte Brontë also engaged with “a turn-of-the-century anxiety for connectedness” explored in *Mansfield Park*, adopting for themselves the historical backdrop of 1810s (Sutherland, Introduction xii). Calling it elsewhere “the first Victorian novel,” Sutherland sees in Fanny Price the prototype of *Jane Eyre*; she also briefly compares Fanny and *Oliver Twist*, *Rose Maylie*, and *Esther Summerson* (Sutherland, “*Jane Eyre*” 413-14).

thought positively of professionals, especially the navy. The amicable relationship she had with her two sailor brothers, Francis and Charles, confirms such a view.²¹ While it is widely accepted that Austen deposits hope for the nation's future in this newly-made class, especially in *Persuasion*, I argue that in *Mansfield Park* the hope is a much more tentative one, tinged with doubt and fear. That uneasiness comes from the thin presence and low participation of English women in the affairs of the sea and the Empire.

William Price is the appropriate starting point for examining the validity of my claim that *Mansfield Park* divulges Austen's anxiety over the male-dominated naval empire, because he is the only character in the novel serving the Navy excepting Admiral Crawford who never actually appears in the novel. In contrast to his sister, William has earned mostly favorable responses from scholarly readers. Analyzing *Mansfield Park* through the lens of colonial gender relations, Moira Ferguson describes William as an "impeccable sailor-brother" (125). Tuite defines him as a "heroic figure" and an embodiment of "the principle of talent against birth," a character modeled after Francis and Charles Austen (*Romantic Austen* 126). For Margaret Doody, William "is the only admirable specimen of manhood" in *Mansfield Park*, whose "kingly name indicates that he is conqueror—an empire builder, a coming leader of men" (140). Indeed, dazzled by William's experience in "[t]he glory of heroism, of usefulness, of exertion, of endurance" which shines against his own "selfish indulgence," even Henry momentarily wishes that

²¹ At the same time, my analysis of *Mansfield Park* acknowledges John Peck's warning that "reduc[ing] the issue to personal considerations" may obscure the fundamental question of "what the public's view of the navy can tell us about currents of change—and, consequently, sources of tension—within British society at this time" (31).

“he had been born a William Price, distinguishing himself and working his way to fortune and consequence with so much self-respect and happy ardour” (197).

But does William really deserve such laudatory adjectives? Indeed, John Peck’s observation that “Austen’s enthusiasm” for the young sailor “goes well beyond the basic requirements of the plot” has some truth in it (30). William, unlike Henry, may be a conscientious correspondent, but readers have no information regarding the content of his letters because the text reproduces none of them. Therefore, Fanny’s enthusiasm for her sailor brother deserves further scrutiny.

No doubt, William is the most affectionate brother—of all the four grown-up brothers in the novel, that is. When William visits Mansfield Park after seven years’ absence, timid Fanny overcomes the temporal gap “gradually” but surely, greeted with “an affection on his side as warm as her own” (195). He also does himself credit by winning Sir Thomas’ good will with his “open, pleasant countenance, and frank, unstudied, but feeling and respectful manners” (194). Further, Sir Thomas learns his nephew can recite with “clear, simple, spirited details,” a quality that betokens “good principles, professional knowledge, energy, courage, and cheerfulness, everything that could deserve or promise well” (196). In fact, William proves himself an entertaining, fine storyteller when asked to talk:

Young as he was, William had already seen a great deal. He had been in the Mediterranean – in the West Indies – in the Mediterranean again – had been often taken on shore by the favour of his Captain, and in the course of seven years had known every variety of danger which sea and war together could offer. With such

means in his power he had a right to be listened to; and though Mrs. Norris could fidget about the room, and disturb every body, in quest of two needlefulls of thread or a second hand shirt button in the midst of her nephew's account of a shipwreck or an engagement, every body else was attentive; and even Lady Bertram could not hear of such horrors unmoved, or without sometimes lifting her eyes from her work to say, "Dear me! how disagreeable. – I wonder any body can ever go to sea." (196-97)

Equipped with diverse foreign experiences and a touch of military heroism, William is a valuable addition to the family circle. Mrs. Norris occasionally disrupts the audience, but everybody else is all ears. Lady Bertram awakens from her habitual torpor, even though it is only to say that the sea is "disagreeable." Henry is captivated by William's tales. Mary's response is unrecorded, but she thinks "either navy or army" is justified in its "heroism, danger, bustle, fashion" and thus "[s]oldiers and sailors are always acceptable in society" (92).²² William is exactly the type of sailor she approves of. William knows how to enliven the audience, both of Bertram and Crawford stamp, with his accounts of British colonial and imperial projects.

That gratification, however, is suspect. Shortly after his arrival, William again demonstrates to the Bertrams and the Crawfords that he is worthy of respect and investment by exhibiting skillful horsemanship. As Landry observes, "[h]orsemanship and the navy are traditionally at odds"; despite his class and occupation, which may lead

²² As Peck notes, Mary's criteria for judging a profession places "heroism" and "danger" on the same level with "bustle" and "fashion"; Mary thus exposes her indifference to the army and the navy's real job of maintaining national security (Peck 38).

a prejudiced reader to expect him to be an awkward rider, William successfully manages Henry's horse (62-63). Fanny, however, is fearful despite William's accounts of "his own horsemanship in various countries," different dangers he escaped unscathed, and "the rough horses and mules he had ridden," doubting "he was at all equal to the management of a high-fed hunter in an English fox chase" (197). Until William "returned safe and well, without accident or discredit," she refuses to be at rest or feel grateful to Henry. His returning without "discredit," according to Landry, testifies to his "natural discretion as well as his manliness, which has been thoroughly, because colonially, tested" (69).

Yet Fanny's fear has more stories to tell. It is not William's colonial feats that Fanny doubts. Rather, she doubts whether they can guarantee "at all" his ability to manage an English horse on English ground in an English activity monopolized by wealthy, landed English gentry. For Fanny, colonial achievements are an unreliable barometer for domestic gentlemanliness. Moreover, when it comes to horse-riding—hunting, more accurately—William's fraternal affection becomes somewhat oblivious of Fanny. While Fanny is anxious about the upcoming ball her uncle is hosting to secure Henry Crawford for her, "William, determined to make this last day a day of thorough enjoyment" goes "snipe shooting" (221). Contrasting William's going out for hunting on the last day of his visit with Fanny's giving up her morning's rest after the ball to spend more time with him, Barbara Seeber concludes that his preference for hunting is "a detail which puts sport in opposition to domestic affection" (47). William's decision exposes him to further censure because from Seeber's post-colonial, eco-feminist perspective, hunting in Austen's novels is a problematic, cruel activity that "marks the world of

opportunities and independence and women's exclusion from it" (47). Admittedly, Fanny herself uses animals and depends on the Bertram wealth from Antigua, yet I agree with Seeber that Fanny is better able to connect with nature and the animal world than other characters are; Fanny knows how to practice the English lady's virtue of moderation.

William's riding presents a strange and almost ominous parallel with Mary's skillfulness in horse-riding and her exhibitionist tendency. Before his promotion, William complains to Fanny that he does not care for Portsmouth because it is unlikely that he will procure a partner for dance: "The Portsmouth girls turn up their noses at anybody who has not a commission. One might as well be nothing as a midshipman" (207). While it is understandable to grieve sexual frustration, it is not the most heroic or patriotic resentment. It is even unfair to the girls given the novel's depiction of his parents' married poverty. Then, when he pays another visit to Northamptonshire, his objective is expressly "to shew his happiness and describe his uniform," which, Edmund somewhat cynically muses, will soon degenerate into "a badge of disgrace; for what can be more unbecoming, or more worthless, than the uniform of a lieutenant, who has been a lieutenant a year or two, and sees others made commanders before him?" (304).

While Edmund's remark reads as a critique of the naval promotion system based on patronage, William's potential for moral degeneracy is hinted at here, no matter how remotely. William lacks Fanny's discernment in judging other people's moral characters. For instance, he is unscrupulous about getting promoted through the help of an admirer of

his sister.²³ As Sales suggests, circumstances of William's promotion and the 1809 scandal surrounding the Duke of York and Mary Ann Clarke bear an almost menacing resemblance for a Regency reader (110). By refusing Henry, Fanny eliminates the possibility of corruption and saves not only herself but her brother. Sally B. Palmer praises how Fanny, "grafted onto the noble Bertram rootstock," protects the Bertrams from "crossbreeding" with the corrupt Crawfords (227). Fanny achieves much more; she effectively engineers a new family tree for the Price family on Bertram soil.

A comparison with an earlier incident facilitates a fuller appreciation of William's overseas exploits and Fanny's scruples. Sir Thomas returns to Mansfield Park after a long absence to stage a similar scene, but to an opposite effect. Sir Thomas' restoration to the family hearth is far from welcome for several family members. Interrupted in the middle of a rehearsal for a play that Sir Thomas will surely dislike, the younger Bertrams and their friends are flustered when Julia announces his arrival. Still, just like William, Sir Thomas has "the best right to be the talker" as they gather around the fire "at his suggestion" (149). In contrast to William who is called on to talk, however, this voluntary

²³ Tim Fulford views Wickham's "gaudy regimental dress" in *Pride and Prejudice* as symbolizing a status "earned not by experience on battlefield or parade ground but by influence"; Austen was perhaps worried about "the corrupting effect of this unearned social status" over her brother Henry ("Sighing for a Soldier" 157). Given William's preoccupation with his uniform, Fanny may have a corresponding fear for William, although it should be remembered that Austen distinguishes between the militia and the navy. As Gillian Russell illustrates, while Austen in *Pride and Prejudice* criticizes the degeneracy of the military (especially the militia) which could turn the "glamorous defenders of the nation" into "its greatest threat," the navy is viewed in a more promising light in her other works (264, 266).

speaker earns “unbroken[,] unalloyed enjoyment” only from Lady Bertram, whose utmost extent of excitement is to be “almost fluttered for a few minutes” (150).

Then comes the much-debated scene about slavery in Antiguan plantations. When, after Sir Thomas’ return, Edmund regrets the loss of Grants and Crawfords and lowering of the general spirit, Fanny disagrees: “The evenings do not appear long to me. I love to hear my uncle talk of the West Indies. . . . It entertains *me* more than many other things have done – but then I am unlike other people I dare say” (Austen’s emphasis).

Encouraged to “talk to him more,” Fanny reminds Edmund:

“But I do talk to him more than I used. I am sure I do. Did not you hear me ask him about the slave trade last night?”

“I did – and was in hopes the question would be followed up by others. It would have pleased your uncle to be inquired of farther.”

“And I longed to do it – but there was such a dead silence! And while my cousins were sitting by without speaking a word, or seeming at all interested in the subject, I did not like – I thought it would appear as if I wanted to set myself off at their expense, by shewing a curiosity and pleasure in his information which he must wish his own daughters to feel.” (165-6).

The Antiguan slavery and “a dead silence” received much scholarly spotlight in the years following Edward Said’s essay, “Jane Austen and Empire,” originally published in 1989 and republished in *Culture and Imperialism* (1993). Calling for a postcolonial reading of *Mansfield Park* that registers the significance of “space, geography, and location,” Said observes that *Mansfield Park* not only “synchronizes domestic with international

authority” but recognizes that England is maintained by “overseas sustenance” (*Culture and Imperialism* 84, 87, 89). According to Said, the “dead silence” results from the lack of “common language” to bridge the two worlds of West Indian cruelty and English affluence; this “extraordinary discrepancy” was brought to life by the progress of the British imperialist project and the ensuing “postcolonial consciousness” (96).²⁴

The moral implication of the “dead silence” pervading *Mansfield Park* has been widely discussed in relation to slavery and the abolition of the slave trade in 1807.²⁵ Ferguson sees in Fanny a “mediator or representative of slaves’ silenced existence and constant insurrectionary potential” (133). While Brian Southam contends that Austen is trying to show how much of a taboo the topic of slavery was within “a plantation-owning family” like the Bertrams (*Navy* 192), Jon Mee observes Sir Thomas himself “would have welcomed the opportunity to criticize the trade but defend his own enlightened slave-owning practice” because, for the narrator, the problematic ones are Sir Thomas’ “morally indifferent children (bar Edmund)” (Mee 85). George Boulukos refuses to “equate[] silence to complicity and speech to resistance” and suggests that amelioration is Austen’s approach regarding slavery in *Mansfield Park* (361). According to Boulukos, Fanny sees in Sir Thomas an enlightened, “morally exemplary slave-owner” (362).

²⁴ Said refuses to identify with writers who employ “the rhetoric of blame” and challenge Austen for “being white, privileged, insensitive, complicit” (*Culture and Imperialism* 96).

²⁵ The temporal setting of *Mansfield Park* has been a subject of critical debate. Disagreeing with the assumption that *Mansfield Park* is set in 1808-9, Brian Southam proposes that the main events in *Mansfield Park* occur in 1812-3 (“The Silence” 13-4). J. A. Downie proposes that while Southam’s interpretation met with enthusiasm from scholars who were trying to widen the postcolonial scope in Austen criticism, the original 1808-9 timeframe serves the purpose just as well (433-4).

The question of contextualizing the silence in *Mansfield Park* within the postcolonial critical discourse is intertwined with another, equally controversial question of Austen's political commitments as a woman from the lesser gentry. On one hand, scholars read a progressive, subversive drive in Austen's works. According to Margaret Kirkham, for instance, *Mansfield Park* is an "English, feminist" expression of "the ideals of 'liberty, equality and fraternity'" which "embodies Jane Austen's most ambitious and radical criticism of contemporary prejudice in society and in literature" (118-9). Mee, in contrast, perceives "female patriotism" in conservative sense to be the key term for comprehending Austen's political and gender dynamics, contending that "[f]emale patriotism was a conservative attempt to defend rather than subvert the nation" through "rethinking of women's roles" and "new opportunities for their participation" (80-81). Vivien Jones likewise takes it would not count as a "contentious observation" to state that Austen's political outlook was that of a "patriotic nationalist, more specifically a female patriot, rather than a cosmopolitan" ("Reading for England" 222-23).²⁶

The link between the female patriotic fervor and English women's imperial engagement demands further scrutiny. Diagnosing that "some kind of comfortable alliance" does not necessarily exist between "Austen's female patriotism" and "imperial expansion," Mee suggests that Fanny embodies Englishness which heals the "damage done to Mansfield Park by the worldliness (both literal and metaphorical) of her more refined relatives"; female patriotism allows female intervention "in the moral life of the

²⁶ Jones further writes elsewhere that "coexistence of a 'feminist' awareness with an essential conservatism, of an impulse for reform together with a readiness to work within traditional structures is fundamental to Austen's fiction" ("Feminisms" 285).

nation” not the empire because “[a]broad is a place of suspicion for Austen” (85, 88-90). Despite Austen’s suspicion, however, Fanny, and by extension Austen herself, is curious about what happens outside the British Isles. I propose that this silence denotes the Bertram children’s inaptitude for colonial entrepreneurship. They are failing to ask the fundamental question—how is Mansfield Park to be sustained under changing colonial circumstances? While critics have often assumed that Fanny’s interest in the Antiguan plantation arises from humanitarian sympathy for the abolitionist cause, Austen in fact withholds from her readers precisely what Fanny desires to know about the plantation. It is equally possible that Fanny is, at the same time as she endorses humanitarian measures, wondering about what is to be done to address economic repercussions of abolishing slave trade or even slavery itself: she can wonder, for instance, what managerial alterations will occur in the plantation or how such changes may impact Mansfield Park.

I argue that the analogy between slavery and women’s condition falls short of translating into empathy for the enslaved people in Antigua or oppressed people in other colonized parts of the world. As Ruth Perry notes, “Austen’s relationship to colonialism, not unsurprisingly, was determined by both her gender and class” (103). Although Austen noticed the similarity between the slavery and the dependency of women without means, she was fascinated by colonialism’s promise of upward class mobility for men of her class; in short, “Austen’s relation to colonialism and slavery is thus neither more nor less than one might have predicted from her gender and her class” (Perry 104).

Perry’s analysis on Austen’s recognition of interlaced relationship of proselytizing mission, commercial enterprise, and militarism is based on Austen’s letter to Cassandra

written in January 1813, where Austen praises Sir Charles William Pasley along with the English abolitionist Thomas Clarkson and the Scottish missionary Claudius Buchanan:

I am reading a Society-Octavo, an Essay on the Military Police [sic] & Institutions of the British Empire, by Capt. Pasley of the Engineers, a book which I protested against at first, but which upon trial I find delightfully written & highly entertaining. I am as much in love with the Author as I ever was with Clarkson or Buchanan, or even the two Mr Smiths of the city. The first soldier I ever sighed for; but he does write with extraordinary force & spirit. (*Letters* 198)

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Although her novels are almost entirely set in England away from battlefields, this letter demonstrates that Austen was deeply intrigued by the aggressive, colonialist militarism overseas Pasley promotes in his *Essay on the Military Policy and Institutions of the British Empire* (1810).²⁸ Austen's enthusiasm for Pasley's militarism and her admiration

²⁷ A serious study on Austen's take on the *Essay* is yet to come. Austen scholars are often unwilling to associate Austen with Pasley's machoistic, aggressive militarism and colonial expansionism. Tim Fulford, for one, finds it "surprising that Pasley should have impressed Jane Austen, who was normally so wittily wise about male pretensions"; he qualifies Austen's approval of Pasley by adding that "there are strong elements of irony in her judgment of him" ("Sighing for a Soldier" 176). Fulford reckons that Austen resonated with Pasley in her concern for refashioning gentlemanly masculinity and avoids discussing the *Essay*'s deep interest in colonial management. Jan Fergus, on the other hand, dismisses altogether the international, military dimension of Austen's attraction to Pasley and observes that "it's Pasley's style that most attracts Austen" (36).

²⁸ Warren Roberts points out that in this same letter Austen juxtaposes her book club's readings that include Pasley's *Essay* with the reading list of a rival women's book club to dismiss the latter's focus on descriptive, touristic books (95). Austen's assertion of her book club's superiority reveals her awareness of the political function of reading. Vivien Jones writes that Austen's sighing for Pasley is "an expression of patriotism itself" because it is an adulation paid to his spirited, soldierly call for defending the nation against external and internal threats (226). Austen is disdainful of the other book club's

for Clarkson's humanitarian, abolitionist cause complemented each other. As Moreland Perkins puts it, the abolition of slave trade evinced for Austen "her nation's dramatic moral progress" that vouched for Britain's "honorable dominion over land" it "needed for its own prosperity" and "safety" (n.p.). Women in the nineteenth-century, however, could not partake of the military heroism. As an alternative, Fanny knocks on the door of the imperial commerce as a candidate for a joint plantation manager.

Mary Crawford has another thought. The only person shrewd enough to notice the emotional depth of Fanny's interior ("she is as good a creature as ever lived and has a great deal of feeling"), Mary exits the novel with this prophetic taunt. She jeers, "A pretty good lecture upon my word. . . . At this rate, you will soon reform every body at Mansfield and Thornton Lacey; and when I hear of you next, it may be as a celebrated preacher in some great society of Methodists, or as a missionary into foreign parts" (198, 378). By ending the courtship, Mary rejects the prospect that life with a pastor offers. If becoming the wife of a foreign missionary is one of possible prospects, Fanny may not be meant to be stationary as she seems. Regardless of her physical location, as a clergyman's wife, Fanny's mission would inherently serve the empire.

reading list because these women are failing to do what Jones calls "the kind of responsible reading recommended in the name of female patriotism" (227). In other words, Austen deemed touristic readings alienated from political contexts harmful because they hinder women's development into informed, political subjects amid the war.

4. Conclusion

Edmund Spencer's Britomart takes the sword and marches off on horseback to find a husband and fulfill the divinely ordained task of founding a dynasty. Her future spouse, however, falls behind her in terms of textual centrality and, occasionally, in martial prowess. Likewise, Edmund proves himself lesser than Fanny in several respects: self-control, discernment, and firmness. Unlike his heroic namesakes, he is "the bullied"; his "moral position" is repudiated time and again by everybody except Fanny (Doody 147). Throughout the novel, Fanny supplements where Edmund lacks, turning out indispensable to Mansfield Park, the would-be bulwark of English values. Married to Edmund, Fanny will be supported (albeit indirectly) by the profits from the Bertram properties, including the Antiguan plantation. Austen suggests that Britain still needs English women to accomplish its imperial project. Hoping women to be able to be a part of its glory, she encourages Fanny to claim her share of imperial participation as a daughter and sister of sailors, as well as a wife of a clergyman. Doubtful of what is happening outside England, but genuinely interested, Fanny Price is willing to get a taste of the empire with her brothers.

Chapter 2

Reluctant Soldiers and the Question of Ireland:

Colonial Antimilitarism in Edgeworth's *The Absentee* and "The Prussian Vase"

Maria Edgeworth's Irish tales reflect her conflicted stance as an enlightened woman intellectual and a Protestant Anglo-Irish landlord regarding the Union of 1801. Her first two Irish tales, *Castle Rackrent* (1800) and *Ennui* (1809) render suspect her national, religious, and class allegiances by allowing Jason Quirk and Lord Glenthorn, both of Irish peasantry origin, to acquire Anglo-Irish estates. Her third Irish tale *The Absentee* (1812) seemingly retracts the previous tales' Irish sympathy in presenting the rehabilitation of the Anglo-Irish landlords as a desirable possibility.²⁹ Although Lord Colambre secretly loves Grace Nugent, Lady Clonbrony's orphaned niece, Lord Clonbrony's mismanagement of Irish estates and Lady Clonbrony's extravagance in London almost force him into an arranged marriage. Refusing such a degradation, he leaves London for Dublin to educate himself about his native country. Through

* A slightly revised version of this chapter will appear in *Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* vol 62. no 1. as "Reluctant Soldiers and Forgotten Intertexts: The Question of Ireland in Edgeworth's *The Absentee* and 'The Prussian Vase'" in Spring 2021.

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²⁹ Ina Ferris observes of *Castle Rackrent* and *Ennui* that "ownership of an Anglo-Irish estate passes into the hands of a (technically) native Irishman" ("The Irish Novel" 240-1). Ferris views it as continuing the grapple with "the question of native right" because English-born, Ireland-raised Grace, the linchpin of Colambre's restitution, is considered "native" Irish. On the other hand, Julie Nash considers that *The Absentee* featuring an aristocratic hero "represents a retreat" from *Ennui*'s "radical questioning of social hierarchies" (90). I suggest that Grace's hybridity rather than Irishness underpins Colambre's Irish lordship.

Colambre's example, *The Absentee* urges absent landlords to return home to improve the national economy as well as public and personal morality. Given the background of the Napoleonic Wars, such a mission prohibits participating in the British war efforts against the French.

I argue Colambre's return to Ireland indicates Edgeworth's antimilitarism which sheds a new light on her colonial, Irish consciousness discussed by Marilyn Butler, Mitzi Myers, Robert Tracy, Deborah Weiss, and others.³⁰ Clarifying Edgeworth's stance on warfare and the military is integral to investigating how she situates Ireland's colonial condition within the British Empire's global commercial and military network post Anglo-Irish Union. Edgeworth's antimilitarism has rarely been noticed with the notable exception of Cliona Ó Gallchoir whose *Maria Edgeworth: Women, Enlightenment and Nation* (2005) considers the role of gender in Edgeworth's engagement with Enlightenment as a woman writer from Ireland.³¹ I argue that an important earlier manifestation of her antimilitarism can be located in her understudied story for young people, "The Prussian Vase" in *The Moral Tales* (1801). Agreeing with Myers' insight on intertextualities within and between Edgeworth's works that a truly feminist, postcolonial

³⁰ Butler emphasizes Edgeworth's commitment to "the history, language, culture, and the future of Irish people" ("Edgeworth's Ireland" 267). Myers calls Edgeworth "a gendered border intellectual" and explores her feminist departure from colonialist perspective (119). Following their lead, Weiss urges critics to examine her "broad, cosmopolitan, and, importantly, an Enlightenment-based outlook on economic and social issues" (2). Noticing the shared "voiceless" state between the Irish colonial subject and the eighteenth-century woman, Tracy regards Edgeworth "well qualified to write" colonial novels as they "portray those not in control of their own destiny" (*The Unappeasable Host* 21-22).

³¹ Ó Gallchoir discusses Edgeworth's antimilitarism in her chapter "German and Irish heroes in *Patronage* and *The Absentee*," yet her focus is on *Patronage*.

reading of the author enunciates “the interdependence of Edgeworth’s child and adult literature” (123), I read *The Absentee* together with “The Prussian Vase” to investigate her antimilitarism as an overlooked aspect of her outlook on British imperialism. Such a reading helps explicate *The Absentee*’s departure from her previous Irish tales. To the ongoing question “whether the Irish experience has been closer to that of Europe or that of colonised non-European countries,” Ian McBride responds that “the colonial and *ancient régime* models” may overlap, challenging “the insular approach of English historiography”; following his lead, I adopt the eighteenth-century practice and examine post-Union Ireland through “continental parallels” of intra-European conquests (*Eighteenth-Century Ireland* 14-15).³² Edgeworth found such a parallel in Poland and Prussia.

If *The Absentee* is a novel of the Napoleonic Wars, “The Prussian Vase” is a story on the Seven Years’ War (1756-63). The story’s internal and external chronologies are crucial to my analysis of Edgeworth’s take on colonialism within Europe. Set during Frederick the Great’s invasion of Saxony, “The Prussian Vase” was written just a few years after the Third Partition of Poland (1795) and published in the year of the Union of Britain and Ireland.³³ As such, it questions the possibility or efficacy of integrating the

³² Conceding the difference between colonial practices inside and outside Europe, Julia Wright maintains that “military conquest, administrative rule, and political disenfranchisement” were shared, fundamental colonial conditions (5). She adds that even within Europe, earlier colonialization could be “nearly as brutal as it was outside of Europe in the nineteenth century,” as in Oliver Cromwell’s dealings with Irish subjects. Colonial practices honed in the internal colony of Ireland were further applied in external colonies, most notably India (Wright 7).

³³ Ó Gallchoir cites Mrs. Frances Edgeworth’s claim that Edgeworth wrote “The Prussian Vase” in February 1800 (Introductory Note, xiii).

national and religious others into state apparatuses such as the military through a relatively recent history of conquest and absorption between European neighbors. The Seven Years' War goes beyond offering a continental, historical analogy in the Prussian-Polish relationship for Ireland's situation post-Union. As McBride explains, the Seven Years' War had an immediate impact on Ireland. Its demand for the Irish peasantry spurred "a reassessment of confessional discrimination" in the British armed forces; Britain's growing reliance on Irish recruits will elicit the United Irish anti-war grievances during conflicts with France (*Eighteenth-Century Ireland* 26, 45).³⁴ Contradictions inherent in colonial conscription are central to my analysis on antimilitarism in "The Prussian Vase" and *The Absentee*.

Focusing on dysfunctional, dissident soldiers in "The Prussian Vase" and reluctant potential recruits in *The Absentee*, I investigate how Edgeworth embraces, challenges, and revises now-forgotten contemporary intertexts discussing militarism authored by men. Edgeworth's footnote points to Sir Nathaniel William Wraxall's *Memoirs of the Courts of Berlin, Dresden, Warsaw, and Vienna, in the Years 1777, 1778, and 1779* (1798) as the story's source (197n). Wraxall earned fame with his 1775 travelogue *Cursory Remarks Made in a Tour through Some of the Northern Parts of Europe* (Turner). Samuel Johnson, himself a travel writer, recommended him to Hester Thrale in a letter dated *May 22, 1775*: "Wraxal [sic] is too fond of words, but you may read him" (qtd. in Turner). Edgeworth fictionalized the latter part of the *Memoirs*' Letter V which

³⁴ At the same time, McBride suggests that the United Irish estimate of Irish recruits was "exaggerated" (*Eighteenth-Century Ireland* 353).

criticizes Frederick's treatment of the vanquished during the Seven Years' War. *The Absentee*, on the other hand, invokes Sir Charles William Pasley's unapologetically militaristic *Essay on the Military Policy and Institutions of the British Empire* (1811) to have Colambre instantly wave it away. His active gesture of rejection invites a speculation that Edgeworth wrote *The Absentee* partly in response to the *Essay*. Pasley's *Essay* attracted a substantial audience, including unlikely admirers such as Jane Austen who called Pasley "first soldier I ever sighed for" in her letter to Cassandra dated 24 Jan. 1813 (198). Therefore, many original readers of *The Absentee* would have recognized the intertext published only a year before it.

The centrality of the vase and the Prussian exploitation of its Saxon creator Sophia Mansfeld in "The Prussian Vase" indicates Edgeworth's consciousness as a woman artist from a conquered land.³⁵ Her feminist engagement with wartime violence facing women prompts her to recognize—if only momentarily—the intersectionality of oppressions based on gender, class, and ethnicity. About to be forced to marry a Prussian soldier and facing marital rape, the artisan shares her oppressor with the Jewish courtier: Frederick and his militaristic empire. The story's acknowledgement of the seeming villain as another victim deserving sympathy necessitates a more layered interpretation of its Jewish characters. Amid Edgeworth's early-career misrepresentation of the Jewish people

³⁵ Ulrich Pietsch's article on Meissen porcelain's production history mentions not one female artist of porcelain. The only female artist to be mentioned is Maria Sybilla Merian (1647-1717), whose flower patterns created as "a template for women's embroidery" were referenced by porcelain makers around 1740 (Pietsch 30). Whether female contribution was historically minimal or overlooked by historians, Sophia's gender reflects Edgeworth's interconnected understanding of gender, creativity, and coloniality.

that continues into *The Absentee*, “The Prussian Vase” contains a meaningful crack that heralds *Harrington* (1817) and its redemptive efforts. Peeping through this crack, I trace how Edgeworth’s colonial consciousness and antimilitarism unfold in *The Absentee*.

1. Enlisting the Conquered: The Lesson of “The Prussian Vase”

“The Prussian Vase” is set in the court of Berlin under Frederick the Great—a discerning patron of art, brilliant intellectual, skillful military leader, and moreover, Enlightened despot. The story begins with delineating the condition of three groups of subjugated people in Prussia and introduces an outside observer in an unnamed English disciple of the great porcelain manufacturer Josiah Wedgwood, a dedicated abolitionist and the Edgeworths’ family friend. The opening paragraph narrates how Frederick captured and transported porcelain manufacturers from Saxony to Berlin, including a young designer/painter of porcelain named Sophia Mansfeld. Separated from her family and lover, she is severely depressed and unable to work. The next paragraph describes the disorganized military review of the Jewish regiment whereat the audience is amused and Frederick upset. Finally, after announcing the English traveler, the story presents a seventeen-year-old Polish count Augustus Laniska (197-200).

The story’s sympathy generally lies with Laniska, yet he has lessons to learn, both explicit and implicit. Recognized by the king for his “high spirit and capacity,” he “often expressed himself with more openness and warmth upon this subject [Frederick’s faults], than prudence could justify” and, while visiting the Berlin manufactory with the English traveler, condemns Frederick as a “tyrant” for his treatment of Sophia (199-200, 203). In

response, Frederick opens a competition that will let free the artist who creates the finest vase, proclaiming that “[t]he artist’s name shall be inscribed on the vase, which shall be called the Prussian Vase” (209). Sophia wins the competition, yet it turns out that a word “tyrant” was hidden after “Frederick, the great” in the panegyric poem which was written by Laniska for illiterate Sophia and inscribed on the vase’s bottom. When the news of Laniska’s imprisonment circulates among the visiting foreign intellectuals, Frederick, who was “[c]areless of what might be *said* of him” but “anxious, that nothing should be *printed* derogatory to his reputation,” grants Laniska the English trial by jury at his friends’ supplication (219, Edgeworth’s emphasis). Laniska’s friend Albert Altenberg identifies the true perpetrator. Having a son in the Jewish regiment, Solomon wanted to avenge Laniska for making “the corps of Jews his laughing-stock” during the review (250).

Scholars rarely discuss “The Prussian Vase” other than as exemplifying Edgeworth’s uncritical use of stereotypes. According to Susan Manly, Jewish stereotypes in stories for children including “The Prussian Vase” particularly distressed Rachel Mordecai, the Jewish-American educator whose reproach motivated Edgeworth to write *Harrington* (8). Richard Lovell Edgeworth’s preface to *The Moral Tales* claims that “The Prussian Vase” seeks to provide “a lesson against imprudence, an exercise of judgment, and an eulogium upon our inestimable trial by jury” especially to “young gentlemen, who are intended for the bar” (ix). Yet Sheila Spector condemns it as capitalizing on the “stereotypical depiction” of Solomon to “illuminate the British legal system” (318-19).

Scholars' concern over its deployment of stereotypes are valid, yet another important dimension surfaces when the preface is read against the political unrest of the 1798 Rebellion and the Union. Does the applauded English mode of trial equally benefit all British subjects? Does the story merely celebrate the English judicial system or plead for its impartial dispensation as the last resort for the disenfranchised? What warrants nonpartisan, equitable administration of justice? Edgeworth modifies Wraxall's "continental parallel" to investigate the complex dynamics between different groups of subjugated people within Europe, eventually to direct their attention to Britain and Ireland. Using the Continental setting, Edgeworth alerts her youthful readers including future lawyers to the vulnerability of diverse colonized others in their own society.³⁶ Moreover, she challenges the sustainability and even legitimacy of a hyper-militarized state governed by soldiers to emphasize the responsibility of those who wield the pen in such a society. Laniska's exoneration is made possible through Frederick's fear of the written and Altenberg's "logic and rhetoric" which Laniska initially dismisses (205).

Wraxall's condemnation of Frederick's ruthlessness toward the conquered focuses on his exploitation of human resources as a colonial administrator. Against "the laws of nations" and "modern war," Frederick transported "[a]ll the best artists" of Dresden china from Meissen to Berlin where they "were compelled to continue their labours for the profit of a Sovereign, the inveterate enemy of their country"; coupled with the plight of

³⁶ Francesca Orestano writes of another Continental piece titled "The Little Merchants" in 1800 edition of *The Parent's Assistant* that Edgeworth, employing "unfamiliar settings" and intertexts, "creates an interstitial space" where English and Irish "local realities" are showcased for readers' contemplation (60, 70).

“[h]undreds of Saxon young women” who were “forcibly carried off from paternal cottages” to wed Prussian men, this move provides the background for Sophia’s situation (1: 212-13). Saxon young men, following Frederick’s policy on those conquered, were enlisted “to carry destruction into the bosom of their native country,” a measure that precipitates concerns over the army’s loyalty: “How, in fact, can the native of Gascony, of Podolia, or of Swabia, entrapped or seduced into a foreign service, and detained in it by force, be animated with patriotism, affection, or even a sense of allegiance?” (Wraxall 1: 214-15). They were mostly “captives” held in rein by contrivances such as mutual surveillance between soldiers and short rotation term (civilian peasants aided pursuing a deserter to escape filling in his place), yet having this “prodigious proportion of foreigners” minimized native Prussian casualties (1: 216-17). The opening of “The Prussian Vase” demonstrates that Edgeworth was equally intrigued by the Prussian army’s demographics as by the Saxon’s sufferings. By presenting Sophia and Jewish soldiers prior to the “foreigners of distinction” including “the French literati” in Berlin, Edgeworth ensures that the Prussian court’s cosmopolitan surface does not deceive the English traveler or readers (206).

Although the story claims to expand upon the legal and moral distance between Prussia and England, the fact that Britain and Prussia allied during the Seven Years’ War could easily induce contemporary readers to associate Frederick’s tyranny and the Polish count’s predicament at the Prussian court with Britain’s colonial policy in Ireland. Whereas the teenager audience may not have been familiar with the details of the Third Partition of Poland in 1795 where Russia, Prussia and Austria fought over Poland,

Edgeworth and her grown-up contemporaries were. Tadeusz Kościuszko (1746-1817), the hero of Polish national resistance, was immortalized in numerous British writings, from Samuel Coleridge's "Kosciusko" (1794) and Thomas Campbell's "The Pleasures of Hope" (1799) to John Keats' 1817 "Good Kosciusko"; in particular, Leigh Hunt's "To Kosciusko, who never fought either for Bonaparte or the Allies" (1815), in J. R. Watson's words, portrays Kościuszko as "a kind of modern Cincinnatus, fighting and then retiring to the countryside, where his spade took the place of his sword" (62-65).³⁷

Such respect prevents Edgeworth from indiscriminately reproducing Wraxall's address of the Polish people. Despite Wraxall's condemnation of Prussian wartime atrocities and sympathy for the conquered, Poland in Letter XXI is beyond remedy. Its ruling class is marked by "general dissolution of morals" and the Polish will be "for ever destitute" of "system, subordination, obedience, and discipline" (2: 104, 117); hence, in Wraxall's view, their current subordination to Russia and inevitable future "total dissolution" (2: 131). Edgeworth's Polish aristocrats are disciplined and intellectual. Laniska's military competence wins Frederick's attention and his mother hosts a salon as a "woman of considerable information and literature" uncommon, the narrator observes, not only among the Polish but also Prussian ladies (206); Countess Laniska is also an art critic "whose advice was of material use" in designing the vase (210).

³⁷ According to Monica Partridge, "[t]he events of 1793-95, which led to the final partition and extinction of Poland as an independent state, caused increasing British sympathy for Poland and corresponding antipathy towards Russia" (421). J. R. Watson similarly explains that the partitions of 1772, 1793, and 1795 met with "disfavour" across Europe and that Britain's and France's "failure" to help Poland incurred further "shame" (62-63).

Similarly, Edgeworth modifies Wraxall's account of what he calls the Jewish people's "most decided inaptitude and antipathy to war" (2: 218). Wraxall rather disdainfully observes that although Frederick pressed the Jews in Poland into service, they were eventually "broken and disbanded" due to "their insurmountable disinclination to bear arms" (2: 219). Edgeworth, in contrast, juxtaposes the Jewish review Wraxall passingly mentions with Sophia's plight to illuminate the exploitative nature of their enlistment:

His majesty had formed the singular project of embodying, and training to the science of arms, the Jews in his dominions. They were rather awkward in learning the manual exercise; and the Jewish review, though it afforded infinite amusement to the spectators, put Frederick so much out of humour, that, as soon as it was over, he rode to his palace of Sans-Souci, and shut himself up for the remainder of the morning. (198-99).

Because Edgeworth's Jewish regiment is "awkward" like Wraxall's, her passage sounds dismissive and the Jewish review seems merely explaining Solomon's hostility to Laniska. However, Edgeworth deliberately links together the Saxons and the Jews as fellow sufferers under Prussian rule. Those who laugh at Jewish soldiers are exposing their own insensitivity and thoughtlessness. Laniska's laughter, himself an aristocrat from a colonized nation, reflects worse on him and his much-emphasized youthful rashness of temper than on the Jewish youths. Edgeworth also establishes that because the Jewish regiment frustrated Frederick, the king was detained from inspecting the porcelain manufactory where the Saxon artists' creative labor is being exploited. In other words,

the Jewish regiment and Sophia are engaging in military and work slowdowns as a form of resistance against Prussian oppression. By elaborating on Frederick's frustration instead of the regiment's clumsiness, Edgeworth highlights how the Jewish youths disturb the tyrant's imperial aspirations.

Still, the Saxons and the Jews' common victimhood does not obliterate the varying forms and degrees of oppression each group is exposed to, as recognized by the equivocal portrayal of Solomon in the courtroom. The narrator, describing Solomon's unprepossessing demeanor, admits that "it was justly observed, that his having the misfortune to be a Jew was sufficient, to prejudice many of the populace against him, even before a word he uttered reached their ears" (230). Some "impartial spectators judged, that the poor man was only terrified at being called upon to speak in so large an assembly," but they are, presumably, few. Madelyn Travis offers a valuable insight that as the trial's progress "elicits conflicting responses to Solomon," his characterization "eschew[s] an inherent 'racial' element to Jewish criminality" (14-15). Although the trial ends with a revelation of Solomon's scheme, young readers "intended for the Bar" should learn by implication that a prejudiced courtroom obstructs unbiased administration of the rule of law.

While the Irish Catholics and the Prussian Jews cannot be equated, the discriminations the Jews face in "The Prussian Vase" mirror those against the Irish Catholics that the Edgeworths condemned. Edgeworth recollects in *Memoirs of Richard Lovell Edgeworth* that her father as a magistrate was adamant that everybody is "entitled to fair trial" and innocent until proven guilty; further, "when he was to judge of any

action, he never inquired whether it had been committed by a catholic, or a protestant” (207). In 1798 when R. L. Edgeworth was at last constrained to curb his suspicions against “military interference” and mobilize the yeomanry so that his tenantry “should be put upon a footing with others, have equal security of protection, and an opportunity of evincing their loyal dispositions,” he included Catholics—he felt that “confidence” was “due” to those who, having “hitherto conducted themselves irreproachably,” persevered in demonstrating “strong attachment to him and to the government” in the violent moment (2: 211-12). As a measure of self-defense and empowerment, R. L. Edgeworth’s incorporative decision contrasts with Frederick’s imperialist mobilization of the oppressed Jews which demanded allegiance without allowing them their due respect. Moreover, according to Tim Blanning, Frederick famously exploited his Jewish subjects, for instance forcing them to purchase “a fixed amount of porcelain for export whenever they were granted a concession or got married” (457-58). Solomon’s declaration that he is “something of a judge of china [him]self, being used to selling small pieces of it up and down the town and country” evokes such a policy (231). Considering Frederick’s reputation as a despotic ruler both in the story and in history, the poem better reflects Frederick’s character after Solomon’s alteration. Thus, the sentence that Solomon should “sweep the streets of Potzdam, (including the court in front of count Laniska’s palace) for a twelvemonth” is “universally approved” by the spectators (254); while the sentence is degrading, it hints at Edgeworth’s unwillingness to subject Solomon to a severer punishment.

To the vase Sophia designed with Countess Laniska's advice, Laniska contributes the poem and Solomon adds the finishing touch. As the Prussian Vase bearing Sophia's name emerges through Saxon-Polish-Jewish collaboration, it becomes the truthful bearer of the history of Prussian oppression, the very thing that Frederick dreaded. The exploited female colonial talent tempered by colonial aristocrats—one of them trained in the Prussian military school—inadvertently reaches the height of its rebellious potential through Solomon's wronged dignity. In this account of the Prussian national history, the Jews occupy an undeniable space just like the Saxons and the Polish as their communal wound is indelibly inscribed on the Prussian Vase, the materialization of what Kathleen Wilson calls "the weft of collective narratives" (3). Wilson observes that national identity "depended on the ability of individuals to insert themselves" into such collectivity and "to identify themselves with experiences that are shared through representation." Edgeworth's treatment of this serial, fragmented authorship reveals "The Prussian Vase" as a powerful statement of her consciousness as a colonial writer alert to prejudices' variegated operations facing the Union.

However, as Edgeworth projects her concerns over the post-Union status of the Irish onto displaced characters, she confronts the dilemma of colonial aristocratic masculinity. Laniska, "a Pole by birth" and "a Prussian by education," is Irish-born, English-educated Colambre's prototype (199). Although Laniska's Prussian military training was intended to secure him social respectability as a colonized yet aristocratic male subject, it does not safeguard him from allegations of treason. Suggestively, Laniska's savior Altenberg is a near namesake of Albert Altenburg in *Patronage*.

Because Edgeworth began composing *Patronage* in May 1809 and *The Absentee* in 1811, the two novels are products of contemporaneous efforts (Carville and Butler vii, x). Written and set during the Napoleonic Wars, *Patronage*, in Ó Gallchoir's words, "contains some very critical reflections on English institutions and the state of English public life," to which Altenburg adds "another layer" of criticism (*Maria Edgeworth* 104, 110). The German count enters the novel appealing to "the English law, and British Constitution" to be true to its reputation of protecting from the high and mighty "the property and personal liberty of the lowest, the meanest subject" and discharge his servant from impressment (6: 238). Such recycling of characters indicates that the questions she raised in "The Prussian Vase" still troubled Edgeworth. In the Irish national tale published a decade later, the Anglo-Irish Lord would not repeat the Polish count's mistake. Of the Polish and Anglo-Irish war heroes, Kościuszko's dedication to his native soil, especially as a farmer after retirement, provides a better example for Colambre than the Duke of Wellington's service for the British Empire. Colambre will politely decline to subscribe to Pasley's *Essay* and settle down in Ireland with Grace.

2. A Reading Interrupted: Lord Colambre and Sir Charles William Pasley's *The Military Policy of Great Britain* (1811)

The figure that elicits the readerly sympathy the most in "The Prussian Vase" is a female artist from a conquered land. In contrast, in *The Absentee*, Edgeworth invites the reader to identify with a male, Anglo-Irish, aristocratic landlord. Yet I argue that *The Absentee*'s support for the Irish cause from the colonial subject's perspective deserves

more scholarly attention. Imperial management is a multifaceted business; each piece addresses its different phases, focusing on different aspects with different aims. Whereas “The Prussian Vase” prepares the adolescent reader for the Union by encouraging them to contemplate the consequences of the unequal incorporation between two nations, *The Absentee* recommends for the mature audience a course of action to take in an already established situation.

Colambre’s Irish education begins with befriending an English officer. Sir James Brooke helps Colambre overcome his parents’ anachronistic prejudices by updating him on current Irish customs and warns him of Lady Dashfort, who misrepresents the Irish people and insinuates Grace’s illegitimacy to secure Colambre for her daughter. Preoccupied with Grace’s parentage, Colambre visits Count O’Halloran, a widely respected Irish patriot and an ex-soldier. At O’Halloran’s castle, he comes across Pasley’s *Essay*, which O’Halloran warmly recommends. Yet Colambre puts it aside the moment he notices another book on the Nugents’ genealogy.

Edgeworth, Butler notes, often “distinguishes her characters, with a new subtlety in relation to their gender, class, and nationality, by what they have been reading” (“Edgeworth’s Ireland” 268). I further argue that what they refuse to read, or prefer not to read, tells us as much about characters as what they do read. Therefore, Pasley’s *Essay* is as important as the Nugent genealogy in analyzing Colambre’s place as an Anglo-Irish aristocratic male heir to a mismanaged Irish estate in a novel critically portraying Ireland’s confused state. W. J. McCormack remarks that the Nugent genealogy and Pasley’s *Essay* are “emblems of alternative futures for the hero—clarification of the

Nugent past, or military service” (Introduction xxvii).³⁸ Colambre clearly chooses the former.

Calling for an aggressive military policy against France, Pasley laments that Britain lacks a well-disciplined, experienced land force to preserve the home-front if its powerful navy falls. He stresses, however, that achieving the Napoleonic military efficiency does not require emulating the French absolutism: “we may preserve our national independence against the world without any change in our happy constitution” (12). He also believes that Britain’s “immense body of regular soldiers kept on constant pay” is “amply sufficient to effect the destruction of the French empire” (501-2). Pasley’s remodeling of the British national defense system consists in rehabilitating the martial spirit; he emphasizes that some Britons’ belief that “a nation of freemen, animated with a general determination to resist a foreign yoke, can never be subdued” is illusory (41). Amid Pasley’s argument that Britain’s land force needs as rigorous training as its navy, Colambre’s passage begins with “[a]ll that distinguishes a soldier in outward appearance from a citizen is so trifling” (42). Colambre stops here, but the passage continues thus:

[T]he military step, the exercise of the firelock, the words of command; every thing, in short, requisite for putting a battalion through the usual manœuvres of a review, is so simple, that any men with good will and intelligence, may soon acquire them. Hence we have volunteer regiments, all new, officers as well as

³⁸ McCormack further speculates in his explanatory notes to *The Absentee*’s Oxford edition that “Colambre’s notion of enlisting might well have been discouraged had he read a little further” even without the Nugent genealogy because of the *Essay*’s support for “untrammelled [sic] British imperial expansion” (306).

men; who may appear to admiring multitudes almost as perfect under arms as the oldest regiment of the line; . . . (42)

Outward distinctions of a soldier in a military review may deceive onlookers, but they are not only insufficient but insignificant in a real battlefield. The next paragraph spells out what truly matters: “that habitual contempt of danger and of death, . . . that implicit respect, and that unbounded obedience to the will of superior officers . . . that ardent spirit to attack, that unconquerable firmness in defeat and calamity, derived from the mutual confidence” (43). Such qualities distinguish the true soldiers from civilians, earned only through “the stern unrelenting discipline and constant habits of years.” Colambre’s passage is an apt choice, given the misdemeanor of the English officers who accompanied Colambre to Halloran Castle. *The Absentee* contrasts their shallowness with “military ease and gentlemanlike dignity” of the Irish Count, an exemplary soldier of Pasley’s cast (111).³⁹

The narrative, however, overrides its approbation of the disciplined masculinity O’Halloran embodies as O’Halloran’s past mistakes are unveiled. O’Halloran was supposed to deliver the marriage certificate of Grace’s parents to the Reynolds but forgot to see the delivery to the end because “[t]he active scenes . . . in which [he] was immediately afterwards engaged, drove the whole affair from [his] mind” (219). Heidi Thomson argues that circulation in society qualifies a character as “creditworthy”; alluding to the Count’s bachelorhood, Thomson compares him to “a living fossil, a rich repository of valuable antiquarian knowledge,” yet “ultimately sterile in his own person”

³⁹ All textual references to *The Absentee* follow the Penguin edition.

(“The Fashion” 171). Immersed in military affairs and antiquarian pursuits, O’Halloran failed to circulate in the civilian society not only himself but the Reynolds’ nuptial vows, endangering their line of legitimacy and almost ruining two women’s reputation.

When the broader context of intertextual debate between the novel and the *Essay* is considered, Edgeworth’s reluctance to let Colambre enlist translates as her criticism of the *Essay*’s merger of militarism and colonial expansionism. Pasley contends that since a nation’s enduring prosperity requires a productive territory, Britain should invest more in defending its province and acquiring colonies overseas: “[t]he conquests of the French by land, which add to the power and resources of their empire in every respect, may be compared to the growth of a goodly tree upon a mountain; . . . whilst, on the contrary, the naval power of Great Britain, which has been founded upon an extraordinary series of victories, that do, in themselves, add nothing permanent to the resources of the nation, resembles an oak planted in a flower pot” (54). His gloomy speculation that the British national economy, with its high dependency on commerce and manufacture, is rendered vulnerable by cross-Channel hostilities must have touched contemporary readers’ nerves, especially because Napoleon’s Continental Blockade (1806-1814) was still in effect when Pasley wrote, and Edgeworth read, the *Essay* (24-25).⁴⁰

Pasley’s commercially and militarily ideal colony is “large, fertile, and populous ultramarine possessions, or islands,” pay for its own government, and “materially assist

⁴⁰ Contemporary opinions were divided, as Esther Wohlgenut shows through Robert Southey and John Croker’s example who wrote for *Quarterly Review* in May 1811 that because British dependence on foreign commerce is insignificant, Pasley’s worries are groundless (48).

in manning the fleets and recruiting the armies of the mother-country”; the former North-American colonies, current East-Indian territories, and Egypt are such past, present, and potential future model colonies (61).⁴¹ In contrast, Britain and Ireland together constitute a model empire consisting of islands or disconnected lands: “mutual aid and supplies may be transmitted from one island to the other, if either were invaded, with great facility; . . . Consequently the united strength of the two islands, may appear little inferior to that of one great island, equal in resources to both” (70). By refraining from calling Ireland Britain’s colony, Pasley frames the Union as a mutually profiting integration between two nations on more or less equal terms. Yet, suggestively, while a colony’s capacity to contribute manpower to the motherland’s military is one of Pasley’s standards for gauging its advantageousness, Ireland’s manpower was famously absorbed into the British military, an issue problematized by Edgeworth. Unease over the unquenched Irish resentment grows more prominent as the *Essay* nears the end:

The progressive power of the Romans in Italy, being thus founded upon an equal and honourable union with their kindred tribes, like that of Scotland and England, Rome was strong at home: whilst the situation of the Carthaginians in Africa, being exactly like that of the English protestants in Ireland a century ago, Carthage was weak at home; . . . (481)

The Scottish engineer brings up the Anglo-Scottish ethnic affinity to highlight the Irish difference. Pasley’s language when discussing Ireland betrays a deep apprehension over

⁴¹ Mary A. Favret points to Pasley’s interest in “colonial bodies” as potential recruit as reflecting the increasingly massive, global scale of the early nineteenth-century warfare (35).

Irish political discontent (and, given the 1798 Rebellion, with good reason) and suggests that when the British army comes over to Ireland, it is as a military occupier: in orchestrating home defense, “a few regiments of the line” should be stationed “in Ireland, in order to insure the internal tranquility of that island” (501).

Colambre’s dismissiveness of Pasley’s *Essay* implies that national military issues can wait, because Grace’s family history is his priority; his romantic interest outweighs the fortification of the national defense system. For a novel written and published during the Napoleonic Wars, such an implication is almost dangerous, not least because Edgeworth’s family had been suspected of Catholic allegiances during the 1789 Irish Rebellion. Nevertheless, Edgeworth firmly denounces Pasley’s colonial projects through Colambre.

Seen in this light, Colambre’s friendship with Sir Brooke becomes questionable. Edgeworth has the English officer leave Colambre rather abruptly when his regiment is dispatched to “quarters in a distant part of Ireland” (94). Presumably, as Spencer Jackson notes, Sir Brooke garnered his knowledge of Ireland while subduing the 1798 Rebellion and ensuing revolts, which makes his perspective that of a “benevolent imperialist” at best (512). Colambre needs to directly engage with the Irish peasantry’s lives to become the truly legitimate heir, rather than relying on the ethnographical reports of a military agent of British imperialism or an antiquarian menagerie kept by a veteran who, in his military zeal, has almost disrupted a legitimate family line. In order to correctly situate himself on the map of Britishness, the young lord’s survey of the Irish estate should be conducted with a consciousness that the Anglo-Irish is distinct from the English.

3. A Career Unpursued: Anglo-Irish Aristocrats, Irish Peasants and the Army

Irish people in the lower socioeconomic strata take over the second phase of Colambre's Irish education. Encounters with a conscientious middleman Burke, a shrewd postillion Larry Brady, and the honest widow Mrs. O'Neill enlighten him of the Irish peasantry's predicaments. The Irish peasantry's privation, however, does not persuade Colambre of the necessity of his presence among them. Unable to forget Grace Nugent but unwilling to marry a supposedly illegitimate woman, he is considering enlisting when O'Halloran visits him. The Count passionately recommends enlistment:

To go into the army in these days, my lord, is, in my sober opinion, the most absurd and base, or the wisest and noblest thing a young man can do. . . . Officers are now, in general, men of education and information;. . . . The life of an officer is not now a life of parade, of coxcombical or of profligate idleness—but of active service, of continual hardship and danger. . . . In the present state of things, the military must be the most honourable profession, because the most useful. (216-17)

O'Halloran believes that the current British army embodies Pasley's military ideal—a combination of education and experience with unflinching firmness in adversity. As David Gates demonstrates, it was a time when the British army desperately needed officers with an elevated level of “professionalism and general calibre” to more efficiently control its explosive growth (142). Enlistment seems not simply “the wisest and noblest thing” which an educated, responsible youth such as Colambre can do, but one that he is expected to do.

The Count's enthusiasm for the now-reformed military reflects only one side of contrasting contemporary views of the British army. Catriona Kennedy observes that Wellington's 1808 campaign in the Iberian Peninsula initiated the elevation of the army's reputation ("John Bull" 129). Yet Gates concedes that its glory was often sullied by drunken soldiers "running amok and looting, raping, and pillaging their way through the town they had just stormed"; Wellington himself believed in corporal punishment as the only way of putting them on order (144-45). Further, Mark Lawrence notes that Wellington as the commander of the allied army of England and Portugal was disrespectful to the Spanish people and "was generally on awkward terms" with those in the Spanish army (459-60). Edgeworth may not have heard of these details, but she never mentions the Anglo-Irish military genius, and the husband of her close friend from childhood Catherine Pakenham, as if avoiding an unworthy precedence. Moreover, as Kennedy remarks, "[t]he technical skill required to command a ship" rendered the navy "a career more open to talents than the army" (*Narratives* 36). The navy was more training-intensive, more professional, and consequently, more respected. In contrast, according to David Chandler and Ian Beckett, the British Army was traditionally deemed "a small professional long-service body serving mostly overseas, out of sight and out of mind" because Britain's defensive mainstay was its navy (xvii). The army's relatively lower reputation of professional rigor casts a doubt on Colambre's sincerity for the military career.

Edgeworth balances O'Halloran's glorification of a commissioned officer with the peasantry's horror for enlisting as a common soldier. On his way to the Clonbrony

estates, Colambre stays with Mrs. O'Neill who is suffering under Lord Clonbrony's agent. Although her prospective daughter-in-law is as dutiful and perceptive as her genteel namesake, the peasant girl Grace is unable to marry her fiancé Brian because Mr. Garraghty's exploitative way of levying aggravates their already severe poverty. Significantly, Grace's worst fear is not old-maidhood. Rather, she is worried that destitution may drive Brian to sail to America or enlist. Grace declares she is willing to part with "[a]ny thing at all, sure, rather than that he should be forced to talk of emigrating: or, O worse again, listing for the bounty – to save us from the cant or the jail, by going to the hospital, or his grave, may be – O mother!"; in turn, Mrs. O'Neill tries to soothe her: "as to America, it's only talk – I won't let him, he's dutiful" (150).⁴² Mrs. O'Neill's consolation rings with irony because she virtually claims that emigrating abroad is undutiful, even if the family's poverty and lack of other economic prospects force him into it. He risks being undutiful by trading his duty to stay near his mother and tend to her needs for the duty of being the breadwinner. For the Irish peasantry, enlisting undermines one's masculinity.

Whereas reluctance to participate in the Napoleonic Wars is not equivalent to negation of the British rule over Ireland, neither the Irish peasant nor the Anglo-Irish aristocrat enlist. By having Colambre contemplate purchasing a commission to fight against Napoleon's army, Edgeworth verifies his Hanoverian allegiance. Yet martial

⁴² Grace's horror reflects her contemporaries' commonplace perception examined by Cookson that a soldier "existed in a kind of exile from the ordinary world, bereft of the ties of social existence . . . if the soldier did return, he returned as if from the dead" (111).

fervor is prominently missing in *The Absentee*. Colambre chooses to stay in Ireland; likewise the war fails to inspire patriotic feelings for Britain leading to enlistment for Edgeworth's Irish peasantry. If, following Wilson, mid-eighteenth-century British women were expected to stimulate militaristic patriotism in their menfolk through "examples of domestic virtue," Edgeworth dispenses with such a notion for her early nineteenth-century Irish women (108). Virtuousness of the peasant girl Grace and Mrs. O'Neill is never contested despite their remonstrances against Brian's potential enlistment. As Megan Woodworth points out, O'Halloran's celebration of the military as the vehicle of reforming Britain and its gentry is "undercut" as the narrative simultaneously hints that "the profession of landowner is most important as the landed family—including tenants and dependents [sic] not immediately related to the owners—is the backbone of society" (147). The landlord's military valor merely perpetuates his absenteeism rather than remedying the peasantry's destitution or religious sectarianism.

What, then, does Grace signify as the antithesis of a military career in the anti-absenteeism agenda? Critics such as Mary Jean Corbett have turned to Irish colonial and gender politics in Edmund Burke's mold to explain how Colambre-Grace marriage braces the anti-absenteeism agenda, arguing that Burke's religious tolerance aims to draw Irish Catholic men into the larger framework of "imperial citizenship" by granting them fuller, English patriarchal authority (21, 32-33). Grace's legitimacy is necessary for the Anglo-Irish landlord because Burke's societal order depends on policing female sexual unruliness (Corbett 71-72). Thomson objects that such an interpretation hinges on Grace's Irishness which is an "illusion" given her English descent (Introduction xxiii-

xxv).⁴³ However, I agree with Corbett that a successful Union demands Irishness from both Grace and Colambre; Burke's "common naturalization," Corbett explains, requires "identifying partners to Union as neither simply English nor simply Irish, but as something of both" (75). This contradiction—affirmation of Irishness through non-Irish descent—undergirds *The Absentee*'s antimilitarism informed simultaneously by colonial consciousness and cosmopolitanism. Colambre's and Grace's Irishness transcend their ancestry and the Irish should stay away from England's war.

Just as descent alone does not determine one's national tie, birthplace does not validate it. English ladies scornfully gossip that Lady Clonbrony "expect[s] to pass for English" because "she is not quite Irish *bred and born*—only bred, not born" and introduces herself as "*Henglish, born in Hoxfordshire*" (2, Edgeworth's emphasis). In *The Absentee*, education and nurture exert a fundamental influence over one's national belonging. Thus, Colambre has to prove that his native Irish loyalty survived foreign education. When Lord Clonbrony accuses his England-educated son believing that "nothing can be good or genteel but what's English," Colambre remonstrates:

I assure you I am as warm a friend to Ireland as your heart could wish. You will have no reason, in that respect at least, nor, I hope in any other, to curse my English education – and, if my gratitude and affection can avail, you shall never

⁴³ O'Halloran describes Miss St. Omar (Grace's mother) as "a very young English lady, who had been educated at a convent in Vienna" (218). Yet Miss St. Omar's education, her name evoking a French Catholic seminary, and Reynold's Austrian enlistment (Irish gentlemen, barred from British officership, often joined a continental Catholic army) give Grace's parents "a vaguely Catholic aura," as demonstrated by Tracy ("Maria Edgeworth" 11, 14).

regret the kindness and liberality with which you have, I fear, distressed yourself to afford me the means of becoming all that a British nobleman ought to be. (20)

Colambre claims himself a “friend” to Ireland who has been afforded “the means of becoming” the ultimate “British nobleman.” Calling oneself a friend to one’s native country sounds like an act of assuming distance, yet being a “friend to Ireland” carries historically specific political implications; in her father’s *Memoirs*, Edgeworth calls those who engaged in the parliamentary support for the Irish cause in Ireland and England as “friends of Ireland” (279). An earlier passage indicates that Edgeworth’s use of friendship is twofold: “He had formed friendships in England; . . . but his own country was endeared to him by early association, and a sense of duty and patriotism attached him to Ireland” (*The Absentee* 6). By stating that Ireland is “his own country,” Colambre confirms his Irish patriotism. At the same time, Colambre’s acknowledgement of English friendships suggests that friendly relationships with multiple nations are compatible. Esther Wohlgenut observes that Edgeworth’s Irish writings, with its emphasis on education, “argue for socio-cultural foundation to national identity that allows for multiple national allegiances” and promote “rooted cosmopolitan judgment” that negotiate potentially conflicting national identities; her cosmopolitanism “does not replace but rather supplements local attachment” (75, 85-86, 88). Read thus, the two passages imply that because Colambre has completed the English portion of his education, now he embarks on the Irish counterpart to strengthen ties forms by birth. Colambre’s task is to prove himself as a worthy British citizen while remaining loyal to Ireland.

As opposed to Colambre, Grace is challenged to justify her Irish loyalty as a young woman of foreign extraction. Lady Clonbrony, complaining that she “hate[s] to hear people, women especially, and young ladies particularly, talk of being friends to this country or that country,” chides Grace for cherishing emotional ties to Ireland despite her non-Irish birth and demonstrating political investment despite her gender (70). In response, Grace reasserts her Irish loyalty as a war widow’s orphan adopted by generous people with Irish ties, her stepfather Mr. Nugent and the Clonbronys:

“I was wrong,” said Miss Nugent, “to call myself a friend to Ireland; I meant to say, that Ireland had been a friend to me; that I found Irish friends, when I had no other; an Irish home, when I had no other; that my earliest and happiest years, under your kind care, had been spent there; and I can never forget *that*, my dear aunt – I hope you do not wish that I should.” (70-71, Edgeworth’s emphasis)

Grace stresses how Ireland befriended her, not the other way around. Naomi Tadmor demonstrates that the eighteenth-century usage of the words friend/friendship between individuals, especially in political relationships, encompassed “vertical” ones; a chain of such vertical connections shaped the eighteenth-century English society, linking “the prime minister of England” all the way “down to the level of the village poor” (236). If the explanation is extended to relationship the between an individual and a nation, Grace is indeed “a friend to Ireland,” yet she corrects herself, as if dissociating herself from the epithet “friends of Ireland” discussed above. I suggest that Edgeworth, by positioning Grace as a grateful beneficiary of Irish goodwill, avoids the politically charged epithet and forestalls accusations of presumption or colonialist condescension against the

English-born girl.

Grace maintains that her gratitude for people who voluntarily offered a “home” to a friendless and homeless orphan developed into loyalty to her benefactors’ nation. The displaced English girl met with different treatment in Ireland from the Irish peasant in London or Jewish soldiers in Prussia, admittedly owing to her national and class background to a degree. Still, Grace’s and Colambre’s assertions of Irish affinity reveal that, for Edgeworth, ties formed by education and nurture are as natural as ties created by birth regardless of one’s birthplace, parentage, and gender.⁴⁴ Grace’s importance lies in her hybrid, rather than her Irish or English, or even European, identity. Her sincere Irish attachment substantiates her Anglo-Irish fiancé’s claim as an enlightened landlord who can benefit the Irish peasantry when he chooses marriage to Grace over fighting abroad for Britain. A poetic justice of an antimilitarist brand is achieved when the adopted war orphan anchors Colambre in their homeland.

At the same time as Edgeworth contemplates the antimilitaristic implication of the ruling class hybridity, she makes it clear that migration is not a matter of choice for the working class. Larry’s brother Paddy works as a wheelwright for Mordicai, a Jewish coachmaker and moneylender. Colambre meets Paddy at Mordicai’s place of business and witnesses how everybody in the yard bursts out laughing at Paddy’s Irish accent:

⁴⁴ For Corbett, Colambre-Grace marriage “epitomizes the antiessentializing tenor in Edgeworth’s representation of intercultural relations by its insistence that ‘national origins’ matter less than ‘natural affections’” (75). Ó Gallchoir interprets Colambre and Grace as representing a “fluid and anti-essentialist” Irishness, a “disappearing and reappearing” identity forged “in the context of real and palpable power differences” (*Maria Edgeworth* 106-7).

“Their risible muscles were acted upon mechanically, or maliciously, merely by the sound of the Irish brogue” (9). Unlike Laniska, Colambre dares not laugh at the displaced religious, ethnic other in the dominant country. Both Paddy’s Irish brogue and Lady Clonbrony’s “Henglish” meet with English derision despite each speaker’s contrasting motives for being in London, which exposes how voluntary, aristocratic absentees force the Irish peasantry into either degrading dislocation or dangerous enlistment. *The Absentee*, as Clara Tuite observes, “exhibits and demands from its English readers a particular kind of sympathy towards the Catholic and lower-class Irish”; such depiction of the peasantry evidences Edgeworth’s empathy toward the Irish cause and her resistance to the colonialist agenda (“Maria Edgeworth’s Deja-Voodoo” 388).

Nonetheless, Edgeworth’s rather menacing representation of socially and geographically mobile working-class characters betrays her fundamental anxiety. Mrs. Petito’s transfer of service from Anglo-Irish Lady Clonbrony to English Lady Dashfort relocates her from London to Dublin. The opportunistic English gentlewoman’s maid remarks that although she “was greatly frightened at first” of the move because of Lady Clonbrony’s misrepresentations of Ireland, she “was very agreeably surprised” that “the accommodations, and everything of that nature now, is vastly put-up-able with!” (91). The fragility of her allegiance as a wage-laborer who can serve one lady just as well as another is exacerbated by her spatial mobility which widens her field of vision and enables her to debunk Lady Clonbrony’s self-hatred. Thus, in Julie Nash’s words, Mrs. Petito embodies “moments of energetic (and comic) insurrection” on the part of the

working class; as such, she convincingly “defends herself against the invisibility of her station and provides an argument for servant rebellion” (91-92).⁴⁵

What transformation would Irish peasants undergo once they leave Ireland? In London, Paddy the former Irish peasant exclaims thus upon recognizing Colambre’s Irish nationality: “and there was the *raison* my heart warmed to him from the first minute he come into the yard” (10). Later, he helps Lord Clonbrony evade Mordicai’s execution for his debt. Paddy seems to preserve emotional ties to Irish lords akin to an ideal peasant’s attachment to his feudal lord. The closing letter between the brothers conveys another story. After informing Paddy of Colambre’s engagement to Grace and the family’s return, Larry wraps up: “And there’s another thing: they say the rich *ould* grandfather’s coming over; –and another thing, Pat, you would not be out of the fashion – and you see it’s growing the fashion not to be an Absentee” (256, Edgeworth’s emphasis).

Larry’s call for return is grounded on the pragmatic prospect of a new benefactor and employment. Indeed, the letter begins with Larry acknowledging the receipt of the five-pound note that Paddy received from Mordicai. Paddy’s betrayal of his employer in favor of his former landlord is approved of, rather than condemned, as natural emanation

⁴⁵ Nash contends that complicated servant figures such as *The Castle Rackrent*’s Thady and *Ennui*’s Ellinor are missing in *The Absentee* because “contrast[ing] the corruption of British society with the honesty of the Irish people” is its priority. Still, as Amit Yahav points out, the Irish peasant Larry has the novel’s final words as a resourceful communicator who, inhabiting the Irish linguistic community where his speech is appreciated, “uses institutions—laws, language, novelistic conventions—without being subordinated to them” (“Is There a Bull in This Nation?” 103-4). Class dynamics in *The Absentee* is not less sophisticated than in Edgeworth’s previous works.

of national ties. Still, the suspicion lurks that wage labor and enhanced working-class mobility undermine the traditional social hierarchy.

Given that soldiering is another form of wage-labor, Colambre's enlistment is unnecessary as well as precipitous because he is the only son of a titled landlord. As Stana Nenadic writes of the eighteenth-century Scottish Highland gentry, when younger sons enlisted "to seek employment and sources of income," individuals and family often suffered negative repercussions (78). Similarly, the confusion over Grace's legitimacy originates from her parents' marriage overseas. Enlistment of the elder son of the wealthy Reynolds causes his migration to Europe to serve the Austrian army, which jeopardizes his family's legitimate bloodline when he privately marries property-less Miss St. Omar and dies in a battle. Soldiering in *The Absentee* spurs cross-border migration, loosening the soldier's affective ties to his nation and family with an empty promise of glory. Those near the top of the societal pyramid are not free from its harms.

4. Conclusion

Edgeworth urges the return of Anglo-Irish absentee landlords with a view to strengthening Ireland's national morality and economy from the Irish perspective rather than the colonialist. "The Prussian Vase" shows that from her earlier career, Edgeworth was suspicious of the military's activities of nation-building and boundary-setting. Its investment in victims of Prussian militarism establishes the story as one of the earliest (post)colonial works of children's literature and corroborates its kinship with the national

tale defined by Ina Ferris: “a fiction that locates itself in a contentious zone of discourse in order to articulate the grievances of a small people” (*The Romantic National Tale* 50).

However, *The Absentee*'s portrayal of migrant laborers confirms that Edgeworth's sympathy for the disenfranchised was limited by her class allegiance as a landowner. Perceiving that growth of the uprooted, migrant labor force and expansion of wage-labor to all social realms undermines the existing order based on landed property, Edgeworth endeavors to contain the migration of laborers, partly by denouncing war and soldiering. Her call to end absenteeism is not confined to the goal of revitalizing Ireland; the social order of the entirety of Britain is at stake.

Chapter 3

Julia's "Native Air":

Soldier-Artists, the Female Critic, and the Historical Novel in *Guy Mannering*

Ever since Georg Lukács credited the mass military conscription during “the French Revolution, the revolutionary wars and the rise and fall of Napoleon” with development of the national consciousness in Europe focusing on Sir Walter Scott’s first novel *Waverley* (1814), Scott’s historical novel has chiefly been understood as a male-driven narrative featuring martial conflicts at a pivotal moment in the progress of national history (23). *Guy Mannering* departs from such a model in its lack of interest in military glory. It features two soldier-protagonists disillusioned with the military, Colonel Guy Mannering and Captain Vanbeest Brown, originally Harry Bertram of Ellangowan. On the day of the latter’s birth, Mannering as a young traveler is warmly received by Godfrey Bertram, a Lowland aristocrat awaiting his first-born. A student of astrology, Mannering prophesies dangers to befall Harry. Twenty-two years later, Mannering returns to Ellangowan from India, severely depressed after mistaking that he killed Brown in a duel. By then, Harry has been presumably abducted by Meg Merrilies’ gypsy clan in retaliation for Godfrey’s forceful evacuation and the laird ruined by his agent Glossin. On the laird’s death, Mannering invites the orphaned Lucy Bertram to his home. Soon, Brown/Bertram arrives in Scotland in pursuit of Julia, Mannering’s only daughter.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ I will refer to Harry Bertram/Vanbeest Brown as Brown and occasionally as Harry when discussing his childhood.

Scholarly responses to Scott's second novel exemplify the scholars' bewilderment with elements incongruous with the Lukács-*Waverley* model and expose an underexplored terrain that may radically revise the narrative of Scott's contribution to the dynamics between gender and genre in the Romantic novel. Gary Kelly for one comments that *Guy Mannering* "is not really a historical novel"; rather, it is a study of the disintegration of a "'pre-modern' rural society" (*English Fiction* 150-1).⁴⁷ On the other hand, Jane Millgate highlights Scott's effort to differentiate his second novel from the first without denying that *Guy Mannering* is a historical novel. She quotes Scott's letter to John Morritt (January 19, 1815): "I want to shake myself free of *Waverley* [*Guy Mannering*] is a tale of private life" (qtd. in Millgate 66). In this account of a "private life," as Millgate's long list of analogies attests (two heroes a generation apart, "Mannering as astrologer" and "Meg as sibyl," "Glossin the bad lawyer" and "Pleydell the good lawyer," and so forth), historical continuity is expressed through repetitions and parallels, which, in turn, inform *Guy Mannering*'s experiment with narrative development (68).

Exclusion of Julia Mannering in these accounts—although she could have been easily paired up with Meg or Lucy Bertram—reflects the insufficient scholarly attention paid to Scott's female characters.⁴⁸ I examine from a feminist, postcolonial perspective the

⁴⁷ Kelly is unclear about what disqualifies it as a historical novel or how he defines one. His point that *Guy Mannering* depicts a dissolution of the traditional way of life to give way to the modern is indeed one of the key components of the genre defined by Lukács.

⁴⁸ Henry E. Shaw pairs up Meg and Julia as the narrative's resistant dissonances, arguing that examining Scott's female characters allows a more thorough comprehension of his notion of history and its "underlying protest" (285). Shaw recognizes Julia's potential as Meg's "foil" with her capacity to generate a plot that may disrupt "male ascendancy" in *Guy Mannering* (291). Agreeing with him, I examine the (anti)colonial, (anti)militaristic implication of her Indian background.

novel's intervention in the contemporary debate on gender, genre, and literary production amid Britain's transformation into a global militaristic empire. I argue that the English colonel's Anglo-Indian daughter (born in India from English parents) is a complex character with a powerful claim to narrative authority. A byproduct of British military imperialism and the only female character whose letters are incorporated in the novel where soldier-artists nearly monopolize various art forms, Julia offers a critique of their art and contemplates the historical implication of her cultural hybridity. This is most clearly demonstrated in the symbolic passage where Julia judges Mannering for adding India-inspired components to Lucy's work-patterns:

Luckily for me [Mannering] had at that moment got into a long description of the peculiar notions and manners of a certain tribe of Indian, who live far up the country, and was illustrating them by making drawings on Miss Bertram's work-patterns, three of which he utterly damaged, by introducing among the intricacies of the pattern his specimens of oriental costume. (159)

Brown admits the Colonel "draws beautifully" and his artist friend Dudley agrees (114). Notwithstanding the praises of professional and amateur sets of European male eyes, Julia the culturally hybrid female critic ruthlessly condemns the patterns as "utterly damaged."

Guy Mannering's exploration of various art forms as manifestations and medium of imperial aspiration as well as resistance suggests that its engagement with Britain's militarism, and the reader's critical engagement with the novel, requires mobilizing the methodologies of art, music, and literary criticisms. Mannering is a skilled draughtsman

and painter while Brown is a musician. While Julia connects with Brown through music, her response to Mannering's drawings emphasize their estrangement. By reading Julia as a youthful yet serious critic of her father's and lover's amateur dabbling with multiple art forms, I present her as the novel's embedded critic of the art that they professionally practice—the art of war. The distance between the narrator and Julia constantly fluctuates, yet the relationship is clearly dialectical in that their aesthetic and political appraisal of the global colonial condition eventually converge. Scott reveals through Julia his discomfort with the narrative form that demands portrayal of physical violence in the world already subject to mass-violence perpetrated by nation-states. Therefore, the British Empire and its military should be the starting point in examining the significance of this attempt at revision of his previous novel's approach to history.

1. “Trap Doors and Back Doors to the Empire”: Imperial Soldiering and British Citizenship

In late 1814, Sir Walter Scott, immensely successful in his second literary career as the anonymous novelist of *Waverley* (1814), made an interesting choice by turning to a “private life” for his second novel. Scott's two soldier-protagonists leave the military to explore civilian life, reversing Edward Waverley's journey from a private life to that of public and military. If, following the critical convention, Edward's journey from England to the Highlands and back equips the haphazard, youthful reader of romance with a mature, historical insight, what does the hardened veterans' homecomings achieve in giving a novelistic expression to history of this particular juncture?

Linda Colley's *Britons* argues that wartime fervor facilitated British subjects' identification with the British Empire. Meanwhile, as J. E. Cookson elaborates in his *British Armed Nation: 1793-1815*, Scotland was "grossly over-represented in the army's rank and file" and even more among the officers during the Napoleonic Wars (127).⁴⁹ *Guy Mannering* examines the soldiers returning from the imperial outskirts of India through three unhappy soldiers of different social and military rank as well as nationality rather than glorifying those fighting abroad.

At first glance, *Guy Mannering* seemingly assumes that veterans merit distinction over civilians and the law. Mrs. Mac-Candlish the keeper of the inn of Gordon Arms declares that she wishes Mannering "or ony honourable gentleman that's fought for his country" would purchase the Ellangowan estates rather than Glossin (68).⁵⁰ In a similar vein, Brown writes to his Swiss comrade Captain Delasserre that "[a] retired old soldier is always a graceful and respected character" and his stories are invariably "listened to with sympathy and reverence" (111). Accordingly, when his reputation is in danger, Brown resorts to his status as a soldier. While following Julia to Scotland, Brown accidentally witnesses a clandestine funeral of a smuggler, loses all his belongings, and is entrusted with a suspicious purse by Meg. Horrified at the prospect of undeserved ruin without

⁴⁹ In the 1813 inspections returns which "survey[ed] around 40 per cent of the army," Cookson observes, "the army was about one-half English, one-sixth Scottish, and one-third Irish" (126). As of 1811, "England made up 57 per cent of the United Kingdom population, Scotland 10 per cent, and Ireland 33 per cent"; Scotland is clearly overrepresented (Cookson 127).

⁵⁰ Tara Ghoshal Wallace notes that veterans may even acquire "public identity—visible, recognizable, and narratable" through military service in India; for instance, newspaper reports enable Mannering to enjoy "the celebrity status" (152).

documents for identification, Brown ruminates, “Perhaps there may be a regiment quartered at the county-town, in which case my knowledge of the service, and acquaintance with many officers of the army, cannot fail to establish my situation and character by evidence, which a civil judge could not sufficiently estimate” (154-55).

Brown distrusts the civil judicial system; a “country magistrate” is likely to be “stupid or obstinate” whereas in a court-martial “the point of honour can qualify strict law” (154-55). However, he is soon to be disillusioned in the superiority of the military judicial system thanks to Pleydell as well as in his elitism as a soldier of an Indian regiment.

The novel establishes much earlier its overarching theme: the connection between military service and disintegration of family and traditional ways of life. During Godfrey’s persecution of the gypsy clan, “a stout young fellow who sometimes had gone to sea a-fishing, was handed over to the captain of the impress service at D---” (39). It is one of the turning points of the enmity, because Meg, the youth’s aunt, “could not be prevailed to enter the Place of Ellangowan” after this (40). When Brown comes across Gabriel later as a huntsman in Charlieshope, he has been diminished to a “thin, dark, active fellow” remarkable for his reserve: “he was down-looked, embarrassed, and avoided the eyes of those who looked hard at him” (135-36).⁵¹ The limited glimpse of Gabriel’s intervening eighteen years amplifies the damage done to him. Captain Hattaraick, the Dutch smuggler who kidnapped Harry, confirms that Gabriel, who was serving the Royal Navy, informed the smugglers of the impending attack on the day of

⁵¹ *Guy Mannering* explains a huntsman as “a sort of provincial officer of the district, who receives a certain supply of meal, and a reward for every fox he destroys” (134).

Harry's abduction. According to Hattaraick, Gabriel came across grownup Brown on the ship to the East Indies, but "kept out of his eye though, as he had served the States against England, and was a deserter to boot" (189).⁵² Continuing the arguments of scholars such as Benedict Anderson, Ernest Gellner, Linda Colley, and Liah Greenfeld on "the rise of the nation-state," Yahav-Brown observes that the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature's urge to "recognize the excluded" is partly accountable for *Guy Mannering's* incorporation of gypsies (1129). Scott's recognition, I suggest, takes the direction of acknowledging the toll an enforced integration of impressment takes on Gabriel. His distance from the British military grows wider because the conscript's record of military disloyalty deters his reintegration into his native land. He dares not recognize his former landlord's heir.

Scott allows a reader a fuller glimpse of an officer's life, yet military life in *Guy Mannering* is unpalatable regardless of rank. In the same letter in which he described to Delasserre the respectful attention a veteran enjoys, Brown points out that the military profession gives a false promise of complete citizenship and integration into British mainstream society. He sees himself as one of the "foreigners" just like his Swiss mercenary friend: "for what am I the better that I was originally a Scotchman, since, could I prove my descent, the English would hardly acknowledge me a countryman?" (112).⁵³ He continues,

⁵² Garside explains that Gabriel served the navy of the United Provinces of the Netherlands, which sided with America during the War of American Independence (Explanatory Notes 408).

⁵³ The choice of the audience for this letter further confirms that Scott is resolved to portray the military in British India as a "motley crew" with diverse motivations often

The English are a wise people—while they praise themselves and affect to undervalue all other nations, they leave us, luckily, trap-doors and back-doors open, by which we strangers, less favoured by nature, may arrive at a share of their advantages. And thus they are, in some respects, like a boastful landlord, who exalts the value and flavour of his six-years-old mutton, while he is delighted to dispense a share of it to all the company. (112)

Brown's Scottish birth does not alleviate his sense of estrangement on the British soil; nor does it, in his view, convince the Englishmen of their common nationhood. He needs avail himself of the "trap-doors and back-doors" granted non-Englishmen, enlistment.⁵⁴

Yet Brown's veteran earns the audience's respect only after he "manage[s] to escape disease, and steel, and lead, and the effects of hard living" (111). Thus English "advantages" and by extension soldiering are like a "six-years-old mutton" which the English are "delighted to dispense a share of" to the Irish and the Scottish.⁵⁵

Moreover, soldiering takes an emotional toll even on those successful in the profession. An excerpt of Mannering's letter to a friend from his youth starts in a hurt

unrelated to patriotic feelings. In the mid-eighteenth-century, Swiss mercenaries in the East Indies "insist[ed] on maintaining their own separate codes of discipline, and were moreover inclined to desert to the French, or any country power which might offer better wage" (Heathcote, *The Military* 28).

⁵⁴ Tellingly, the evicted gypsy clan offered "services and combat in times of war" to the laird in exchange for being allowed to live on the Ellangowan estates (Nord 30).

⁵⁵ Noticing that *Guy Mannering* depicts "the hard lot of Scottish soldiers of fortune in India," Iain Gordon Brown quotes Brown's complaint regarding "trap-doors and back-doors" and the Colonel's enumeration of difficulties he experienced as a soldier mentioned in the next paragraph (72). Gordon's article focuses on how Scott engages India in his novels. I examine through the soldiers' grievances the illusory correlation between imperial soldiering and national/domestic belonging.

tone: “And now, why will you still upbraid me with my melancholy, Mervyn?—Do you think, after the lapse of twenty-five years, battles, wounds, imprisonment, misfortunes of every description, I can be still the same lively unbroken Guy Mannering, who climbed Skiddaw with you, or shot grouse upon Crossfell?” (68). Although Mannering takes pride in coming from an ancient English family, he recounts that, unattracted by neither of his uncles’ career path, one a bishop and the other a prosperous merchant, his “unfortunate person slipped down and pitched upon a dragoon saddle” (69).⁵⁶ His misfortune arises more directly from marrying an imprudent woman. Sophia encourages Brown to use her as the cover in courting their daughter, giving rise to the fatal duel. Brown falls and “*Looties*” the “native banditti” sweep in (71). Sophia, supposedly brokenhearted because of Brown’s death, dies and Julia starts to pine away. Consequently, Mannering writes, “I was induced to throw up my command and return to Europe, where her native air, time, and the novelty of the scenes around her, have contributed to dissipate her dejection and restore her health” (71).

Deep-seated in Mannering’s urge to return is his dread of hybridization of race, culture, and class which his military career in the East Indies, if not generated, augmented. With a name decidedly evocative of miscegenation, Brown, as Katie Trumpener notes, “is a figure around whom Mannering’s fears of racial and social

⁵⁶ Concerning the preference for soldiering, Siraj Ahmed argues that Brown’s “rejection of a mercantile in favor of an aristocratic vocation” brings about the regeneration of the “Bertram aristocracy” (208). However, Julia labels Mannering’s “aristocratic feelings” in disapproving of Brown’s suit as “childish” (97). I propose this resonates with Scott’s distrust of the notion of soldiering as an “aristocratic vocation” restated throughout *Guy Mannering*.

miscegenation can crystallize” (187). Mannering remarks that Brown joined his regiment when they were struggling to “obtain white faces to countenance [their] line of battle” (70). When Sir Robert Hazelwood hears Brown’s claim that he used to serve under Mannering while interrogating Brown on the alleged charge against his son Charles, the Baronet waveringly adds, “They do give commissions very loosely, and carelessly, and inaccurately, in India” (260). Mannering’s misgivings arise from the structural condition of the British army in India that the novel leaves undiscussed but the contemporary readers were aware of. Following the French lead that trained Indian soldiers “on the Western model” during the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-48), the British recruited Indians as “a cheaper, healthier, and more numerous substitute for European troops” (Heathcote, “The Army” 365). Intermingled without converging under a single national identity, the constituents of the military in British India—whether British officers, European soldiers, or Indian soldiers—were “particularly prone to mutinous activities” from as early as 1683 (Heathcote, “The Army” 368).

Brown’s amateurish interest in music deepens suspicion against his allegiance. Although Brown is not an army musician, a musical soldier may evoke either foreignness or lowly social origin considering the history of British military music. Music, Cyril Ehrlich notes, was “certainly the only [occupation] dominated by foreigners”; notably, the influx of foreign musicians was caused by the military when the regiments returning from the Seven Years’ War brought with them German instrumentalists (16-17). The predominance of foreigners—mostly German and sometimes Italian—among band masters and musicians in the British army throughout the next hundred years eventually

posed a problem in the battlefield. Despite the mandate of the 1803 edition of the *General Regulations and Orders of His Majesty's Forces* that band members should be “effectives” (i.e. “genuine soldiers trained to fight whenever duty called”), their foreign extraction exposed them to mistrust of “the conviction with which they would enter the battlefield” (Herbert and Barlow 55-57). In other words, a soldier-musician’s wholeheartedness, if not allegiance, in the battlefield was prone to be doubted.

Alan J. Guy’s explanation of the eighteenth-century British army’s class dynamics sheds further light on Mannering’s unease. Because the army, excepting Artillery and Engineers, did not require formal training, combining the qualifications of an officer and those of a gentleman was a complicated and disruptive task (Guy 100-1). Before the Victorian public school and its “recognizably standard and interchangeable version of the English officer and gentleman,” officers struggled to “reconcile an aristocratic honour code with the need for military subordination and the demands of polite society” and duels increased (Guy 108-9). Brown’s hazy background as a Scottish-born clerk moved to India to work for a Dutch company threatens to unsettle the class boundaries within the regiment already less stable than those in Britain.

Nonetheless, Mannering the Englishman ends up acting the part of Othello and “dare[s] not open” the play afterwards (70). Crestfallen because of his wife’s death and the supposed slaying of Brown’s, Mannering dreads that he has “gone native” and turned from a rational European male citizen into a stereotypical Oriental tyrant. Writing of the nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century Dutch Indies, Ann Laura Stoler notes that “European” in a colonial society was a classification that depended “not on skin color

alone but on tenuously balanced assessments of who was judged to act with reason, affective appropriateness, and a sense of morality” (6). Likewise, in the late eighteenth-century British Indies, Mannering’s loss of self-control unsettles his European manhood. As a high-ranking member of the colonial military administrative body, the Colonel is painfully aware of the implication of his rashness. In self-doubt, Mannering gives up his military career and turns to the domestic periphery of Scotland – as if uncertain of successfully reintegrating in England.

Although the lot of soldiering falls on men only, female members of a soldier’s family also pay the price as a soldier’s work of violence alienates him from himself and the rest of the family. Mannering conflates his public authority as a soldier with private authority as a patriarch and attempts to militarize the domestic sphere, only incurring resistance. Julia reports to her correspondent Matilda Marchmont a dialogue she had with Mannering over hosting Dominie Simpson, Godfrey Bertram’s former retainer.

“Chaplain, papa? Lord bless us!”

“Yes, Miss, chaplain; is there any thing very new in that word? had we not a chaplain at the Residence, when we were in India?”

“Yes, papa, but you were a commandant then.”

“So I will be now, Miss Mannering,—in my own family at least.” (101)

Julia confesses that when she was growing up, she saw Mannering only “at rare intervals, and was taught to look up to him with more awe than confidence” (92). If Julia hopes that his retirement may alter their relationship, the Colonel’s determination to be a “commandant” of his family denies her such a hope. Julia observes to Matilda that

Mannering's "success in life and in war . . . have given a hasty and peremptory cast to his character" (91). Julia's assumption that as "[a] soldier, that 'in the trade of war has oft slain men'" Mannering "feels probably no uneasiness" over the duel's outcome leads her to conceal Brown's whereabouts from Mannering (92). Julia quotes from *Othello*; the parallel between the two military figures suggests that Mannering's "subsuming of the man of feeling within the man of arms" bred his misfortune (Millgate 80).

Julia's misunderstanding over Mannering's trauma reflects the novel's concern with soldiers returning from abroad. After meeting with Pleydell, Mannering contemplates his new acquaintance's profession: "I have no great opinion of the long robe in any country, but there are good men in all professions. What a pity that their habits of shirking, and tricking, and splitting hairs are inconsistent with the high point of honour and chivalrous zeal for their king and country" (210). The narrator chides him:

Alas! My dear Colonel, whom I love so much that I have made thee stand godfather to this history . . . Were the learned advocate thinking on thee at this moment, . . . might he not with equal reason wonder that from India, believed to be the seat of European violence and military oppression, had arrived an officer of distinction, open to compassionate and liberal balance? (210-11)

Despite "love" and respect for the Colonel, the narrator emphasizes that he served in India, "the seat of European violence and military oppression." Although the narrator limits his critique to India, the passage still questions the validity of access acquired through "trap-doors and back-doors." If the humanity of an aristocratic, Oxford-bred English soldier is disputed, can a Scottish-born, Dutch-educated soldier unschooled in

British moral and sentimental propriety expect to enjoy full-fledged British citizenship through military participation? To fully address this question, the implication of Julia's colonial upbringing should be examined.

2. Julia's "Native Air": Music and Imperial Belonging

In crediting Julia's recovery to her return to Europe, Mannering envisions Europe as the space in which to recuperate the British subjects' body and mind from exposure to India's colonial space. When he decides to remove Julia from Mervyn's place in England to Scotland upon learning of her midnight rendezvous with Brown under disguise, it is under an unspoken assumption that Scotland may also give her "native air, time, and the novelty of the scenes" as a part of "Europe" proper. Julia, however, has different thoughts about what constitutes "native air" for her:

I was born in the land of talisman and spell, and my childhood lulled by tales which you can only enjoy through the gauzy frippery of a French translation. O Matilda, I wish you could have seen the dusky visages of my Indian attendants, bending in passive attention round the magic narrative, that flowed, half poetry, half prose, from the lips of the tale-teller. No wonder that European fiction sounds cold and meagre, after the wonderful effects which I have seen the romances of the East produce upon the hearers. (92)

Julia's statement that she was born in India complicates Mannering's claim that she is native to European air. Being born within a territory, Mannering implies, does not render one a native. His daughter, however, claims an abiding bond to the land of her birth.

On Julia's arrival to Woodbourne, the place Mannering rented near Ellangowan, the narrator introduces her as a girl with "piercing dark eyes, and jet-black hair of great length" whose features combine "a little haughtiness, and a little bashfulness, a great deal of shrewdness, and some power of humorous sarcasm" (106-7). For Deborah Nord, Julia's "dark beauty and forceful character suggest a tamed—and thus acceptable—version of the Gypsy" and the Bertram-Julia marriage a symbolic reintegration and thus recognition of Gypsies as a part of "a mongrel Scottish inheritance" (35, 39). In addition to the Gypsy, I propose that Julia fuses two other "dark," marginalized races, primarily the Indian but also the Jew. Once in Europe, Julia asserts and assumes cultural distinctiveness, hinting at a parallel between her courtship and Shakespeare's Christian-Jewish intercultural courtship. Her room in Mervyn Hall has a balcony overlooking a lake. There, Julia writes, she "was deeply engaged with that beautiful scene in the Merchant of Venice, where two lovers, describing the stillness of a summer night, enhance upon each other its charms, and was lost in the associations of story and of feeling which it awakens," when "a sound of a flageolet" approaches her across the lake (94). With much agitation and drama, she continues: "I distinguished plainly that little Hindu air which you called my favourite—I have told you by whom it was taught me—the instrument, the tones were his own" (94-95).

In referring to *The Merchant of Venice*, she effectively casts Shylock's shadow over her father. The narrative attributes Julia's daring in pursuing the nocturnal courtship to her father's disposition, accentuating their consanguinity. Mervyn's letter brings up the delicate subject by reminding Mannering of their similarity: "Your daughter has much of

the romantic turn of your disposition” (88). He ends the story in a like manner: “Julia has too much of her own dear papa’s disposition to be curbed in any of her humours” (90). Thus, the more Julia resembles Jessica, the stronger becomes Mannering’s identification with Shylock, one of the best-known racial, cultural, and religious others in English literature. However, unlike Mannering who despairs of his proximity to Othello, Julia is unafraid of admitting the otherness she embodies or being recognized as such. Julia’s childhood lullabies were Indian storytellers’ stories, which implies simultaneous bilingualism.⁵⁷ Julia prides herself on having access to the stories in the original, spoken language, unmediated by “gauzy frippery of a French translation.” No wonder that Brown courts Julia teaching her the “little Hindu air” and use it as the secret signal.

The passingly-mentioned “little Hindu air” allows an insight into what propels Julia and Brown’s mutual attachment. Discussing the impact of overseas military and colonial activities on those returning to Britain, Trumpener suggests that Bertram’s distant reaction to Meg on their reunion testifies to “the occupying soldier’s familiar reflex of weariness and disquiet at any sign of native singularity” (220). Julia also turned out “a coldhearted sentimentalist” because “the pervasive distrustfulness of colonial society prevented the development of real bonds with her nurses”; thus, they are “linked”

⁵⁷ Julia’s bilingualism allows her to further share the liminality with Brown. Rescued from Glossin’s conspirators, Brown recounts his abduction to Pleydell: “In short, it is all a blank in my memory, until I found myself first an ill-used and half-starved cabin-boy aboard a sloop, and then a school-boy in Holland” (309). Removed from homeland, the child had a foreign language forced upon him. Although his Scottish birthplace and Dutch education make him less ambiguously European, Brown may understand even better than Julia the disorientation accompanying cultural, especially linguistic, transition. Brown’s cosmopolitanism was obtained at the price of violent uprooting from home.

because “they have shared—and lacked—the same nurse” (Trumpener 221). While I agree with Trumpener that colonial occupation’s parasitic interdependence with the sense of constant threat stunts the occupiers’ emotional maturation, I argue that Julia and Bertram did develop lasting, salubrious cultural bonds with their nurses. Underpinned by these homologous bonds, their courtship unfolds through music.

Brown’s musical skills highlight Brown’s marginal status in the British army and society. His obscure background may easily remind a contemporary reader that military musicians often “came from the ranks of the poor, including many orphans” (Herbert and Barlow 7). Further, Brown’s Hindu music defies the period’s conventional usage of music in the hands of a soldier. A regimental band in the long nineteenth century advanced British imperial nationhood by presenting the military service as “an exciting prospect” for potential recruits and disseminating “patriotic propaganda” inside the British Isles; it also pacified civilian expatriates by engineering “British culture in a colonial setting” (Herbert and Barlow 53, 240).⁵⁸ In contrast to such a practice, Brown uses his musical abilities to court the rebellious, culturally hybrid daughter of an overbearing commander against the father’s will, thereby disdaining the imperial, patriarchal authority of the British military. Most importantly, Brown’s musical talent was cultivated by gypsy musical performances. Meg is Brown’s first music teacher; out of affection to the child and loyalty to the family, she would “sing him a gypsy song” whenever she “way-lay[s] him in his walks” (40). The novel notes that many Scottish

⁵⁸ This was especially true in the late eighteenth century because, before the military music developed a distinct identity, “a good London regimental band could easily be confused with a wind chamber group” (Herbert and Barlow 175).

gypsies of the time “cultivated music with success, and the favourite fiddler or piper of a district was often to be found in a gipsy town” (36). Brown thus imbibed perceptiveness to sounds considered outlandish, the sounds that do not belong to the corpus of music that constitutes the standard music education for Scottish, British, nor European gentry.

The history of the flageolet illuminates another subversive aspect of Brown’s serenade. In rekindling the seventeenth-century popularity of the flageolet, as Jane Girdham notes, its nineteenth-century innovators capitalized on its gender-neutral aspect originating from seventeenth century and accentuated its suitability for domestic use (398-99).⁵⁹ Brown’s instrumental choice makes the tune not only more accessible to Julia but reproduceable on her own terms. Just as the flageolet occupied an ambiguous place in the gender binary, it lies on the border between the military and civilian life but leans toward the latter.⁶⁰ While a musical soldier may enjoy playing flageolet, the main woodwind instruments of the late eighteenth-century military bands were “flute, oboe,

⁵⁹ By 1803, William Bainbridge’s flageolet “with seven finger-holes, one thumb-hole and two keys” was patented, followed by other patents (MacMillan 560). These were called English flageolets while the old flageolet was now called the French flageolet (Girdham 400). Given the novel’s temporal setting, Brown’s instrument is probably a French flageolet, the one used for training birds (Girdham 404). Yet the widespread use of English flageolets by 1810s makes it possible that Scott does not make a strict distinction between them. A YouTube clip “(0248) English Flageolet in A-Flat, 6 key” posted by EUCHMI (Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments) features William Waterhouse playing a Bainbridge English Flageolet (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=98aB56-1OeI>). Kôske Nozaki’s YouTube channel *Flageolet & Recorder* specializes in early eighteenth-century music played on a small, bird flageolet and recorder.

⁶⁰ The Welsh-born military musician John Parry’s career testifies to this in-betweenness of the flageolet. According to Waterhouse, Parry was “formerly clarinettist in a military band” but became a London-based “performer and teacher of the double flageolet” from 1807 to around 1810 (Waterhouse 176n6). The veteran became “the virtuoso performer” who expanded the “repertory for both the single and double flageolets” (MacMillan 566).

clarinet, and bassoon” (Herbert and Barlow 85).⁶¹ Considering that a flageolet was commonly “used for teaching caged birds to sing” (Girdham 404), Brown inverts the instrument’s prescribed use and redraws the domestic arrangement of Mannering’s oppressive, Anglo-Indian military household in courting the “caged” girl in this manner. Ironically reversing his own history, the man abducted as a child by smugglers lures an heiress away from her home with a Hindu music. Abduction is the typical, although mythical, gypsy misdeed—Brown performs a smuggling gypsy while Jessica romanticizes and imitates a Jewess. Given the widely accepted late eighteenth-century theory that locates gypsies’ origin in India, a Hindu air is approximately a native air for Brown.⁶² For India-born Julia, it is the native air.

What qualifies Brown’s air as Hindu air? Given the late eighteenth-century’s burgeoning discourses around national music, the question is fundamental to interpreting Scott’s engagement with Romantic nationalism. What determines a melody’s national identification? Does it depend on authorship? Internal structure of the piece? The performer, or the setting of the performance such as audience and occasion? Or is it the lyrical language that matters? How does Brown’s native Scottishness inform the adopted Hindi-ness of his tune, and vice versa?

⁶¹ Bainbridge’s *The Preceptor for Bainbridge’s New Patent Flute Flageolet* (1810) claims that “any Lady or Gentleman may learn themselves to play [flageolet] with ease” (qtd. in Girdham 402).

⁶² Garside notes that Heinrich Grellmann’s influential *Dissertation on the Gypsies* (1783, English translation 1787) used “an alleged similarity between the gypsy language and Hindustani” as an evidence and that Scott’s “Notices Concerning the Scottish Gypsies” (1817), written for *Blackwood’s Magazine*, echoes such a view (“India” 161-62).

These questions are central to the Romantic debate over music and cultural nationalism. Matthew Gelbart analyzes how the eighteenth-century cultural nationalists' endeavor to identify a melody's place of origin was tied to the project of reclaiming Scotland's "communal property" and "cultural capital" (24). The eighteenth-century English printing industry exploited the Scottish stereotype essentialized as "'universal nature'—the pastoral, the innocent, the rustic, even the wild" (29). Conversely, the Union of 1701 provoked the Scottish to assert cultural independence, as Allan Ramsay's lyrics collections such as *Scots Songs* (1719) exemplify (30).⁶³ Amid cultural nationalism that deepened after the failed uprising of 1745 began the mid-century consecration of James I of Scotland as the symbolic composer of Scottish songs, replacing David Rizzio the Italian secretary of Mary Queen of Scots; Lord Kames, for one, denies the previous generation's Rizzio myth in favor of James I in his 1774 *Sketches of the History of Man* (Gelbart 34, 37). The cards of introduction Mannering receives from Pleydell for his visit to Edinburgh—and Mannering "was gratified with seeing that they were addressed to some of the first literary characters of Scotland"—include one addressed to "Lord Kaimes [sic]" (226). The Kames reference indicates Scott's awareness of the contemporary debate on music, history, and nation, yet *Guy Mannering* goes beyond unmediated adoption of Kames' cultural nationalism.

⁶³ Leith Davis notes that Ramsay's 1724 *Tea-Table Miscellany* is distinct from printed collections of his time in providing "only lyrics and an indication of which song is to be used with each set of lyrics"; the audience's prior Scottish cultural knowledge was needed (189-90).

After Brown's identity is unveiled, Mannering asks Julia whether he is "the author of the serenade" (316). Julia says yes, but it is unclear whether her affirmation means he composed the melody or simply performed it. The ambiguity resists conforming to the eighteenth-century cultural nationalism's interpretation of music and its national identity. If Brown is the composer, it defies the mid-century shift to emphasis on geographic origin regarding musical authorship and enhances Brown's link to Indian culture forged through Meg. If Brown is simply a skilled performer, calling his tune Hindi still defies cultural nationalists such as William Tytler who asserted that "a Scots song can only be sung in taste by a Scottish voice" (qtd. in Gelbart 38).

The Romantic perception of similarity between Hindi-Scottish music allows Brown to traverse between, and combine, the native and adopted cultures.⁶⁴ In legitimizing the tune of a white European soldier's making as Hindi, *Guy Mannering* suggests that Hindi culture is a universal human legacy. From the modern perspective, such an interpretation sounds like an imperialistic urge for cultural appropriation, especially because he uses the tune to woo an heiress. Brown's childhood exposure to gypsy songs and Julia's Indian upbringing, however, render Brown's Hindu air an enactment of transcultural authorship rather than shallow, materialistic cultural

⁶⁴ Indebted to Charles Burney's fusing of the Scottish, the Eastern, and the ancient music, works exploring the "the idea of a universal folk scale" linking these "three different kinds of primitive Others" flourished from the 1780s, led by British Orientalists (Gelbart 128-29). Further, the eviction of the gypsy clan strongly evokes "the arbitrary establishment of property rights in India" that was under severe public criticism in relation to the East India Company's charter and its renewal (Garside, "India" 164). *Guy Mannering* establishes a stronger affinity between Scottish gypsy music and Indian music by such a parallel.

appropriation and suggest the potential of the bond formed across subjugated peoples to dispute the imperial global order from inside the empire.

Yet Julia is irritated by Lucy, revealing her dismissiveness of another imperial periphery. On hearing of the Scottish guest, Julia thoughtlessly asks “[h]as she much of the accent, sir?”, incurring Mannering’s sharp rebuke (100). As a “young English gentleman” and recent Oxford graduate traveling Scotland, he has learned that the Lowland peasantry grow hostile with the approaching night “when the voice of the querist alone was distinguishable” (3-4).⁶⁵ Mannering is aware that even a community or individual under discrimination may deploy against others the identical demarcator of difference and medium of exclusion used against themselves—and the Anglo-Indian girl’s ill-judged question carries the point.⁶⁶ Although Julia’s Indian attendants’ tales have unconsciously familiarized her to Scotland and prepared her for a life in another imperial periphery, it takes Julia more than indirect experience to open up to another periphery, breathe in its air, and move around there. Julia should learn how to appreciate

⁶⁵ As if mirroring his peasantry’s hostility to the English, Godfrey during his improvement project evicts an “old sailor, who had so long rejoiced the smoky rafters of every kitchen in the country, by singing *Captain Ward* and *Bold Admiral Benbow*” for his “strong Irish accent” (33). Tied to a melody, music with lyrics transcends national accents and creates affective bonds across differences in accent. When the magical tie of the melody is removed, the bond is undone.

⁶⁶ Julia’s linguistic background remains vague; she never specifies what Indian language she grew up hearing nor whether she speaks it. Yet in Dutch Indies, as European children raised by native servants struggled with Dutch, a “direct line” was often “drawn from language acquisition to motherhood to morality” (Stoler 121, 124); coexisting was the notion that “appropriate moral referents” are required “for citizenship rights” in addition to “[l]inguistic fluency” (Stoler 129). In never questioning Julia’s English and in detailing Sophia’s inaptitude for instructing moral and sentimental propriety, *Guy Mannering* expresses the same concerns.

Scotland and its nature and meld her physical self in new surroundings. To that end, Lucy is thrust on Julia as a native guide.

3. Lucy's Work Patterns and The Landscape of the Historical Novel

Mannering believes that Julia's native European air has mended her health.

However, Julia refuses to share her father's opinion about Europe being her native place. The novel is sympathetic to Julia's sense of estrangement in Scotland and legitimizes her attachment to India as natural. Yet it endorses the Colonel's decision to bring her to Scotland; there, Brown and Julia's attachment comes to fruition and the Mannerings arrive at a reconciliation, however incomplete. What is it in Scottish air and its soil that heals breaches cut and deepened by colonial battle-cries? What should Julia learn from befriending Lucy?

Mannering, narrator, and Julia disagree over the benefits of the companionship. Julia's portrayal of Lucy in her letter to Matilda is markedly condescending:

[Lucy] knows nothing of music whatever, and no more of dancing than is here common to the meanest peasants, who, by the way, dance with great zeal and spirit. So I am instructor in my turn, and she takes with great gratitude lessons from me upon the harpsichord, and I have even taught her some of La Pique's steps, and you know he thought me a promising scholar.

In the evening papa often reads, and I assure you he is the best reader of poetry you ever heard . . . it is the reading of a gentleman who produces effect by feeling, taste, and inflection of voice, not by action or mummery. Lucy Bertram

rides remarkably well, and I can now accompany her on horseback. . . . We walk also a good deal in spite of the cold—So upon the whole I have not quite so much time for writing as I used to have. (157)

Here, Julia rereads an earlier passage from her perspective. A free indirect speech biased by Mannering's consciousness, the earlier passage runs thus:

Of music she knew little or nothing, but her new friend undertook to give her lessons; in exchange for which, she learned from Lucy the habit of walking, and the art of riding, and the courage necessary to defy the season. Mannering was careful to substitute for their amusement in the evenings such books as might convey some solid instruction with entertainment, and, as he read aloud with great skill and taste, the winter nights passed pleasantly away. (108)

Both passages point out that Julia gives Lucy music lessons and Lucy helps Julia engage more with vigorous physical exercise outdoors. Both also note that Mannering reads books for them.

The incongruities in details highlight the tension between the Mannering's. Julia and the narrator (Mannering may take the narrator's side) have significant differences concerning Lucy's adequacy as a teacher. While the narrator mentions only that Lucy teaches Julia how to interact with Scotland's nature, Julia emphasizes their reciprocity and her own physical fitness. Julia declares that Lucy knows "no more of dancing than is here common to the meanest peasants." By "dancing," Julia means French ballet moves such as "La Pique's steps." As Lucy's upbringing makes it unlikely that she roamed around the Lowlands and danced among peasants the way Natasha Rostova does in Lev

Tolstoy's 1869 *War and Peace* (580-83), Julia's observation implies that Lucy has entirely missed out on dancing, a part of the evicted gypsy clan's expertise. Julia thus unwittingly reminds the reader of ruptures—between classes, cultures, and the past and the present—caused by their eviction in pointing out Lucy's lack of experience in dance. Lucy's alleged inadequacy of musical knowledge similarly evokes the absence of Meg and her gypsy songs. While Julia, Mannering and the narrator all equate musical knowledge with the ability to play an instrument, it is revealed later that Lucy can sing "her native melodies very sweetly" (299). I suggest that Julia senses deprivation of something essential in Lucy's songs and registers it as a deficiency in her musical knowledge. With Lucy, Julia cannot connect through music of the periphery. After accompanying Lucy's song on harpsichord, she executes "some of Corelli's sonatas with great brilliancy," alone (299-300). The cultural irrelevance of Italian music to the Scottish locality underscores incompatibility between the girls.

The two passages suggest that Julia resists Lucy as a teacher because she senses Lucy's alienation from the Scottish culture in its full scope. Deprived of female companionship of her social status by her mother's death on her birth and without a noteworthy foster mother, Lucy has led a secluded life with her drunkard father and is just another caged bird. Mannering tells Julia that from Lucy's "excellent example, tried as it has been in the school of adversity" she "may learn the art to govern [her]self" (100). This push to emulate Lucy's self-discipline, combined with the narrator's observation that Julia, bred in warm climate, learns how to "defy the season" from Lucy, suggests that Mannering values physical exertions for its disciplinary potential; the cold Scottish air is

not expected to expand her range of free movement. The girls' companionship is expressly tied to Mannering's project of physically containing Julia's music within Woodbourne's Anglo-Indian-Scottish aristocratic home: "There is no lake under the windows, and you will be under the necessity of having all your music within doors" (101). In severing the organic bond between music and space, and the performer and the listener, the Colonel's artificial containment precludes the development of genuine friendship. Julia's letters rarely depict herself with Lucy as her sole or main companion or transcribe their conversation despite the amount of time they spend together. In the only passage describing the girls' outdoor excursion, Charles Hazelwood is with them.

Significantly, the excursion ends violently when Brown, seeing Julia on Hazelwood's arm with Lucy following behind, misunderstands Julia and Hazelwood's relationship (168). He accidentally shoots Lucy's admirer after a scuffle and becomes "the author of [Hazelwood's] wound" (169). The only character to be called an author in *Guy Mannering*, Brown is attributed with two contending authorships: the authorship of a hybrid music the narrative legitimizes and that of a violent laceration on human body that it condemns.⁶⁷ Rather than unconditionally valorizing Brown as an author figure, Scott's examination of literary creativity and production extends to the role of a critic, the future spouse of the young "author."

To fully grasp the significance of reading Julia as a critic, one should first examine women's role in British literary sphere around the turn of the century and Scott's

⁶⁷ With her prophecy dramatically fulfilled, Meg has long been regarded as an author figure and infatuated the early readers of the novel (Garside, "Picturesque Figures" 145).

relationship to the female literary figures. Scott's indebtedness to female authors in his maturation as an author is relatively well recorded and explored, especially the Irish women novelists such as Lady Sydney Owenson and Maria Edgeworth. Ina Ferris, for one, observes that "Scott was working within a contemporary female genre" in reshaping the Irish national tale into the historical novel (*The Achievement* 105).⁶⁸ Julia's recurring, almost insistent, interjections of aesthetic assessments suggest Scott's alertness to women's agency as mediators and shapers of literary culture in the capacity of a critic, which is a less investigated aspect of Scott's relationship to female literary figures.⁶⁹ Scott was well aware of the influence of renowned salon hostesses; as Amy Prendergast notes, Edinburgh's Alison Rutherford Cockburn (1712-94) was his mother's relation and he sought patronage of Dublin's Lady Moira (born Elizabeth Hastings, 1731-1808) for *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* in 1805 (73, 124).⁷⁰ Whereas a literary salon was modeled on aristocratic patronage, "the professional woman literary critic" emerged in the aftermath of the French Revolution, as observed by Mary A. Waters and discussed in the

⁶⁸ For Ferris, historical novel is an "already existing category" that "Scott's first readers of the Waverly Novels appropriated" rather than his invention (*The Achievement* 6).

⁶⁹ While Robert Irvine is one of the few critics to notice Julia and her letters as the voice of a counternarrative, he grants Julia no "particular function in working out the plot"; his ultimate female author figure is Meg (42, 46). Because Julia's epistolary authorship sides with "the feminine domestic novel" which is "a rival sort of novel" to Scott's, her voice is eventually "suppressed" by "the romance plot" (Irvine 46-47). I agree with Irvine that Julia drives the counternarrative, but I interpret her as a critic whose presence is consistently felt.

⁷⁰ Marked by "elite nature and their absolute insistence on mixed-gender sociability," eighteenth-century salons granted British and Irish women entrance in "literary debate on equal footing with men" otherwise unavailable to them (Prendergast 2-4). A salon's hostess moderated the intellectual conversation and often helped a "fledgling writer" find a publisher (Prendergast 44). Further, hostesses in Ireland and Scotland such as Cockburn "used the salon as a forum for negotiating personal and national identity" (Prendergast 9).

introduction. Major journals' male-centered gatekeeping led women critics including Mary Wollstonecraft, Anna Letitia Barbauld and Harriet Martineau to turn to the *Analytical Review*, the *Monthly Review*, and the *Monthly Repository*, all owned by the Dissenters and promoting middle-class values (M. Waters 85).

Not in need of financial support but nor a hostess of a salon, Julia endeavors to carve out for herself a space for intellectual and cultural autonomy against isolation amid her father's authoritarian supervision. When Mannering chooses for Julia and Lucy's winter indoors pastime "such books as might convey some solid instruction with entertainment" and reads them aloud to the girls in his own voice, his selectivity mirrors the early nineteenth-century gentlemanly reviewers' ambition to police the female taste. Although Julia does applaud Mannering's reading as that of "a gentleman who produces effect by feeling, taste, and inflection of voice, not by action or mummery," she commends his performance without commenting on the content; she has already stated that the "solid instruction" of the European fiction that "sounds cold and meagre." Suggestively, Indian tales in her recollection are powerful in their "magic narrative."⁷¹ Mannering's "voice" is seductive, but his narrative does not capture Julia's attention. Refusing to swallow silently what is served, she desires to deliver her own judgments on drawings, writings, and performances that shaped and are shaping the British Empire's cultural landscape.

⁷¹ Ferris notes that contemporary reviews on *Waverley*, including ones by Francis Jeffrey and John Croker, valued its adherence to historical "fact and accuracy" (*The Achievement* 83). *Guy Mannering* being a "private" tale, I suggest that Mannering's selectivity and "solid instruction" are not necessarily prioritized over Julia's preference for Indian "magic narratives."

Julia is the dissenting critic that Scott realizes he needs in his exploration of unfamiliar geographic terrains that borders on encroachment. As already noted, Brown and his artist friend Dudley admire Mannering's drawing skills.⁷² Julia's unsparing response to his drawing shows she has developed very different aesthetic standards: Mannering "utterly damaged" Lucy's work-patterns by adding "his specimens of oriental costume." Julia offers no evaluation on Mannering's costumes; it is the overall effect of blending that she condemns. The Colonel's anthropological knowledge has most likely been acquired through colonial warfare. When he infuses that knowledge onto Lucy's work-pattern, Julia sees its utter destruction, regardless of the knowledge's faithfulness to "fact and accuracy" that, according to Ferris, earned *Waverley* its critical acclaim (*The Achievement* 83).

As a novelist working on expanding his geographical horizon to the East, incorporation of Julia's dissenting voice suggests that Scott is prodding the artistic potential and limits of the subgenre he is cultivating. The young girl views the middle-aged colonel's colonialist cultural mediation with a native's skepticism, questioning the legitimacy of artworks that merge different localities onto one larger, imperial canvas overlooking historical, geographical, or cultural particularities. Given Scott's concern over integrity in portraying Scotland, it is no accident that his astrologer-author figure is talented in drawing and painting. Yet his skillfulness in the two is the means and the byproduct of British military activities. Soldier-artists in India drew for varying purposes

⁷² Yet Brown also notes that Mannering "scorned to display his accomplishments to the view of a subaltern" (114). Such a reluctance to circulate his art and potentially subject it to a social inferior's criticism, I suggest, indicates Mannering's crucial flaw as an artist.

but “many drawings were made by surveyors and engineers while on duty during an official duty survey”; often a preparatory step for conquest or an act of celebration after one, their works are overshadowed by past or impending bloodshed (Rohatgi 42).

Drawing is the Colonel’s hobby, not a main professional duty. Still, on the metaphorical dimension, his painterly excellence bears even clearer imperialistic implication because a soldier literally redraws the map of a region, a nation and the world through his professional art, warfare.

The younger generation challenge Mannering’s discernment on two levels. First, Brown opposes the Colonel’s assumptions about landscapes of different localities. Mannering believes Europe stimulates Julia with unfamiliar scenery but Brown’s letter to Delassere links Indian, English, Scottish and even Swedish landscapes in a strange mixture of familiarity and novelty. After remarking how the English landscape reminds him of Delasserre’s depiction of his “native canton,” Brown observes that for him it has “the charm of novelty” because he has only “an indistinct recollection” of his native “Scottish hills”; his “memory rather dwells upon the blank which [his] youthful mind experienced in gazing on the levels of the isle of Zealand” (114). However, he continues,

I am confident, from that sensation, that hills and rocks had been familiar to me at an early period, and that though now only remembered by contrast, and by the blank which I felt while gazing round for them in vain, they must have made an indelible impression on my infant imagination. I remember when we first mounted that celebrated pass in the Mysore country, while most of the others felt only awe and astonishment at the height and grandeur of the scenery, I rather

shared your feelings and those of Cameron, whose admiration of these wild rocks was blended with familiar love, derived from early association. Despite my Dutch education, a blue hill to me is as a friend, and a roaring torrent like the sound of a domestic song that has soothed my infancy. (114)

Although English landscape is a “novelty” to him, its “hills and rocks” dispel the “blank” in his mind, the flat Dutch landscape internalized. Brown claims that even the sight of “wild rocks” in the foreign, colonial terrain of the Mysore country stirred “familiar love.”

Some Scottish soldiers did perceive similarity between Scottish and Indian landscapes.⁷³ Yet Brown’s observation is singular in that he juxtaposes a geographically non-specific “blue hill” to the sonic referent of “a roaring torrent” and likens the natural sound to “a domestic song” of his Scottish childhood.⁷⁴ Because Brown’s Hindu air is essentially a product of the open air as an extension of “a roaring torrent,” Julia’s Scottish outdoor education is indispensable. At the same time, Brown unsettles the indoors-outdoors distinction by calling the torrent’s musical equivalent “domestic”; suggestively, after Gabriel’s impressment, Meg sang for him outdoors only. The blurring redefines the ideology of domesticity undergirding the nineteenth-century gender hierarchy by questioning the link between spatial confinement and domesticity. Moreover, such blurring occurs while Brown writes about the foreign and native landscapes that evoke

⁷³ In his letter to Sir William Fawcett from around Rathore (September 5, 1790), Major Dirom describes the area as “the most delightful” and “beautifully situated,” adding that he “think[s] [him]self in the Highlands every morning” (qtd. in Buddle 57).

⁷⁴ Although music’s mimetic capacity invokes its potential as a universal language, *Guy Mannering* values cultural specificity and prior knowledge in appreciating a cultural artifact.

home or make him feel at home and is entwined with the second challenge targeting the contemporary pictorial conventions that embeds the larger social structure.

As the young couple reverse several contemporary pictorial conventions of representing gender, music, and landscape, the subjects which Mannering is particularly eager to exercise control over, they resist his patriarchal and imperial authority. Viewed against Richard Leppert's study of visual representation of eighteenth-century upper-class amateur musicians, Brown's courting of Julia, while reproducing "suspicion" over a male music teacher's potential to disrupt class hierarchy, cancels it out; the novel sanctions their union and he is far from an effeminate lecher eliciting "contempt and loathing" (59). Julia's filial disobedience in response to Brown's music boldly nullifies the image of a caged bird, what Leppert calls "[t]he most striking signifier of male domination of women in eighteenth-century portraits" (183).

Against Britain's imperial militarism, Scott makes an even more remarkable decision when he expands upon the theme of the animal world and problematizes the masculine emblem of hunting. In eighteenth-century paintings, these activities were deemed much more acceptable than music-making for a gentleman as representing "male dominance over property of all kinds and domination of the social order" (Leppert 186). On his way to Woodbourne, Brown rescues the borderland farmer Dandie Dinmont from freebooters disguised as robbers. While staying with the farmer's family in Liddsdale, Brown participates in fox-hunting and salmon-hunting. Brown confirms fox-hunting was an "excellent amusement" comparable to hunting on elephant, "the princely sports of India" (135). However, salmon-hunting, the sport "in some degree peculiar to Scotland,"

elicits an opposite reaction (136). Unused to the spear, Brown is unsuccessful and closer proximity to the prey troubles him: “Nor did he relish, though he concealed feelings which would not have been understood, being quite so near the agonies of the expiring salmon, which lay flapping about in the boat, which they moistened with their blood” (136-7). He decides to remain a spectator.⁷⁵

The denunciation of the Scottish sports on account of cruelty is not intended to target a specific nation. I suggest the narrative seeks to examine how a soldier’s sensitivity to violence is rekindled. Partly due to inadequate skills, Brown contemplates the scene from distance. Skillfulness, however, implies experience. Brown’s perturbation denotes that sensitivity to violence and empathy with living beings numbed by military life are awakened as he encounters up-close an unfamiliar way of taking life. Yet once stationed on an elevated heugh, he “enjoy[s] the scene” and “[thinks] of his friend Dudley the artist” (137). Naturalizing his uneasiness by aestheticizing violence, Brown ends his contemplation meditating on the aesthetic effect of the torch-light used for spotting the fish: “By this light also were seen the figures in the boat, now holding high their weapons, now stooping to strike, now standing upright, bronzed by the same red glare, into a colour which might have befitted the regions of Pandæmonium” (137).

The Miltonic association reverses the way of contemplating landscape that, according to W. J. T. Mitchell, strongly influenced the vision of Scott’s contemporaries; namely, that of the Paradise viewed by Satan’s consciousness from the Tree of Life in

⁷⁵ For Millgate, this scene accentuates Brown’s “otherness” from the pastoral setting; he “place[s] a little aesthetic distance between himself” and salmon-hunting (73). I define his disengaged viewing of it as aestheticization of violence that is deeply problematic.

Paradise Lost (11-12). Rather than jealously fantasizing about harmonious, timeless paradise as the fallen angel without a fixed gender does, Brown's human, masculine, and moreover military-trained, late eighteenth-century consciousness thinks of chaotic hell on witnessing violence against non-humans. Yet the narrator carefully limits Brown's impression to aesthetic appraisal. Condemning violence may expose the Scottish soldier to charges of effeminacy that jeopardizes the British citizenship he is earning hard through the "trap-doors and back-doors." Not shackled with the burden, or privilege, of aggressive, military masculinity, Julia is ironically empowered to articulate criticisms against Britain's military violence.

Finally, Julia's refusal to extend her India-learned cultural openness to anything Dutch demands further analysis in the context of Ann Jensen Adams' observation that art historians commonly consider seventeenth-century Holland as the birthplace of naturalistic landscape (35). The Mannerings' resentment toward Dutch education is quite pronounced. Julia reports that Mannering "has a particular antipathy to the Dutch" and that Brown's Dutch (charity) education offended him (97). Julia considers Dutch education questionable even when not on charity, such as Pleydell's: "Pray don't talk of it—we like you much better as you are—Utrecht, in heaven's name!—I dare say you have spent all the intervening years in getting rid of the effects of your Dutch education" (300).⁷⁶ While Julia's hostility reflects East Indian colonial rivalry to some degree, I suggest that her denouncement addresses the historical perspective embedded in

⁷⁶ According to Garside's explanatory note, Pleydell's contemporary legal students often studied in Utrecht: "during the early and mid-18th century, the Netherlands was a popular location for Scottish students of Roman law" (432).

seventeenth-century Dutch landscape-painting. The most accessible and popularly collected paintings in Holland when the country was undergoing major “political, economic, and religious shifts,” its rise coincided with the extensive land reclamation project led by Amsterdam-Haarlem based merchants (Adams 38-40, 48). Yet the works of representative painters such as Pieter van Santvoort disregarded contemporary commercial and reclamation efforts and “historicize[d] its subject and recollect[ed] an earlier era” in diametrical opposition to Scott’s historical novels (Adams 55).

Scott refuses to mindlessly aestheticize and thus fetishize the Scottish landscape nor history. “Time moves on” in *Guy Mannering* including the pastoral space of Liddesdale with all the “developmental change that constitutes history” (Millgate 74). Here, the eulogy for the pre-enclosure era is conjoined with acknowledgement of Britain’s burgeoning commerce. As Scott’s melding of history and fiction acknowledges Scotland’s duality as participant and victim of British imperial aspiration, his fiction resists seamless absorption into the English or even British culture.⁷⁷ Indeed, *Mannering* is not the only one that Julia criticizes over Lucy’s work-patterns; Julia mockingly adds that she “believe[s] [Lucy] thought as little of her own gown at the moment as of the India turbands and cummerbands” (159). When *Mannering* is modifying her work-

⁷⁷ Caroline McCracken-Flesher describes Scott as an “actively and aggressively” Scottish author who resisted “cultural cannibalism inevitably exercised by England’s dominant culture over Scotland’s national literature” (161-62). Proposing that Scott’s works should be “disgorged from the canon” and reinstated as a part of “world literature as a literature of difference” (162), she observes that “Scott looms from *The Talisman* not as an imperialistic oppressor, but as a visionary opening a space for colonized nations” (165). I argue Scott already had such a project in mind in *Guy Mannering*, written more than a decade before *The Talisman* (1825).

patterns, Lucy is distracted by Julia flirting with Hazelwood. Absorbed in her romance plot, Lucy neglects to keep watch over her artwork and let it be manipulated by a military hand. Julia's romance plot, in contrast, is intertwined with and made possible by active engagement with Hindi music on both Brown's and Julia's parts. Lucy's attitude to her art provides a finishing touch to Julia's colonial education with its negative example.

4. Conclusion

Julia's English father calls himself "Indian"; he "must rub up his faculties a little, and put his mind in order" before joining the sophisticated conversations of Scottish Enlightenment thinkers (226). Normally, according to Julia, Mannering shuns "crowds or sights of any kind where human figures make up the show, unless indeed it were a military review" (167). With his English identity jeopardized and sociability depleted by military experience in India, Mannering assumes Julia needs more discipline to be an acceptable female member of the British gentry.

Through her colonial upbringing, however, Julia has developed confidence and a sense of identity more malleable to the changing world that some critics have mistaken as arrogance. Trumpener maintains that "the novel's characters do not understand the size, coherence, or meaning of the imperial framework," emphasizing the amnesiac nature of Julia's and Brown's colonial experience (190). I suggest that the novel's "decidedly skeptical view of imperial adventure" (Nord 34) is shared and embodied Julia. Her critical acumen sees through the violent mechanism through which native culture is penetrated and recombined by external forces. Although the novel's ending recognizes

that their future is not quite freed of military clamor because Brown is “obliged again to go to India” as a soldier on leave, the Bertram siblings’ redistribution of their parental legacy and construction plans indicate the brother’s eventual settlement in Scotland (352). The novel ends with Mannering announcing his retirement as an “astrologer” (355). Instead of the Colonel, Julia and Harry together will remember, compose, and enjoy their nurses’ songs and maybe tales.

Chapter 4

Deciphering the Imperial Bleakness:

Soldierly Domesticity, William Cobbett, and *Bleak House*

When Nicola Bradbury asks “[w]hat does ‘Bleak’ signify?” in the opening paragraph of her 1996 introduction to the Penguin edition of *Bleak House*, she repeats a classic question that still puzzles scholars of the nineteenth-century British novel (xix). In 1970, Alice Van Buren Kelly opened her own article stating that “[a]nyone who has given much thought to the title of *Bleak House*” would be surprised at Dickens’ choice to confer the name to the household which is “in fact the least bleak” (253). Early twentieth-century scholars endeavored to resolve the conundrum by spotting the house’s actual model. Reverend H. Bodell Smith’s 1919 article, for instance, proposes a certain “Bleak Hall” as the title’s inspiration, based on locality, architectural similarities, and views from the house (197-98). Whereas Smith emphatically observes that Bleak House was “not a mere fiction of his brain” (198), Trevor Blount warns such attempts might possibly “obscure the greatness of his art,” adding “[l]ife and fiction ought not to be equated so nakedly” (141).

I side with Blount in championing Dickens’ imaginative power regarding the seemingly misleading name of the Bleak House, although I acknowledge earlier scholars’ attempts to identify Bleak House’s model who, in Blount’s words, were indeed paying “a backhanded compliment to Dickens’s fictional world” (141). I suggest that examining the title’s seeming irony in the context of the contemporary cultural and political discourse

sheds light on less or rarely studied aspects of Dickens' take on radicalism, British imperialism, and gender. I locate the key to deciphering the irony of "Bleak House" in the political writings of William Cobbett (1763-1835), specifically his reconfiguration of Burkean aesthetics in *Rural Rides* (1822-26). I argue that as an ardent admirer of the older journalist, the younger journalist-turned-novelist respectfully appropriated, fictionalized, and complicated the problems Cobbett raised about the British establishment, adopting Cobbett's reinterpretation of bleakness to construct the novel's atmospheric background that, however discreetly, promises redemption.

In *Rural Rides* and in earlier writings, the ex-soldier inveighs against the enclosure, national debt, taxation, political factions, and the British military as responsible for the plight of the British working class. Negative environmental impacts of industrialization and urban sprawl are inseparable from Cobbett's opprobrium against the corrupt, disorganized political practices of Britain's ruling class which was profiting itself at the cost of the working class from various activities including global commerce aided by the military. As a radical agriculturalist, Cobbett in *Rural Rides* surveys the English rural landscape to bring to light the disintegration of the working class' formerly (what he sees as) organic relationship to land. Although Dickens is often viewed as the representative novelist of the city since Raymond Williams' influential *The Country and the City* (1973), *Bleak House* is, as in the title of Norman Page's book, "a novel of connections." *Bleak House* demonstrates the connection between the country, the city, and the suburbs most emphatically through the tragic transmission of Jo's illness to Esther Summerson.

Yet the ending of the novel, in which Esther is married to her well-deserving physician husband Allan Woodcourt, allows a lingering hope for British society.

Dickens places his hope for the recuperation of Britain in characters returning from abroad. Written in the early 1850s about the 1830s, and by the representative practitioner of a genre whose respectability was by then established, *Bleak House* reflects a shift from the previous chapters' Romantic novels produced during the Napoleonic Wars, especially regarding the military returnees.⁷⁸ Austen's Fanny Price is suspicious of the impact of William's imperial naval experiences on England, Edgeworth's potential recruits prefer to stay home in Ireland, and Scott's soldiers who served in the Indian outpost and their family members are bitter, broken, or even dead. Dickens' military returnees display a wider spectrum in their response to the imperial experience.

Bleak House's heightened multidimensional exploration of the British military experience is made possible by its massive length, which secures a greater narrative space to accommodate a vaster number of minor characters. Alex Woloch's *The One vs. the Many* (2003) investigates "the democratic impulse" underlying the realist novel's revision of narrative space and its deployment of minor characters (31). Along the dissertation's trajectory of Austen-Edgeworth-Scott-Dickens, each chapter offers a more diverse cast of military related people. My focus of analysis also moves closer to minor characters who compete for narrative space and claim the reader's attention. *Bleak House*, undoubtedly the work with the most military connections by Dickens, features a

⁷⁸ T. W. Hill infers from chapter fifty-five's reference to the railway under construction that *Bleak House* is set in "the early thirties of the nineteenth century" (Hill 39).

large cast of such characters. Dickens' portrayal of the Bagnets and George Rouncewell evidences his sympathy for veterans and their families, yet none glorifies overseas military activities; further, Esther's father Captain Hawdon dies from opium addiction. Similarly, while Woodcourt's heroic saving and nurturing of the shipwreck victims brings him fame, his elevated reputation barely translates into material gain; his stay overseas proves his already sterling character rather than forges it. In other words, the main beneficiaries of Woodcourt's imperial sojourn to China and India as a man of medicine are afflicted Britons.

Searching for the remedy, Dickens unsettles and revises Victorian gender norms through the characters returning to Britain from the Empire's margins. Along with Woodcourt, George and Mrs. Bagnet are returnees with remedial potential. Considerable scholarly works have examined Woodcourt's regenerative capacity, especially with the growth of medical humanities. George's nursing of Captain Hawdon, Phil, and Sir Leicester has attracted feminist critics; for Holly Furneaux, George epitomizes "tender masculinity" (Furneaux, *Queer Dickens* 177). Mrs. Bagnet has remained outside scholarly attention, as demonstrated in Charlotte Mathieson's omission of Mrs. Bagnet in her otherwise perceptive essay on *Bleak House*'s "remodelled masculinity" and sunburnt men returning from abroad (Mathieson 332). Yet Mrs. Bagnet is just as sunburnt, with her face "freckled by sun" and "wholesome brown fingers" (439, 754).

I argue that Mrs. Bagnet is another repository of Dickens' hope for reform complementing Esther and Woodcourt's upper-middle class, professional morality. Drawing from Elaine Freedgood's postcolonial insight on things, metonymy, and the

Victorian realist novel in *The Ideas in Things* (2006), I examine what Mrs. Bagnet's umbrella tells us about the female traveler's contribution to the project of recuperating the ailing British nation as a non-fighting, unrecognized member of the British imperial military. Freedgood's "strong metonymic reading" interprets a seemingly irrelevant, recurring object in a Victorian novel "in terms of its own properties and history" to resurrect forgotten stories intertwined with the "manifest or dominant narrative" (12). Freedgood shows that the cultural literacy required for such an investigation may partially be retrieved by exploring contemporary materials, including periodicals—the medium Cobbett and Dickens were deeply invested in. Once Cobbett's writerly journalism clears the mystery of Dickens' bleakness, Dickens' editorial journalism gives voice to the stories Mrs. Bagnet's umbrella has to tell of the British Empire and its foggy metropole.

1. Deciphering Bleakness Periodically: Fog from *Rural Rides* to *Bleak House*

Born nearly half a century apart, Cobbett (1763-1835) and Dickens (1812-70) have much in common as writers. Passionate address of England's social maladies, ruthless censure against the dysfunctional government, and urgent call for reform permeate both writers' oeuvres. Dickens' involvement with periodicals as a contributor, editor, and founder of journals intensified his literary as well as political affinity with the journalistic giant of his youth. Naturally, Dickens' contemporaries sensed the link. George Augustus Sala, a long-time contributor to *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*, commented on their stylistic similarity. Of all "modern English writers" only Cobbett was comparable to

Dickens as a “plain, downright Englishman,” whose Englishness consists of that “simple, manly, ringing English prose” marked by “the entire absence of Gallicisms” (Sala 103).⁷⁹ As Kathryn Chittick notes, Dickens’ own Gad’s Hill library included *Selections from Cobbett’s Political Works* (1835) (108).

Among modern commentators, Richard Ingrams observes that “[t]he spirit of Cobbett survived most effectively in the works of his admirer Dickens” (308). Yet, the two writers have rarely been investigated together in depth with the recent exception of Gregory Vargo’s *An Underground History of Early Victorian Fiction* (2017). As Vargo traces the creative dialogue between the radical print culture and the Victorian realist novel, Cobbett’s *A History of the Protestant Reformation in England and Ireland* (1824), Dickens’ *Oliver Twist* (1837-39), and *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859) feature as some of the key texts. I extend Vargo’s research and read *Rural Rides* as one of the major aesthetic and political inspirations for *Bleak House*. Submerged in Dickens’ appropriation of Cobbett’s singular bleak/bleakness is his vision for the sustainable British nation against the devastating fog summoned by the combined forces of the British Empire’s industrial

⁷⁹ Sala’s comment on Dickens’ (and by extension Cobbett’s) stylistic Englishness is not entirely laudatory. Sala notes that although Dickens read and wrote French well, he cannot judge Dickens’ pronunciation because he has not heard Dickens speak French; this induces Sala to associate Dickens further with Cobbett who reportedly “pronounced the language execrably” (107-8). Sala adds that “it is difficult thoroughly to understand, or unreservedly to like a nation whose vernacular you are unable properly to pronounce”; the writers’ Englishness is evoked to bring up Dickens’ unfamiliarity with, and indifference to, French history and culture that made *The Tale of Two Cities* a “very superficial picture of French life and manners at the period of the Revolution” (108).

capitalism, imperialism, and militarism. I further investigate how military figures and metaphors populating Dickens' urban novel ironically offer a regenerative potential.

Bleak House's opening paragraphs, with the famously blinding fog, have long captured scholarly imagination. However, their kinship to the opening paragraphs of *Rural Rides's* first installment remains underdiscussed. Its first 1830 book edition omitted some earlier rides and could not include later rides to industrial towns (Grande 150). When the full version appeared in 1853, *Bleak House* was already complete.⁸⁰ Yet textual parallels suggest Dickens' knowledge of omitted parts and systematic appropriation of *Rural Rides* in *Bleak House*.

On October 30, 1821, in a border village in Hampshire called Burghclere, Cobbett thus begins what will become the first installment of *The Rural Rides* by discussing fog:

Fog that you might cut with a knife all the way from London to Newbury. This fog does not *wet* things. It is rather a *smoke* than a fog. . . . there are no two things in *this world* so dissimilar as an English and a Long Island autumn.—These fogs are certainly the *white clouds* that we sometimes see aloft. . . . So that I am convinced that these fogs are *dry clouds*, such as those that I saw on the Hampshire-

Downs. . . . It is the fogs that rise out of swamps, and other places, full of putrid

⁸⁰ Currently, the most widely available scholarly edition of *The Rural Ride* is Penguin's, based on the 1830 edition. Ernest Rhys' Everyman's Library edition of 1912 used the 1853 edition and "remained one of the most accessible and affordable versions of *Rural Rides* for several decades" (Griffiths 141). However, this edition is old and scarce now. This is probably why James Grande, one of the few critics to note the correspondence between the two works' openings, simply states that Cobbett's omitted opening paragraphs "prefigure[] Dickens's opening to *Bleak House*" (Grande 91); Grande's analysis on Cobbett's radicalism does not extend to Dickens. Elizabeth Helsinger also notes the parallel without further elaborating on it (Helsinger 134).

vegetable matter, that kill people. These are the fogs that sweep off the new settlers in the American Woods. . . . I have never seen anything so beautiful as the foggy valley of the Wysihicken. But, I was told, that it was very fatal to the people; and that whole families were frequently swept off by the “*fall-fever*.”—Thus the *smell* has a great deal to do with health. There can be no doubt that butchers and their wives fatten upon the smell of meat. And this accounts for the precept of my grandmother, who used to tell me to *bite my bread and smell to my cheese*; talk much more wise than that of certain *old grannies*, who go about England crying up “the blessings” of paper-money, taxes, and national debts. (1: 3-4, Cobbett’s emphasis)⁸¹

Thirty years later, Dickens utilizes identical sets of meteorological terms—fog, smoke, and the sun—to open his novel with London’s “[i]mplacable November weather”:

. . . As much mud in the streets, as if the waters had but newly retired from the face of the earth, and it would not be wonderful to meet a Megalosaurus, forty feet long or so, waddling like an elephantine lizard up Holborn Hill. Smoke lowering down from chimney-pots, making a soft black drizzle, with flakes of soot in it as big as full-grown snowflakes—gone into mourning, one might imagine, for the death of the sun. Dogs, undistinguishable in mire. Horses, scarcely better; splashed to their very blinkers. Foot passengers, jostling one another’s umbrellas, in a general infection of ill temper, and losing their foot-hold

⁸¹ This passage is cited from Everyman’s Library edition edited by Ernest Rhys; Penguin edition does not include this installment. Unless otherwise noted, all references to *Rural Rides* follow George Woodcock’s Penguin edition.

at street-corners, where tens of thousands of other foot passengers have been slipping and sliding since the day broke (if this day ever broke), adding new deposits to the crust upon crust of mud, sticking at those points tenaciously to the pavement, and accumulating at compound interest. (13)

Echoing Cobbett's closing snap at the British government's economic policies, Dickens ends his first paragraph by suddenly turning meteorological portrayal into an assault on financial capitalism.⁸² Then he begins the next paragraph with an emphatic statement "[f]og everywhere."

Fog up the river, where it flows among green aits and meadows; fog down the river, where it rolls defiled among the tiers of shipping, and the waterside pollutions of a great (and dirty) city. Fog on the Essex marshes, fog on the Kentish heights. Fog creeping into the cabooses of collier-brigs; fog lying out on the yards, and hovering in the rigging of great ships; fog drooping on the gunwales of barges and small boats. Fog in the eyes and throats of ancient Greenwich pensioners, wheezing by the firesides of their wards; Chance people on the bridges peeping over the parapets into a nether sky of fog, with fog all round them, as if they were up in a balloon and hanging in the misty clouds.

(13)

⁸² The finishing parallel references to economy are crucial to my argument that *Rural Rides* inspired *Bleak House*. Shatto disagrees with scholars who noticed Carlye's imprint on *Bleak House*'s opening because, for one, use of fog was widespread in the period's literature (25). Both works' unexpected shift from the atmospheric to the financial substantiates my claim.

The two writer's fogs contrast sharply. Cobbett's fog, running from London to Newbury, is sanitary and does not "wet things" whereas Dickens's "defiled" fog leaves Britain harmfully sodden. Unlike Dickens' confinement of his fog in Britain, Cobbett evokes the American fog and scenery—beautiful but "fatal"—as the deadly other against which to define healthy Britishness.

Yet although Cobbett conjures the larger global network, *Rural Rides* limits its geographic boundary to England. In the ending of one installment, on Sep. 1. 1823, he considers where to head from Dover, wondering "whether I shall go on to France or back to the *Wen*" (195, Cobbett's emphasis). France, the traditional national enemy, is invoked as the alternative to the *Wen*, Cobbett's denigrating coinage for London. Cobbett decides to stay in England, as if emphasizing the urgency of Britain's predicament.

Cobbett's choice and performative trimming down of his spatial subject matter reveals *Rural Rides* as a text on war and global militarism that closely engages with post-war reconstruction efforts. As *Rural Rides* endeavors to dispel the specter of the past war, it ironically refers back to the war's unwelcome legacy. Facing Europe across the Channel, the White Cliffs of Dover occupy an iconic space in the British national defense system. Paul Readman, calling for "more historical work on the capacity of particular landscapes to encapsulate national sentiment and identities," examines how the cliffs came to represent "insular, sea-girt ideas of nationhood" (244). Still, as Readman notes, Cobbett "famously complained" of the expenditure for building a defense mechanism there around the turn of the nineteenth century (252). Cobbett writes: "I went to see, with my own eyes, something of the sorts of means that had been made use of to squander

away countless millions of money. . . . What reason had you to suppose that the *French would ever come to this hill* to attack it, while the rest of the country was so much more easy to assail?" (199, Cobbett's emphasis). As George Woodcock's note to *Rural Rides* firmly states, the former soldier and "advocate of a popular militia" was "no pacifist" (523). Yet Elizabeth Helsinger notes that Cobbett took to rural affairs amid "mounting postwar rural distress" that captured Parliamentary attention in 1821 (113). As Cobbett's rides "enter national politics" by denouncing the metropolitan wartime misuse of public funds, they aim to "cultivate radical subjects by producing those who can both read critically and use effectively the figures of rhetorical language" (Helsinger 115). Cobbett urges his disenfranchised local readers to connect the dots beyond their immediate circle and participate in national politics.

Writing of the early 1830s—Cobbett's near future—with the hindsight of the 1850s, Dickens confines *Bleak House's* setting to England and demands attention to the plight of its have-nots. *Bleak House* is also a novel of the post-war condition in that it exposes how Britain's domestic predicament is interlocked with the business of empire, specifically that of soldiering. Strikingly, Dickens ends his opening paragraph portraying fog's progressive permeation of land, sea, and air with a subtle military allusion. *OED* offers a military related definition as the very first entry for "parapet": "A defence of earth or stone to conceal troops from the enemy's observation and fire; *spec.* (in permanent fortifications) a protection against missiles, raised on the top of a wall or rampart; (in fieldworks) a bank of earth in front of a military trench or other position." ("parapet, n"). Shatto suggests that the invocation of a balloon ascent is a "reminiscence"

of Richard H. Horne's 1851 *Household Words* article "Ballooning" (26). In Horne's description, the people looking downwards from the ascending balloon "thrust the chin fairly over the edge" rather than a parapet, a word missing in Horne's article (Horne 99, qtd in Shatto 27). The military inflection is Dickens' conscious choice. While people are "peeping" downward from a bridge, the parapet evokes a battle scene where soldiers may be looking downward or upwards if hiding in a trench. Not London's smog but smoke from firearms and dust raised by troops will occlude a soldier's vision and damage his windpipe, which is the prehistory of the Greenwich pensioners "wheezing by the firesides of their wards."⁸³ Thus, in this final sentence, environmental degradation and military activities become inseparable, conflated constituents of the British problem of fog.

Just as Greenwich pensioners suffer from disordered bodily wind, England in *Bleak House* and *Rural Rides* is pestered by unhealthy wind. Another powerful meteorological link between the two works, wind is evoked in terms of physical and mental pain. East wind in *Bleak House* is John Jarndyce's excuse for retreating to Growlery when he is "deceived or disappointed in" somebody (107). Shatto points out that the east wind in the Old Testament signifies "trouble" (67). Further, "[t]hree of the ten alternative titles for the novel refer to the east wind" (Shatto 67), which indicates East wind's thematic centrality in *Bleak House*. Yet neither Jarndyce's disappointment nor the suggested metaphorical meaning of trouble adequately captures *Bleak House*'s complexity.

⁸³ Professor Aeron Hunt (Boston College) brought to my attention the detail on Greenwich pensioners.

A complementing literal interpretation for Jarndyce's East wind-caused-discomfiture elucidates its connection to the theme of social illnesses. This "ill wind," James Buzard observes, "carries the miasma of London's East End westward to more prosperous districts and insists upon their connection" (150). The public health aspect is further elaborated by Jesse Oak Taylor: "The literal east wind is redolent of the sewage that the city flushed downstream, only to have it return laden with the specter of infection" (35). Infection is fundamental to *Bleak House*'s critique of the dysfunctional British society. Another consistently recurring candidate Shatto provides is "Tom-All-Alone's," the slum that breeds the infectious disease which scars Esther's face. The commonality between "East Wind" and "Tom-All-Alone's," the two dropped alternative titles, is clear; both address the crisis of environmental failure amid Britain's growing industrial capitalism and the resulting infectious air. I argue that Dickens' choice of "Bleak House" indicates that "bleak" attached to Jarndyce's house and later Esther's embraces meanings beyond its dictionary definition. The title's irony, in setting it apart from the unequivocal dreariness of the other two, grants the novel richer interpretative possibility that resonates with the novel's final ring of hope.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ Robert Tracy argues that *Bleak House* is "an alternate Exhibition to the one in the Crystal Palace"; the latter "excluded misery and want" ("Lighthousekeeping" 46). Taylor also comments that "*Bleak House* shadows Crystal Palace with a reminder of all that lies outside the glass" (33). Viewing "Bleak House" on two levels helps resolve the irony of calling Jarndyce's home bleak, which their persuasive analogy leaves unexplained. As a national metaphor, it declares the novel an investigation of Britain's desolation. As a house's name, this paper proposes, it evokes a shelter. The two interpretations blend to productively complicate the novel's relationship to its title.

The *OED* lists several definitions for “bleak.” Bleak may portend shade (“[p]ale, pallid, wan; deficient in colour, esp. deficient in the ruddy bloom of health, or the full green of vegetation; of a sickly hue: also used like *pale* to modify other colours”), landscape (“[b]are of vegetation; exposed” or “wind-swept”), and atmosphere (“[c]old, chilly; usually of wind or weather”; “[c]heerless, dreary”), natural and human (“bleak,” *OED*’s emphasis). Across the wide spectrum, the definitions converge in denoting comfortlessness and desolation. Bleak House under Esther’s management cannot be farther from such attributes. I argue that *Rural Rides* contains the key to unraveling Dickens’ curious use of “bleak.” *Bleak House*’s London-born filthy wind expands upon the more contemporary literary heritage of Cobbett. Cobbett’s reference to the east wind indicates that Dickens’ urban climate fiction was inspired by Cobbett’s investigation of rural England, or to say the least, originates from overlapping concerns over worsening quality of life wrought by environmental degeneration, the domestic offspring of global industrial capitalism.

Enjoying Sir Thomas Winnington’s hospitality in Worcestershire on Sep. 27, 1826, Cobbett contrasts the comforts of the MP’s rural estate with his life in Kensington.⁸⁵ He then carries on an internal dialogue regarding his political program of rural rides:

‘Well, then,’ says the devil of laziness, ‘and could you not be contented to live here all the rest of your life; and never again pester yourself with the cursed politics?’

⁸⁵ Sir Thomas Winnington (1779-1839) was an MP of Worcestershire (1820-30). Sir Winnington’s parliamentary votes as traced by Philip Salmon show that, a supporter of Queen Caroline and an objector to the Turnpike system, he was a consistent reformer and concurred with Cobbett on many issues such as Catholic relief (Salmon).

‘Why, I think I have laboured enough. Let others work now. And such a pretty place for coursing and for hare-hunting and woodcock shooting, I dare say; and then those pretty wind-ducks in the water, and the flowers and the grass and the trees and all the birds in spring and the fresh air, and never, never again to be stifled with the smoke that from the infernal WEN ascendeth for ever more and that every easterly wind brings to choke me at *Kensington!*’ (392, Cobbett’s emphasis).

For Cobbett, the easterly wind is life-threatening; “every easterly wind” delivers polluted, suffocating air from London to his Kensington home. The very word Kensington, however, reorients his focus back to “the Gridiron.” He famously challenged Sir Robert Peel’s 1819 Act for the Resumption of Cash Payments, writing that if the government’s resolution indeed proves effective, he “will give Castlereagh leave to put [him] upon a gridiron, while Sidmouth stirs the fire, and Canning stands by making a jest of [his] writing and [his] groans” (“To the Middle Classes” 364).⁸⁶ The shared rhetoric of life and death exposes the connectivity between Cobbett’s political project of popular rural protest and the environmental repercussion of industrialization threatening all inhabitants

⁸⁶ Cobbett even decorates the first pages of *Political Register* with a caricature of a gridiron; the Sep. 27 and Oct. 4, 1823 issues, for example, feature the gridiron along with his challenge of 1819 cited above. Cobbett’s letters addressed to Peel in these issues contend that Peel’s Bill was ineffective, London Newspapers were wrong, and he himself proved correct. As Matthew Roberts observes, although “cash payments were eventually resumed” against Cobbett’s prophecy, Cobbett rightly noticed that the Bank had insufficient gold to redeem its notes; further, the government needed the alleviating effect of the Small Note Act of 1822 to water down deflation (112).

of England. Thus, he reminds himself to go back to “the cursed politics” and work toward “the complete triumph” (*Rural Rides* 392-93).

Between Cobbett’s genuine apprehension over the environmental crisis and his bravado wagering on self-destruction over the government’s economic policy sits uneasily his equivocal treatment of self-preservation. This ambiguity indicates Cobbett’s departure from Burke’s aesthetics and, with deeper repercussions on *Bleak House*, gender politics. John Barrell concludes from Cobbett’s soliloquy above that *Rural Rides* yearns for a future “when it might once again be possible to contemplate the view of an orderly and productive landscape with an unguilty pleasure”; reminding himself of what is due to the rural poor, Cobbett refuses to succumb to “the devil of laziness” and the lures of a delightful country estate (243). Evoking Burke’s *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, Barrell writes that the sense of beauty deriving from variety can be experienced in “being swiftly drawn in an easy coach, on the smooth turf, with gradual ascents and declivities”; Cobbett complicates the contemporary notion of beauty in the landscape by demanding “the evidence of productivity” (Barrell 239).

While Barrell, and following him John Whale, made a valuable point regarding “the necessary connection between beauty and utility” for Cobbett (Whale 141), Cobbett’s engagement with the sublime, the other half of Burke’s *Philosophical Enquiry*, deserves further investigation in relation to self-preservation.⁸⁷ Arguing that “[t]he

⁸⁷ Barrell, Whale, and Grande agree that Cobbett refuses to confine the rural English landscape to aesthetic evaluation by avoiding the term picturesque (Grande 158). The term sublime, I suggest, is even more strenuously avoided, which indicates Cobbett’s conscious distancing from Burke. Still, aesthetics remains an important strategic tool in

passions which belong to self-preservation, turn on pain or danger,” Burke observes that such passions are “delightful” when “we have an idea of pain and danger without being actually in such circumstances”; any such cause of delight is called “*sublime*” (*A Philosophical Enquiry* 97, Burke’s emphasis). Suggestively, “sublime” does not belong to *Rural Rides*’ vocabulary on landscape. Cobbett employs the terms “sublime” and “sublimate” in unflattering contexts of attacking Britain’s postwar economic conditions. Cobbett stresses that he is only concerned about the material condition of the working class because “[a]s to their *minds*, that is much too sublime matter for me to think about” (137, Cobbett’s emphasis).⁸⁸ The plans such as giving a loan to South America are “sublime speculations” sure to “have a most ruinous effect” (Everyman’s Library edition, 2: 26); he similarly sneers of Mr. Ingram of Rottendean—significantly, a ploughman turned an officer—that “the unnatural working of the paper-system has sublimated him out of his senses” (1: 71-72). Discussing Cobbett’s revision of Burke, Whale refers to the often-discussed visit to the Hawkley Hanger where Cobbett’s group descend the high, steep, and slippery precipice as an instance where “a sense of apprehension and surprise” and “associations stemming from feelings of self-preservation” are introduced but do not

Cobbett’s political writings and I examine how he develops his version of aesthetics, particularly through his use of bleak/bleakness.

⁸⁸ This stance buttresses Cobbett’s agricultural enthusiasm in *Cottage Economy* (1821) where, in Katey Castellano’s words, Cobbett “rejects any split between the spirit and body” and “seeks to build a collective sense of independence and dignity in the production of food, which provides a counter-narrative to both Evangelical and Malthusian discourse about the poor” (118). Castellano further notes that “Malthusian scarcity” assaulted by Cobbett “serves as a justification for neglecting the collective social responsibility for a just distribution of food.”

blend into the text (151).⁸⁹ Rather, *Rural Rides*'s rare, unequivocal exhibition of fear for self-preservation is provoked by real, immediate, and unpleasant terror of the distinctly modern, metropolitan threat of polluted air transmitted by the easterly wind.

Cobbett's rural English landscape rejects Burke's polarization of gender in the aesthetics. Burke associates the sublime with rough masculinity and the beautiful with conventionally feminine traits such as smallness, smoothness, variation, harmonious non-angularity, "delicate frame" denoting weakness, and "clear and bright" colors (*A Philosophical Enquiry* 151). In contrast, Cobbett endearingly calls any rough, hilly, and bleak land beautiful if it shelters and feeds its inhabitants, which reflects their political differences. Both Cobbett and Burke valued "tradition, history, custom, sentiment and a sense of local and national belonging"; both supported the war against revolutionary France simultaneously as they "criticize[d] the way the war was being conducted" (Stevenson 40). Yet as Grande notes citing Leonara Natrass, their class affiliation fundamentally differed, with Cobbett's politics marked by "specificity, practicality and concern for the socially underprivileged" (qtd. in Grande 166).

⁸⁹ In his East-Meon-Thursley excursion on Nov. 24, 1822, Cobbett avoids using the turnpike-road and follow the old, beaten paths but the locals, including servants and guides, dissuade him from pursuing his way through Hawkley; Cobbett ends up using the turnpike-road at Hindhead against his resolution (*Rural Rides* 82-90). Helsinger sees here "the most telling instance of Cobbett's encounter with rural resistance" which Cobbett includes "at his own expense" to emphasize "the power of local will and local shrewdness to frustrate the designs of national authorities or national authors" (135-36). Ruth Livesey suspects an economic motive: "In an age when turnpike trusts represented major financial institutions backed by local landowners, a whole superstructure of 'innkeepers, ostlers, and post-boys' worked to keep the traveller on these routes between larger towns paying tolls – and hence the dividend of investors" (87).

Tracing Cobbett's aesthetics of bleak/bleakness in *Rural Rides* in terms of the rural working class' struggles allows us to decipher the seeming irony of the name Bleak House. Cobbett's bleakness is nebulous. Cobbett employs the word in a more conventional sense when describing what he sees as the unjust state intervention of enclosure. For Cobbett, enclosures driven by utilitarianism and the "paper system" bring about "a degradation of an entire organic community of people, animals, plants, and land" (Castellano 123). Thus, the Windsor Forest surrounded by enclosed land is not only "bleak" but "barren" and "villanous" (*Rural Rides* 66).

On the other hand, bleak/bleakness can also be coupled with the idea of shelter or protectiveness. Grande examines how Cobbett's rides demonstrate "an aesthetics of continual disruption" which resists the metropolitan absorption of rural resources facilitated by "smooth roads" and undergirds "his preference for variegated landscapes with hedges, woods and commons over more open country" (157). Yet contemplating Uphusband's open country (Sep. 29, 1822), Cobbett makes a curious association between "bleak hills" and a "shelter":

This country though so open, has its beauties. The homesteads in the sheltered bottoms with fine lofty trees about the houses and yards, form a beautiful contrast with the large open fields. The little villages, running straggling along the dells (always with lofty trees and rookeries) are very interesting objects, even in the winter. You feel a sort of satisfaction, when you are out upon the bleak hills yourself, at the thought of the shelter, which is experienced in the dwellings in the valleys. (57)

Grande observes of the passage that “satisfaction” of the onlooker “depends on an act of association which is governed by the idea of shelter” (148). I want to emphasize that Cobbett stipulates the onlooker to be “out upon the bleak hills” to taste such satisfaction. A physical distance is assumed between the onlooker and the shelter; temporal distance is also there as the actual “satisfaction” is delayed by physical distance.

Dickens collapses such distances. Mr. Jarndyce’s Bleak House is the shelter itself, a sanctuary from London’s dilapidating forces. Once Esther and Woodcourt are united and established in the new, smaller Bleak House, the private, unorganized benevolence of Jarndyce’s brand is anchored to a reforming power of further reach with Woodcourt’s systematic, active professionalism. Yet as Bruce Robbins rather severely remarks, Woodcourt is “so thin” as a character that Esther “is not so much marrying a man as his work” (218). Woodcourt’s relative lack of depth as a character indicates the centrality of Esther’s agency and the values she embodies in the doctor’s project of healing the ailing nation. The implication of the couple’s joint mission on the British empire becomes clearer when put into conversation with Cobbett’s and Dickens’ views of the military and gender politics. Following sections examine Mrs Bagnet, *Bleak House*’s only female military personnel, and pay her much overdue critical attention.

2. Soldierly Domesticity and Its Limits

In *Bleak House*, Dickens continues to complicate Cobbett’s revised understanding of gender. Because Burke and his aesthetic theory are deeply implicated with gender politics, Cobbett intervenes in contemporary gender debates in recasting Burke’s

aesthetics. When Cobbett's rural England repudiates Burke's politicized aesthetics, it challenges his polarized construction of gender. As mentioned earlier, a pretty landscape fails to be truly beautiful unless productive. Masculinity, femininity, and beauty are all radically reconceptualized as Cobbett collapses the gender binarism to pursue his cardinal value: dignified survival of the English rural laborers amid the postwar economic crisis. The Bagnet household exemplify what I call "soldierly domesticity" which, as a remedial domesticity of the post-deployment civilian readjustment period, may be employed to meet the ills of the systematically disoriented British society, if only provisionally and with limits.

Bleak House maintains distance from active scenes of war, yet Britain's global military engagements loom large. Its soldierly presence is more noticeable than any other Dickens novel, with veterans and their families who returned from imperial outposts occupying central place in the plot. Indeed, the Bagnets enter the novel as it approaches the very middle of the narrative arch, the ninth number of the total of twenty. To consult whether he should accommodate Tulkinghorn's request to see Captain Hawdon's writings, George visits the Bagnets' musical instrument shop. Once he spots "a soldierly looking woman, with her outer skirts tucked up, come forth with a small wooden tub, and in that tub commence a whisking and a splashing, on the margin of the pavement," George reflects: "She's as usual, washing greens. I never saw her, except upon a baggage-wagon, when she wasn't washing greens!" (438). The first person to be introduced in the household, Mrs. Bagnet is honored with a full paragraph shortly after:

Mrs. Bagnet is not at all an ill-looking woman. Rather large-boned, a little coarse in the grain, and freckled by the sun and wind which have tanned her hair upon the forehead; but healthy, wholesome, and bright-eyed. A strong, busy, active, honest-faced woman, of from forty-five to fifty. Clean, hardy, and so economically dressed (though substantially), that the only article of ornament of which stands possessed appears to be her wedding ring; around which her finger has grown to be so large since it was put on, that it will never come off again until it shall mingle with Mrs Bagnet's dust. (439)

Although Dickens typically comments on a new character's appearance, Dickens' pointed, early assurance that "Mrs. Bagnet is not at all an ill-looking woman" deserves closer scrutiny given women's complicated relation to beauty in *Bleak House*.

Analyzing Mrs. Bagnet in relation to beauty illuminates how *Bleak House's* engagement with Cobbett's gender politics is fundamental to its challenge against British imperial and national politics. The first thing a reader learns of Mrs. Bagnet is that she is "soldierly looking." When introduced, she is "washing greens," her usual occupation unless traveling on a baggage-wagon. As a wife of a soldier dispatched abroad, she is defined by two actions of preparing food for her family and traveling as a part of the British military. While following the army explains her soldierly air, the domestic, nurturing act of washing vegetables—her primary occupation in England—sits uncomfortably with military discipline. Mrs. Bagnet's soldierliness complicates the way the military aligns with domesticity and femininity in *Bleak House*.

Prior to Esther's marriage to Woodcourt, the Bagnet household is arguably the only functioning family following the traditional nuclear family model based on heterosexual union.⁹⁰ Therefore, it is important to consider the implication of calling the wife and mother of this almost-model household "soldierly." A "[r]ather large-boned" woman of lower-middle class in her late-forties with "a little coarse" appearances, "freckled" skin, and "tanned" hair, the ex-artillery man's wife with three healthy children embodies activity, wholesomeness, and honesty. As such, she sharply contrasts with another woman of around her age, the beautiful, aristocratic Lady Dedlock harboring the secret of an officer-lover and a presumably dead child.

Discussing Dickens' indebtedness to the early nineteenth-century popular radical culture in his use of satire and melodrama, Sally Ledger remarks that "a whole series of mistaken female identities" including Esther's confusion over an unidentified drowned woman, the brickmaker's abused wife Jenny, and Lady Dedlock highlights their "equality in victimhood" as the novel offers a "cross-class account of women's oppression" (206). This same "cross-class sense of identity" stirred working-class women's sympathy for Queen Caroline and her loss of Princess Charlotte as the pro-Caroline radical press adopted tropes evoking the Peterloo Massacre of 1819—images of "infants being torn from their mothers" (Ledger 29). Although Ledger does not directly compare Lady

⁹⁰ Sally Ledger is not alone in believing that "beyond the walls of Bleak House sheer domestic hell reigns virtually supreme" (205). Scholars' oversight of the Bagnets suggests the difficulty of integrating returnees to *Bleak House's* overt project of prioritizing domestic plight as opposed to Mrs. Jellyby's overseas philanthropy. Considering the imperial dimension of the novel's critique of British government resolves such a difficulty.

Dedlock to Caroline, investigating Cobbett's dedication to the Queen's cause substantiates my attempt to expand upon the implied link.

Cobbett's support for Caroline during the trial of 1820 over her alleged adultery is crucial to analyzing his intervention in the contemporary gender debates. Mirroring Burke's furor over the French revolutionaries' invasion of the French Queen's private chamber, Cobbett denounced the British Queen's mistreatment at the hands of her husband and his administrators to expose the corrupt government and demand a radical reform.⁹¹ According to Tim Fulford, as Cobbett associated radical reform to "the preservation of women's traditional legal and social position (as wives, mothers, daughters)" regardless of rank, the newly politicized female readership of *Political Register* learned that "feminine virtues were displayed as much by laboring as by middle-class women" (*Romanticism and Masculinity* 162-63). In rallying popular support for the wronged queen, Cobbett "makes the people the repository of loyalty and chivalry, the aristocracy tyrannical, thus reversing Burke and the distribution of value across the social hierarchy" (Fulford, *Romanticism and Masculinity* 165). By implication, a woman of any rank voicing a just concern is loyal and chivalrous.

⁹¹ Grande similarly writes that Cobbett turned Caroline into "a paradoxically chivalric symbol of radical reform" just as Burke made Marie Antoinette "a sentimental symbol of the *ancien régime*" (128). Cobbett also had a personal reason to be particularly eager to emerge successful in the campaign for Caroline. John Gardner points out that Cobbett was aware that Caroline was likely to be "the reformers", and his own, final rallying cause after the disasters of Peterloo and Cato Street" where he was suspected of having been the government's spy (70). However self-serving Cobbett's motive might have been, Gardner admits that this alliance "brought women's issues to the fore and, in doing so, radicalized many of them for the first time" (74).

After Caroline's defeat and death in 1821, the working-class woman serves as the site of Cobbett's radical resistance against London-born centralizing, exploitative economic changes. Valorization of working-class femininity underlies *Cottage Economy* where, Castellano notes, the working class' "beauty and health in labor employed in self-sufficiency" contrasts with the aristocracy's "sickliness and artificiality of luxury"; wary of "global food economy" and "commercial food," Cobbett locates beauty in "the usefulness of a wife with the ability to bake bread" (Castellano 129). Burke's women are beautiful for their "weakness, or delicacy" and "timidity"; human physiognomy owes its beauty to "softness, smoothness, and delicacy of the outward form" (*A Philosophical Enquiry* 150, 152). In contrast, Cobbett's working-class women are beautiful for working on the field, tending to the livestock, and baking bread to feed the family. As her body registers her productive labor, her skin gets tanned and her hands grow wrinkled. Similarly, *Rural Rides* grants no space for smooth, fragile, upper-class femininity in discussing beauty. In rejecting the idea of the sublime in landscape and joining beauty with utility, Cobbett rewrites the traditionally male virtue of sturdy physicality onto the working-class woman and acknowledges her as an independent, active agent of domestic and national economy.⁹²

⁹² Cobbett's work ethic provides another lens to view his glorification of female household labor. Helsinger remarks that Cobbett, in line with Max Weber's influential argument, moved within "the European, post-Reformation tradition that views labor as a primary virtue and idleness or waste of time" as sinful (116-17). Yet "[l]abor, for those who are not gentlemen, is in his texts the price of material security but not a duty owed to employers or to God" and Cobbett saw "Work" as "everything that contributes to the household economy," rendering wage a non-factor (117). His valorization of housekeeping corresponds with the respect for such labor shown by the pre-industrial

Dickens likewise makes visible the invisible labor of housekeeping to create a powerful, reliable female character. First seen in the novel washing greens, Mrs. Bagnet, if not actually called professional, performs labor that is visible and leaves visible traces.⁹³ Her wedding ring emphasizes the manual labor she has ceaselessly performed after marriage, as “her finger has grown to be so large since it was put on” that the ring will come off only in her death. The soldierly woman’s labor and wedding ring, however, hardly signify the patriarchal exploitation or domestic violence that persecute Jenny and her neighbor Liz. Those around her value her opinion, as Matthew Bagnet tells George: “It’s my old girl that advises. She has the head. But I never own to it before her. Discipline must be maintained. . . . Whatever the old girl says, do – do it!” (441). George agrees, saying he “would sooner take her opinion than that of a college.” In reply, Bagnet praises her promptness and determination in action: “What college could you leave – in another quarter of the world – with nothing but a grey cloak and an umbrella – to make its way home to Europe? The old girl would do it to-morrow. Did it once!” Despite the mythical Discipline, the wife and husband harbor mutual respect, the former in her assumed blindness to her authority and the latter in his thinly masked deference to his wife’s judgement.

society when, in Martin A. Danahay’s words, “women’s work” has yet been “severed from direct market relations and devalued in consequence” (417).

⁹³ In the 1851 census, the Registrar General calls unpaid housework “duties” rather than “occupation” (qtd. in Danahay 417). Danahay calls Esther’s housekeeping role a “profession” and examines her “unpaid and undervalued” and therefore unrecognized domestic labor in juxtaposition to that of male professionals (421, 423). Esther should remain unconscious of “the basis of her professional prestige” not to disrupt her supporting role for “the male professional provider” and maintain distance from female professional philanthropists (423).

The Bagnets seemingly get by notwithstanding the husband's lack of patriarchal authority by their voluntary post-discharge subjection to military discipline.⁹⁴ Mrs Bagnet, "like a military chaplain, says a short grace" as she portions out their frugal meal of "the porks and greens" according to the "exact system" she has devised for catering food and "every other household duty" (442). Mrs. Bagnet incorporates the internalized military codes of behavior into her household management. Yet the equilibrium thus maintained is provisional. She chides George for disrupting domestic stability predicated on the married cohabitation of a heterosexual pair. Calling George "restless" and "roving," she warns him against "tempt[ing] my Mat away from the musical business to New Zealand or Australey" and reproaches his bachelorhood (439-40).⁹⁵

⁹⁴ Dona Budd also examines the military inflection of the Bagnets' discipline focusing on its repressiveness. Budd argues that, with "repeated phrases, which command and close off Mrs. Bagnet's speech" and the "militaresque cloak enclos[ing] Mrs. Bagnet's body," Bagnet successfully contains her threat to patriarchy, although her umbrella reflect his "limp masculinity" (200-2). For Budd, Mrs. Bagnet is "a kind of grotesque, a raw-boned giantess" (203). I consider how *Bleak House's* vision of reform experiments with the unconventional, lower-middle class female agency in the characterization of Mrs. Bagnet.

⁹⁵ Critics have tended to read Mrs. Bagnet's soldierliness as support for the military. Timothy L. Carens senses "an alliance between female duty and empire" in her household management (130). Viewing the Bagnets as a model of "a resolute and resourceful lower-class patriotism," Buzard considers Mrs. Bagnet's umbrella as representing "extensive service on behalf of the empire"; Mrs. Bagnet may use this "*bayonet*" to "defend herself, her family, and their British values" wherever she is (148, Buzard's emphasis). I instead listen to her fear for Bagnet's heading again to "New Zealand or Australey" which suggest reenlistment and argue this unwillingness for further travel hints her suspicion of military expansionism. It is worth noting that Mrs. Bagnet was the person who recommended the bassoon to Bagnet and borrowed one for him to practice (442). Young Woolwich pursues a musical profession, with no mention of possible enlistment. Although he is contracted to "play the fife in a military piece," music served as a way out from the military in this family, not the other way around (440).

The prevalence of disastrous heterosexual unions in *Bleak House*, however, precludes viewing the novel as unreservedly glorifying them as the only legitimate way of building an affective unit. I agree with Natalie McKnight that George emerges “an excellent exemplar of masculinity” because he exhibits “willingness and ability to take responsibility for those weaker than himself” which is “the core characteristic of the good father” despite being an unsuccessful businessman and a bachelor (57). Significantly, he stands the “most appealing” of *Bleak House*’s three “ideal men” because Woodcourt is underdeveloped as a character and Jarndyce “undercuts his appeal with his awkward courting of Esther” (McKnight 56). In other words, George’s determined celibacy, combined with his fatherly excellence, makes him a fully developed, appealing ideal male character. Although the Bagnets fare well as a household, it is only under the myth of Discipline, a military concept based on hierarchy. The British military rank resembles its social rank because a commission could be purchased. As patriarchal gender hierarchy and class hierarchy intersect, the Bagnet’s soldierly domesticity reveals its limits, which in turn challenges British society’s adherence to the stale myth of functioning bureaucracy that leaves the whole society to grope and flounder in the fog.

Mrs. Bagnet emerges truly heroic when she actively steps out of her ascribed gender role and takes it upon her to be a chevalier herself in rescuing George. Her chivalric potential is hinted at, although not quite acknowledged, by Bagnet. He tells George that when his wife consented to marry him, “she ’listed under me and the children – heart and head; for life” (544). Mrs. Bagnet is “that true to her colours – that, touch us with a finger – and she turns out – and stands to her arms. If the old girl fires wide – once

in a way – at the call of duty – look over it, George. For she’s loyal!” (544). The series of military vocabularies (’listed, colours, arms, fire, call of duty) underline the intensity of her loyalty to the family. In Fulford’s analysis of the Caroline Affair discussed earlier, the other half of Burkean loyalty is chivalry. The association between the two is strengthened by Bagnet’s military metaphors. A woman becomes not merely soldierly but loyal and chivalrous through demonstrating heroic non-conformity. In the light of her anti-enlistment campaign, Mrs. Bagnet takes on to be soldierly and chivalrous to confront the military-inflected traumatization harrowing the British people and society. Her soldiering against soldiering remains within the confines of comicality assigned to her but nonetheless effectively confirms that Dickens’ sympathy for the afflicted extends to soldiers from obscure background.⁹⁶

Despite the shared skepticism against the military, Dickens and Cobbett diverge in their treatment of the soldiers. Cobbett condemns veterans and their families for benefiting from “injustice” and the “hellish system” in which “the food and drink and wool are almost all carried away to be heaped on the fund-holders, pensioners, soldiers, dead-weight, and other swarms of tax-eaters” (*Rural Rides* 309). In Cobbett’s portrayal of a beggared soldier from South Carolina who fought for the English army, Grande sees a “punitive” measure for “[t]heir support for a corrupt system” (Grande 161). Dickens blames the government as vehemently as Cobbett, but Dickens is kinder to his veterans.

⁹⁶ Dickens’ sympathy for soldiers corresponds with Jarndyce’s sympathy for the orphans of the sheriff’s officer, whose job is disliked. The plausibility of distinguishing individuals from their profession is further explored in *Great Expectations* (1861), most notably through Wemmick.

George's promotion from a common soldier to a sergeant evidences his "diligence and capability" during the military career (Furneaux, *Military Men* 78). As they reintegrate themselves into civilian life, Dickens' soldiers strive to make honest livings, albeit unsuccessfully, and can be likeable.

Nevertheless, Dickens' military as an institution is repeatedly associated with damaging qualities such as recklessness, indecision, and procrastination. Guppy's friend Jobling/Weevle thus laments his financial difficulties and joblessness: "what can a fellow do, I ask you, *but* enlist?" (323, Dickens' emphasis). Richard Carstone's tragic ending, however, proves enlistment to be an unreliable remedy as he withdraws from his position and eventually wastes away in the Chancery-imposed indecisiveness.⁹⁷ Even the novel's truly (and for some, the only) likeable male character George views his enlistment as a result of boyish impulse. The exchange between George and Sir Dedlock poignantly captures the trooper's regret:

"You have been a soldier," observes Sir Leicester, "and a faithful one."

George makes his military bow. "As far as that goes, Sir Leicester, I have done my duty under discipline, and it was the least I could do."

"You find me," says Sir Leicester, whose eyes are much attracted towards him, "far from well, George Rouncewell."

⁹⁷ Cobbett was also an enemy of Chancery. He jeeringly narrates a story of an adversary who is coming from the United States to Britain to claim his share as a creditor upon an inheritance under a complex legal situation: "The *Chancery* would drawl it out (supposing the present system to continue) till, in all human probability, there would not be as much left for Mr BIRKBECK as would be required to pay his way back again to the Land of Promise" (36, Cobbett's emphasis).

“I am very sorry both to hear it and to see it, Sir Leicester.”

George, with a look of assent and sympathy, makes another bow. The different times when they were both young men (the trooper much the younger of the two), and looked at one another down at Chesney Wold, arise before them both, and soften both.

.... “Thank you, George. You are another self to me. You have often carried my spare gun at Chesney Wold, George. You are familiar to me in these strange circumstances, very familiar.” (893-4)

Sir Dedlock’s remark that George is his “another self” who is “very familiar” to him suggests that the aristocrat and the veteran whose pasts are linked through a military item of “spare gun” are reunited in their present decline by the shared destiny of future obscurity. Soldiering is an outdated profession, better confined to the dying Baronet’s manor. Instead, Britain needs a doctor like Woodcourt, both metaphorically and literally.

George’s evaluation of his career subjects to scrutiny the Bagnet household’s mythical Discipline and Esther’s self-imposed obedience of duty. Brokenhearted, Sir Leicester compliments George for having been a “faithful” soldier. However, even as George returns that he has done his “duty under discipline,” he adds “it was the least [he] could do.” Observing duty and discipline is inadequate for grappling with the societal illness holding the British hostage. In conjoining Bagnet’s and Esther’s linguistic markers – the two most prominent catchphrases/words in *Bleak House* – in the conscientious but remorseful soldier’s summary of his career, Dickens questions the viability of militarized domestic sphere. The Bagnets should unfetter themselves from the Discipline and Esther

should not marry out of duty. Further, he tests out a radical notion that domestic labor and by extension women could be professional. Neither of Mrs. Bagnet's major occupations, washing greens and traveling as a soldier's wife, garners the Victorians' recognition as a profession. Yet she performs the first with perseverance, which many professional men in *Bleak House* fails to. When she reenacts in Britain the second, more distinctly imperial occupation of traveling, a new chapter of the feminist Dickens opens.

3. The Profession of the Returnee: Rain, Forest, and Mrs. Bagnet's Umbrella

Mrs. Bagnet and George's relationship presents the most fully-developed, and probably the only, unromantic male-female friendship between worthy individuals in Dickens' novels. Dickens flirts with the chivalric romance's trope of the love triangle involving a married woman when, at Mrs. Bagnet's friendly scolding of his celibacy, George responds he wishes he "had the luck to meet with such a wife as Mat found" (440). However, Mrs. Bagnet, "who seems in a virtuous way to be under little reserve with a good sort of fellow, but to be another good sort of fellow herself for that matter," comically dismisses the "compliment by flicking Mr George in the face with a head of greens" (440). Dickens defines their relationship as one between two fellows, momentarily obliterating their gender difference.⁹⁸ McKnight writes of Amy Dorrit's

⁹⁸ According to *OED*, a fellow means "a man, a male person" but can "refer to a woman or a female person, esp. one possessing qualities imagined to be masculine" ("fellow"). Interestingly, the *OED*'s earliest example appears in Dickens' own *Old Curiosity Shop* (1841) where Dick Swiveller calls Sally Brass—one of Dickens' famous female villains—"a devilish good fellow." The elevated illustration of the lower-middle class, or even working class, masculine woman in Mrs. Bagnet indicates a shift in Dickens' perception of gender and class.

proposal to Arthur Clennam in *Little Dorrit* that “ideal women should be more like men” (and vice versa) and that “Dickens celebrates androgyny” (59-60). When George is accused of murdering Tulkinghorn, Mrs. Bagnet reverses the romance convention where a knight errant saves a damsel in distress by appropriating male professions to rescue her friend.

Mrs. Bagnet’s androgyny is respectable in her clear-sensed everydayness. She is a regular middle-age woman, subject to neither the awe-inspiring sublimity (*Guy Mannering*’s Meg Merillies) nor angered ridicule (Mrs. Freke in Edgeworth’s *Belinda* [1801]) of earlier androgynous women.⁹⁹ Cobbett’s daughter and collaborator Anne meaningfully observes in a letter to a friend regarding the Caroline Affair’s impact on the society’s perception of aging women. After the mass mobilization of the people that “all the reformers, radicals, Jacobins &c.” but Queen Caroline failed at bringing about, “[a]n Old Woman will not now be thought so foolish a thing” (qtd. in Grande 145). Just as Lady Dedlock is the reigning society beauty as a forty-eight-year old woman, her contemporary Mrs. Bagnet shines in her intelligence.

Mrs. Bagnet is reintroduced in length when she momentarily leaves the domestic realm of household management to deal with repercussions of George’s mismanagement of his Shooting Gallery. Apprehending that George forfeited Bagnet’s security, Mrs.

⁹⁹ Mrs. Bagnet retains a trace of the marvelous through her association with the charismatic gypsy matriarch who exerted an enduring influence over Victorian readers. Deborah Nord points to Peggotty in *David Copperfield* (1849) as Dickens’ domesticated version of Meg. I suggest that with her large frame, browned skin, and familial authority, Mrs. Bagnet is a nearer approximate of Meg. Mrs. Bagnet’s reformatory potential acquired in colonial travels compensates for Meg’s disruptive power she lost in ceding the nominal domestic authority to Bagnet.

Bagnet storms into the Gallery. This time she is introduced through her outfit and belongings, most notably an umbrella:

It is of no colour known in this life, and has a corrugated wooden crook for a handle, with a metallic object let into its prow or beak, resembling a little model of a fan-light over a street door, or one of the oval glasses out of a pair of spectacles: which ornamental object has not that tenacious capacity of sticking to its post that might be desired in an article long associated with the British army. The old girl's umbrella is of a flabby habit of waist, and seems to be in need of stays – an appearance that is possibly referable to its having served, through a series of years, at home as a cupboard, and on journeys as a carpet bag. She never puts it up, having the greatest reliance on her well-proved cloak with its capacious hood; but generally uses the instrument as a wand with which to point out joints of meat or bunches of greens in marketing, or to arrest the attention of tradesmen by a friendly poke. (539)

An umbrella indeed was “long associated with the British army.” T. S. Crawford states that the final years of Napoleonic wars saw British officers carry umbrellas to battle to Duke Wellington's frustration, who himself had one “which concealed a slender sword-stick” (152-53). Mrs. Bagnet's dual use of the military-evoking item “at home as a cupboard, and on journeys as a carpet bag” metaphorizes how the empire-trained woman transcends the distance between domestic labor and imperial traveling, combining in one item the two occupations on the opposite ends of spatial mobility.

On the other hand, metonymic reading of the umbrella illuminates Victorian sociohistorical dimensions now obscure to modern readers. Freedgood explains of the deluge of objects in Victorian novels that mid-Victorians read novels and novelistic things differently from modern readers because they were yet to be fully engulfed by commodity fetishism as defined by Marx (7). Metonymic reading recovers for objects their own “history” and “specific qualities” that they have lost when reading after late nineteenth century took the literary, and metaphorical, turn as opposed to the literal (10). Of all “institutional forms” of storing cultural knowledge, the word is central to Freedgood’s, and my own, reading of Dickens (23). Freedgood notes that although the genocide in Australia does not feature in *Great Expectations*, reports on the violence reached its original readers through Victorian periodicals’ coverage of the events, enabling them to sense and process in varying degrees sinister notes of Magwitch’s “Negro head tobacco” (84-85). Likewise, *Bleak House*’s Victorian audience possessed the cultural knowledge to read Mrs. Bagnet’s umbrella metonymically.

The Victorian periodical again turns out the repository to begin the search for such cultural knowledge, especially Dickens’ own *Household Words*. As Catherine Waters points out, *The Household Words* was subtitled “Conducted by Charles Dickens” rather than “edited,” which signals his heavy influence both on “the editorial selection process” and “the writing of his contributors” (2). *Household Words* included an article titled “Umbrellas” by George Dodd in its issue for Nov. 13, 1852, the month when Mrs. Bagnet

first appears in *Bleak House*'s ninth number.¹⁰⁰ This contemporaneous appearance of an umbrella in Dickens' journal and fiction deserves a closer look.

While Dodd is fascinated by manufactural intricacies and umbrella makers' innovations in their successful "pursuit of lightness," he is leery of repercussions of mass production on laborers increasingly under industrial capitalism (203).¹⁰¹ He warily embarks on elaborating the diverse steps of umbrella making: "[t]he amount of work which the putter-together performs for three farthings is scarcely credible" (202). Marion Rankine correctly notices that "Umbrellas" traces the "the cost in human labor occasioned in the crafting of one single umbrella" and inadequacy of the compensation (24, 26). Not only is the complex labor underpaid but the terms of production, it is suggested, are unfair: "The workman receives stick, ribs, stretchers, and runners from the warehouse; he provides iron wire and sheet brass; his workshop is supplied at his own charge with lathes, saws, rose-cutters, drills, paring-knives, a vice, pliers, and other tools" (Dodd 202). Dodd's critical take on industrial capitalism reflects *Household Words*', and Dickens', continuing engagement with popular radical tradition of Cobbett's brand.

¹⁰⁰ The article was published anonymously following the practice of the mid-century periodicals; Catherine Waters notes "no effort was made to keep authorship secret" (2). Yet this convention put younger, lesser known contributors to disadvantage; by keeping the authorship anonymous, "Dickens unwittingly retarded, not only the literary, but also the commercial prospects of his staff" (Sala 81). Anne Lorhli's 1973 book based on the journal's Office Book excavated the articles' authorship.

¹⁰¹ As the author of the "Days in the Factories" series of the 1840s published in *The Penny Magazine*, Dodd was one of the pioneers of "industrial tourist tale," a journalistic sub-genre that Dickens called the "process article" (C. Waters 85). In "Umbrellas," Dodd starts off with developments in aviation technologies considered offshoots of the umbrella such as parachutes and balloons and dedicates the larger part of it to detailing the manufacture of an umbrella.

If Dodd's history of umbrella is less explicit as a social commentary, it brings to light the reforming nature of Mrs. Bagnet's umbrella. Dodd combines two *Penny Magazine* articles ("Umbrellas in the East" [Dec. 5. 1835] and "Umbrellas" [Jan. 2. 1836]) to concoct a short introductory history.¹⁰² In the process, he curtails the 1836 article's painstaking explanation on gender dynamics around the British umbrella that "the gentlemen began in Scotland what commenced with ladies in England" and that Jonas Hanway (1712-86) was the first man not the "first *person*" to carry an umbrella in England ("Umbrellas" 6-7, original emphasis). Dodd simply declares that Hanway, "celebrated for much more important things, has the celebrity of being the first man to use an umbrella in England" and an Edinburgh surgeon pioneered its use in Scotland around 1780 for professional walks (Dodd 202). His shortened history of the British umbrella bespeaks the complexity of the debates on social reform, middle-class professionalism, and gender intertwined around Mrs. Bagnet's umbrella.

In bringing the philanthropist and a surgeon to the fore, Dodd links the umbrella to the issues of social welfare and public health. This vision was shared by his contemporaries including William Sangster, the umbrella manufacturer. Sangster declares in a 1855 booklet that the umbrella has lengthened the life expectancy of the English people during the past hundred years (4).¹⁰³ For Sangster, Hanway is a "venerable

¹⁰² T. S. Crawford identifies the 1835 article as commencing the "long string of informative articles on the umbrella"; many subsequent articles drew from it (168).

¹⁰³ Sangster's sixty-four-page-long book is a self-glorifying infomercial. With their successful alpaca-covering presented at the Great Exhibition (1851), Sangster was a Victorian household word, as demonstrated by George Dodd's calling umbrella-makers of ancient Nineveh "Sangsters of Nineveh" (Dodd 201). Although Mrs. Bagnet's time was before the alpaca-covering, her mobility invokes the lighter-weight Sangster

philanthropist” who “dare[d] public reproach and ridicule” to spread home the healthy imperial habit he learned in Persia (27-28).¹⁰⁴ His most noteworthy public engagement was his service with the London Foundling Hospital, which must have touched Dickens’ lifelong empathy for neglected children. Hanway’s association with the institution of rescue imparts the umbrella a symbolic significance as a national shelter.

On the other hand, Dodd’s abridgement of the history of umbrella’s gendered usage ironically highlights the British society’s changed notion of an umbrella as a gender-neutral item appropriate for a professional man. Dodd in 1852 no longer feels obligated to reiterate the *Penny Magazine*’s excuse based on John Pugh’s 1787 biography that fragile constitution and the professional need to maintain neat personal appearance induced him to adopt the feminine equipment (“Umbrellas” 7). According to Ariel Beaujot, with the growing perception of the middle-class’ umbrella as “an extension of their professional identities” later in the century, “the inelegant, worn, and hastily furled umbrella” indicated a middle-class man’s vocational sincerity, especially for those in the medicine or church (129). Mrs. Bagnet’s umbrella “flabby” from its double duty anticipates the late nineteenth-century’s association between an umbrella and middle-class professionalism, strengthening her affiliation with dedicated male professionals.

While Hanway learned from his imperial journey a healthy use of an umbrella that benefits the British, Woodcourt proves through his travel the restorative capacity and

umbrella of 1850s. Similar to *Guy Mannering*’s flageolet, technological innovations in objects trigger conflation of temporal backgrounds.

¹⁰⁴ Hanway was a public health activist. According to John Pugh, Hanway supported John Spranger’s 1754 proposal for uniform pavement of London streets out of concern for “health, cleanliness, and safety” (140).

enters Tom-all-Alone's as a "brown sunburnt gentleman" (710). The browned skin, Charlotte Mathieson notes, is a feature that Woodcourt shares with George, the novel's male nurse (329).¹⁰⁵ I would add Mrs. Bagnet with her "honest sunburnt face" to create a trio of healing, sun-affected returnees (540).¹⁰⁶ Mrs. Bagnet's comfort in the civilian society aligns her closer to Woodcourt than to George. Sunburn, which conventionally "denoted the lower-class body of the rural labourer, sailor, military man, or tramp" allows Woodcourt increased cross-class negotiability and proposes "in a positive light, a more fluid concept of femininity in masculinity" (Mathieson 325, 330-1). Mrs. Bagnet's sunburnt body dignifies her lower-middle/working-class femininity by validating sturdy, adventurous, rational womanhood. Such characteristics, not quite incidentally, are requisites of a detective.

In his classic study *The Novel and the Police*, D. A. Miller inspects the role of detective plot in a novel inveighing against the Chancery's "untotalizable system" and "undecidable suit" (69). Whereas Bucket the professional male detective infiltrates people's feelings to manipulate them, Mrs. Bagnet the amateur female detective, unfettered by professional duty, leaves people alone with their secrets. Her considerate

¹⁰⁵ Given the novel's imperial context, the darkened skin tone carries a racial implication. Mathieson points out that the tropically tanned white body could indicate masculinity emaciated by "extreme sun exposure" as well as an affinity to the Indian male body, causing "embodied destabilisation that is at once gendered and racialised" (Mathieson 326). By inserting "sunburnt" between "brown" and "gentleman," Dickens "both highlights and avoids" discussing race (Mathieson 330).

¹⁰⁶ Although the "sunburnt" skin may be superficial and temporary, it indicates the trio's Empire-learned empathy to the marginalized that, Dickens suggests, will have a lasting, healing effect on the British people (I thank Professor Eunha Na at Seoul National University for discussing the point with me). Dickens' take on, and treatment of, Victorian race relations could be further examined in future studies.

reticence regarding George's relationship to Mrs. Rouncewell—she reveals the information she has inferred from a scene that she has accidentally witnessed only when it is needed to save George—contrasts with Bucket's deliberate, intrusive surveillance. Amateur detectives examined by Miller such as Guppy, Tulkinghorn, and Mrs. Snagsby all fail in their investigation because as more and more characters individually engage in detection, they collectively become “a threat to the social and institutional orders” that the police “polices” and “preserves” as the Chancery's “organ” (70-72, 81). Instead of “the deviate erotic desire” driving these unsuccessful amateur detectives, the successful Mrs. Bagnet moves to protect her home against an institutional threat (72). If an English woman's home is just as much of a castle as an English man's is, her castle is raided by Bucket and her hospitality mistreated when he shows up there on her birthday party to arrest George. Holding “literary patterns and expectations” responsible for the “real difficulty of creating a woman detective,” Birgitta Berglund defines a pattern detective as “strong, intelligent, resourceful, a latter-day knight who fights and defeats evil” (139). If so, Mrs. Bagnet deserves recognition as a prototype of a female detective; her knightly rescue of the innocently imprisoned George forms a part of *Bleak House*'s greater battle against the social evil of the British legal dysfunctionality.

The female detective's umbrella matches Bucket's notorious thumb.¹⁰⁷ An umbrella reminded a Victorian of another stick: “just as the *bâton* is the symbol of the

¹⁰⁷ Mrs. Bagnet's umbrella prefigures a more famous detective-owned umbrella. An umbrella is the “stealth weapon for the unarmed Sherlock Holmes” (Barnett 104). Joseph A. Kestner refers to Wilkie Collins' *The Diary of Anne Rodway* (1856) as “the most significant example of the amateur, unofficial female detective before the 1880s” (14). I propose Mrs. Bagnet presents an even earlier such example.

Field-Marshal, the truncheon of our police, so is the Umbrella the distinguishing mark of the respectable paterfamilias” (Sangster 3, Sangster’s emphasis). As figures of a benign patriarch and a police officer coalesce through their similarly-shaped sticks, the female detective carrying the umbrella faces the threat of being subsumed by state-patriarchal coalition. Yet Joseph A. Kestner emphasizes that due to the inherently subversive nature of a woman’s exercise of surveillance, “[a]ny woman undertaking detection, whether amateur or professional, becomes transgressive” (18-19). Mrs. Bagnet’s ride with Mrs. Rouncewell parallels Bucket and Esther’s chase of Lady Dedlock in that a detective attempts to reunite a mother and her child. The recovery of the matrilineal lineage, however, has diametrically opposing consequences; while it dooms Lady Dedlock, George is restored to his mother’s care. As a female detective, Mrs. Bagnet mends a broken home and makes amends for a national failing, proving the two domestic realms indivisible in their illness. Her rescuing of George is fundamentally an act of restoration that blends professional duties of a detective and a doctor on the national scale.

Mrs. Bagnet and Woodcourt resemble each other in being conversant in skills required of the investigative and the medical professions. When Woodcourts comes across Jenny in *Tom-all-Alone’s*, he immediately deduces from “the colour of the clay upon [her] bag and on [her] dress” that her husband is a brickmaker and is responsible for her bruised, torn forehead (712). Regarding *Bleak House’s* fateful contagious disease, Tina Young Choi argues that the similarity between “the chain of events enabling disease’s transmission” and “the unfolding of other events” implies that “the process of tracking disease’s origins is little different from other forms of investigative work in the

text” (77). Thus, in treating Jenny, Woodcourt the doctor displays “an attentiveness to the otherwise unnoticed detail and, perhaps more crucially, the ability to imagine a causal narrative joining those details together, something also required of the novel-reader” along with *Bleak House*’s other investigative characters (Choi 78).

Woodcourt’s interaction with Jenny shows that he respects working-class people’s dignity while sheltering them across his relatively elevated social status as a gentleman-doctor. Dickens’ narratorial interjection underlines this characteristic: “A habit in him of speaking to the poor, and of avoiding patronage or condescension, or childishness (which is the favourite device, many people deeming it quite subtlety to talk to them like little spelling book), has put him on good terms with the woman easily” (711). Woodcourt’s attitude echoes Cobbett’s in *Cottage Economy* where Cobbett, “rejecting the [Arthur Young’s] implicit assumption that the lower classes lack the dignity or credibility of adults, addresses them as parents, responsible not only for themselves but also for their children” (Helsing 117). This overlap regarding interclass communication evidences Cobbett’s influence on *Bleak House*’s reform project.

Woodcourt’s link to Cobbett in his ability to serve the weak manifests in his name itself which evokes trees and forest. Cobbett’s “obsession with trees” in *Rural Rides* reflects his belief that “rural poverty in the laboring classes is at its least severe in forested or wooded districts” because woods can provide measures to “offset the worst consequences of the economic shift in agricultural relations” (Whale 149, 152). Trees thus provide shelter in times of need, paralleling Crawford’s account of the umbrella’s usage in English since “its earliest adoption” as “a commonly used metaphor for any

form of shelter or protection,” a linguistic tradition that Victorians partook in (171-72). An umbrella functions as a sheltering device in rain and, under a different name of parasol, in sun. Significantly, although either rain or sun in excess constitutes bad weather, both are vital for human, animal, and vegetable lives including trees.

Dickens acknowledges the paradox by associating two women representing two different modes of positive domesticity to both sun and rain. Cynthia Barnett correctly calls rain “a protagonist in *Bleak House*,” although she does not mean Esther (199-200). When Jarndyce wishes it rained sweets for little Jellybys, Ada Clare responds: “It did better than that. It rained Esther” (84). At the same time, Summerson evokes summer and sun; Ada and Jarndyce praise her in unison that Esther dispels East wind and brings “sunshine and summer air” with her (486). Mrs. Bagnet’s appearance at the Shooting Gallery begins by focusing on protective items against bad weather then ends with reassuring her sunny cheerfulness against odds when she “look[s] cheerily out of a rough straw bonnet” with her face “fresh-coloured and bright” (540).

If Britain’s rain was like Esther, caring, soothing, and nurturing, an umbrella may remain furled except to shelter Britain’s most vulnerable members: neglected children, battered wives, the elderly, and the sick. Mrs. Bagnet “never puts [her umbrella] up” but depends on her grey cloak against weather. An unfurled umbrella takes up space, hence the opening paragraph’s pedestrians “jostling one another’s umbrellas, in a general infection of ill temper.” The robust woman has enough sun in her that, to George, she “looks as fresh as a rose, and as sound as an apple” (442). To do this “thoroughly fine woman” justice, Mr. Bagnet deploys a climactic analogy: “she is like a thoroughly fine

day. Gets finer as she gets on. I never saw the old girl's equal. But I never own to it before her. Discipline must be maintained!" (442). It would be the most romantic confession of middle-age matrimonial love in Dickens' oeuvre, if without the final two sentences. Dickens implies that their militarism could be, and should be, dropped.

Published in the same volume with Dodd's article, Eustace Murray's "Roving Englishman: His Hints to Travellers" echoes *Bleak House*'s suspicion toward the British traveler's complicity with militarism. Mrs. Bagnet's attire reflects Murray's advice to "start with as little luggage as possible" and, for ladies heading long distance, to "keep to grey, black, and brown" (211-12). Likewise, her antipathy to the roving military life reflects Murray's concluding glorification of a life rooted in the homeland: "[A] year of foreign travel may be good for any one. It enlarges the mind, and teaches a lesson never forgotten through life; a lesson of universal love, toleration, and doubt of our own exclusive merits. After this an Englishman is much better at home" (214).

Murray's suggestion informs *Bleak House*'s treatment of travelling overseas. Cosmopolitanism is valued only insofar as its lessons benefit the British society. The narrator also condemns the fiscal-military state's imperialist expansionism as breeding domestic neglect, envisioning a nation with a moderate, manageable territory: "in truth it might be better for the national glory even that the sun should sometimes set upon the British dominion, than that it should ever rise upon so vile a wonder as Tom" (710). Thus, the recently returned Woodcourt soothes Jenny: "I wouldn't hurt you for the

world” (711).¹⁰⁸ Significantly, Jenny was waiting for the warming “sun” when Woodcourt approaches her. Two sunny women inhabit *Bleak House*, complementing each other in contrasting manifestations of British womanhood. Rather than conveniently entrusting the younger generation with the mission of national regeneration, Dickens deploys two women a generation apart to muster wider support in the rally for reform; likeminded people of all ages are encouraged to take an action.

4. Conclusion

Cobbett and Dickens vigorously distance themselves from the actual British military. Cobbett was famously imprisoned for writing on corruption and corporal punishment in the militia and Dickens’s soldiers have trouble readjusting to the society. Just like other institutions in Britain, such as Chancery, the military is ill-maintained. Duty, self-discipline, orderliness, and self-sufficiency are masculine virtues the military, and by extension other state institutions, claims to uphold but fails.

Dickens experiments with military metaphor to empty it of aggression and violence by grafting it to the presumably feminine sphere of home. Yet, just as his adroit use of metonymy galvanize historical baggage left unmentioned, Dickens’ domesticated

¹⁰⁸ Carens also infers from the narrator’s and Woodcourt’s comments “suspicion on the state-sponsored acquisition and rule of distant territories” and prioritization of “a compassion for the destitute British subject” over “an acquisitive interest in ‘the world’” (131, 134). Yet his critique that Woodcourt’s and George’s domestic philanthropy “justifies the possession of distant ‘dominions’” because they were trained through “imperial military service” needs reconsideration (136). Woodcourt’s journey as a surgeon was not as a part of the military; he practices for the public while George the soldier retires to the declining aristocratic manor.

military metaphors are haunted by unerasable, unerasable memories of imperial and domestic violence. Duty and discipline should be redefined – or, preferably, the Victorian British should craft a new set of terms and meanings. Through people who transgress Victorian gender norms to redress social afflictions, Dickens asks how Britain may wade through the fog and mud that it engenders and accumulates in managing its vast imperial, industrial, and military network.

Conclusion

In the early nineteenth-century British literary scene, Austen's feminist, yet not necessarily anticolonial or antimilitarist, appraisal of the militarized British Empire in distinctly English *Mansfield Park* coexisted with Edgeworth's national tale and Scott's historical novel voicing colonial grievances, although limited by their class privilege. Cobbett, the first to be born of the five writers whose works I examine and the only one with full-time military experience, vehemently charged against the establishment including the military as responsible for the British people's plight and passed on the fighting spirit to Dickens. In the wake of Cobbett's radical journalism and Scott's (and Edgeworth's) cultural nationalism, Dickens's realist novel converges radicalism and feminism through antimilitarism as it advocates humanity of all British subjects.

Militarization, Cynthia Cockburn writes, is "a condition that precedes war and continues when conflict ends, a condition that can make everyday life feel like a battlefield" (167). *Guy Mannering* and *Bleak House*'s critical appraisals of the British Empire are informed by the disturbing awareness that the supposedly civilian sphere of family and gender relations has been infiltrated by the military value system. Radicals historically endeavored to uproot such less visible yet integral workings of militarism creeping into "the social fabric" (Rossdale 68). Condemning the undisciplined, corrupt British military, Wollstonecraft's *Vindication* and Cobbett's *Soldier's Friend* were published on the same year, 1792. It is not coincidence that Cobbett whose writerly career thus began eventually, and probably unintentionally, continues the other writer's

feminist agenda in the 1820s by supporting Queen Caroline. Similarly, antimilitary critique sparked by corruption caused “a temporary coalition of interests between liberals and radicals in Parliament” as demonstrated in Edgeworth’s treatment of the Duke of York and Mrs. Clarke’s commissions sales scandal in *Patronage* (1814), which “placed her in a position of extreme liberalism, close to radicalism” (Ó Gallchoir, *Maria Edgeworth* 110). As Cockburn observes, “power, systematically, is *not* singular”; systems of oppression based on class, gender, ethnic and national dominance, all “founded on violence,” operate alongside each other (11, Cockburn’s emphasis). For a marginalized other, demanding the right to belong entails recognizing intersecting workings of structural violence. The British literary history of the earlier half of the nineteenth century as I trace it testifies to the inevitability of the convergence.

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