Victorian Poetry, Europe, and the Challenge of Cosmopolitanism

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Notes

Chapter 1


5. Tucker, Epic, 495. The Light of Asia was one of the best-selling long poems of the era and could be aligned with other early formulations of what Srinivas Aravamudan calls “Guru English,” a joint production of English colonialism and South Asian religions that evolved into a highly commodifiable form of “transnational religious cosmopolitanism” (Guru English: South Asian Religion in a Cosmopolitan Language [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006], 7). It is a discourse, he reveals, that historically has taken on diverse forms, from Kipling’s Kim (1900) to the popular self-help manuals today of Deepak Chopra: “The global transmission of Hindu and Buddhist thought eventually led to the rise of the self-proclaimed ethno-religious nationalist as well as the detached and Asian-influenced cosmopolitan” (9). As a form of literary discourse, Guru English reaches its highest form, he suggests, in the works of Sri Aurobindo, especially his epic poem Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol (97–101).

7. The 1850s alone, for instance, produced Kinahan Cornwallis’s *Yarra Yarra; or, The Wandering Aborigine* (1858) and Thulia Susannah Henderson’s *Olga; or Russia in the Tenth Century* (1855). See Tucker, *Epic*, 372–74. Other recent work on epic, including Simon Dentith’s *Epic and Empire in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) and Colin Graham’s *Nation, Empire and Victorian Epic Poetry* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), examine epic in more specifically imperial contexts than Tucker’s, but they likewise warn against overemphasizing the genre’s nationalistic aims. As Graham observes, the nation “justifies and underlies imperialism, yet imperialism creates a cultural field in which (hegemonous) nationality is forced to confront the paradox of its co-existence and putative equality with other ‘nations’” (2).


14. Marjorie Morgan makes a similar claim in her study of how domestic travel shaped notions of Britishness, cautioning us not to neglect the diverse kinds of contact zones through which individual Victorians encountered the wider world: “rather than privileging empire as a context, it seems more meaningful to view empire as one of many contexts in which people from Britain framed their identity” (*National Identities and Travel in Victorian Britain* [Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, 2001], 7). By insisting on this kind of reorientation, Anderson and Morgan strike a better balance, I think, than another recent criticism of the role of empire in British cultural studies, Bernard Porter’s *Absent-Minded Imperialists: Empire, Society, and Culture in Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). While Porter is correct to remind us that empire was a much less visible component of education and popular culture than one might assume from the amount of attention it receives now, he brushes aside the large body of literary criticism on Victorian imperialism with the observation that “there are almost no ‘good’ books, poems, paintings, sculptures, musical compositions, or great buildings from the early and middle years of the nineteenth-century that have a significant imperial component to them” (134). Similarly, he omits discussion of any specific flaws in Said’s *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), opting instead to repeat the claims of early critics that he reads too much into the works he studies (ix–x).

15. Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), 6. In *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1978), Said writes, “[t]he Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe’s greatest and richest
and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other. In addition, the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience” (1–2).

16. As Arnold remarked in “The Study of Poetry” (1880), “More and more mankind will discover that we have to turn to poetry to interpret life for us, to console us, to sustain us. Without poetry, our science will appear incomplete; and most of what now passes with us for religion and philosophy will be replaced by poetry” (9:161–62).


18. See Lauren M. E. Goodlad and Julia M. Wright, eds., “Victorian Internationalisms,” cited above, and Keith Hanley and Greg Kucich, eds., “Global Formations Past and Present,” Nineteenth-Century Contexts 29, nos. 2–3 (2007). With a broader historical sweep, it should be noted, the Nineteenth-Century Contexts issue does include Adam Komisurak’s “Typologies of the East: Self as Vortex in Don Juan’s Russian Affair” (219–36). Byron’s presence indicates the central place he still holds—and held in the minds of many Victorian poets—as the figure against which their own encounters with Europe must inevitably be juxtaposed.


23. As Tucker observes and his work repeatedly demonstrates, “a great deal of what Lukács [in his 1920 The Theory of the Novel] and Bakhtin say about the prose fiction of the nineteenth century will also find exemplification among the period’s verse epics” (15). Tucker’s claim is borne out as well by previous critics who have turned Bakhtin’s generic labels to Victorian poetry’s advantage. See, for instance, Meg Tasker’s work on


25. Giving us a sense of how travel could enhance a poem’s marketability, Robert Browning attempted to coax Elizabeth abroad in 1846 with the revelation that Smith and Elder had made him an offer to “print any poem about Italy, in any form.” Philip Kelley and Scott Lewis, eds., The Browning’s Correspondence (Winfield, KS: Wedgestone Press, 1984), 13:308. Hereafter abbreviated BC.


31. There are no specific references to these works in Arnold’s journals or letters that I am aware of, but he did study Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason in 1845 at Oxford and could quite possibly have become aware of other dimensions of Kant’s work during this period or later. See Park Honan, Matthew Arnold: A Life (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), 93.


35. Ruth apRoberts offers the most comprehensive assessment of Herder’s influ-
ence on Arnold and concludes that he “carries out the Herderian program with his own breadth of vision, in his comparative-literature, comparative-religion mode. He combats Philistine provincialism everywhere; he will not limit culture to the English tradition, or even the European tradition.” “Matthew Arnold and Herder’s Ideen,” Nineteenth-Century Prose 16, no. 2 (1989): 7.

36. Paul Micahel Lutzeler goes so far as to nominate Goethe “the spiritual father of European efforts toward international cooperation. While Herder stressed the insurmountable differences between the various cultures, Goethe concentrated on what they had in common” (“Goethe and Europe,” South Atlantic Review 65:2 [2000]: 95–113, 95). Lutzeler explores other dimensions of cosmopolitan thinking in Goethe, although he may err, as I explain above, by positioning him in direct opposition to Herder.


40. Cecil Y. Lang, the editor of Arnold’s collected letters, could not trace a specific source for Lamartine’s prophecy (1:99n7), nor could I in my own study of proclamations made by Lamartine’s provisional government in the wake of the February 1848 revolution. Whether misattributed to Lamartine or not, Arnold’s remarks do capture the kind of internationalist Zeitgeist that had overtaken the continent in 1848. In a diplomatic release made public to assuage fears that the French government would embark on a new Napoleonic conquest of Europe, Lamartine stressed, “by the light of its intelligence, and the spectacle of order and peace which it hopes to present to the world, the republic will exercise the only honourable proselytism of esteem and sympathy” (History of the French Revolution of 1848 [London: George Bell, 1888], 98). The Brownings also hopefully trusted in this prediction, according to Elizabeth in a March 1848 letter: “I take up my republicanism, & am cordially glad that the experiment of the most rational & sincere of governments, a pure democracy, should be tried in Europe. Robert & I agree & thoroughly agree in politics as in other things” (Letters to Arabella, 1:155).

41. Two months earlier, Arnold wrote to Clough, “Do you remember your pooh-poohing the revue des deux mondes, & my expostulating that the final expression up to the present time of European opinion, without fantastic individual admixture, was current there: not emergent here & there in a great writer,—but the atmosphere of the commonplace man as well as of the Genius” (March 6, 1848; LMA 1: 89–90).


43. Albert, Prince Consort of Queen Victoria of Great Britain, The Principal Speeches and Addresses of His Royal Highness the Prince Consort (London: Murray, 1862), 110.


45. Arnold visited Thun, Switzerland, in September 1848 and again the following September, when he composed the “Stanzas in Memory of the Author of ‘Obermann’” along with several poems inspired by “Marguerite,” whose identity Arnold’s biographers have never been able to pinpoint precisely. Honan insists that the most likely candidate
is Mary Claude, a close friend of Clough and his sister Anne—someone who, like Arnold, traveled extensively and was deeply schooled in European literature (see Honan, *Matthew Arnold*, 149–50). Whether inspired by Claude or an unknown French woman, “To Marguerite—Continued” underscores the more erotic and personal attractions that intensified Arnold’s longing for some kind of consummation between himself and the Continent. While staying in Paris two years earlier, Arnold developed a similar obsession with the opera singer Rachel. He would later pay tribute to her in “Rachel III” as the embodiment of a pan-European, pan-racial ideal. Essentially, Rachel had done for the stage what Heinrich Heine had for poetry: “Germany, France, Christ, Moses, Athens, Rome. / The strife, the mixture in her soul, are ours. / Her genius and her glory are her own” (12–14). Of the poets studied in this book, Swinburne goes the farthest in illuminating the complex codependence of body and spirit in initiating the desire to cross cultural borders. Clough too would probe these dueling motives in *Amours de Voyage* and *Dipsychus* (1853; publ. 1865) and may in fact have had Arnold’s affair with Mary Claude in mind when he composed the former: the two principal characters of the poem are named “Claude” and “Mary.” Eugene R. August explores this and other possible connections in “Amours de Voyage and Matthew Arnold in Love: An Inquiry,” *Victorian Newsletter* 60 (1981): 15–20.

46. Riede applies this metaphor to Arnold’s language in ways that again invoke the promising but distant sense of Europe conveyed by his poems: “Arnold does indeed assert the saving power of language, but in words that, ironically, are often self-referential and only enclose an empty space. Arnold is at odds with himself—he describes an inspired and almost magically full language, but he describes it with a sadly empty language (4).


48. In one of the earliest references to her ambition to write a major epic-length work, Barrett wrote to Mary Russell Mitford, “I want to write a poem of a new class, in a measure—a Don Juan, without the mockery and impurity, . . . under one aspect,—& having unity as a work of art,—& admitting of as much philosophical dreaming & digression (which is in fact a characteristic of the age) as I like to use” (December 30, 1844; *BC* 9:304).


50. Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough, March 6, 1848 (*LMA* 1:90).

51. References to Barrett Browning poems other than *Casa Guidi Windows* and *Aurora Leigh* are to *The Works of Elizabeth Barrett Browning*, ed. Sandra Donaldson et al. (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2010).


55. Swinburne, *Songs before Sunrise* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1888), 22. Swinburne wrote the volume largely at the suggestion of Mazzini himself, who chastised him, “Don’t lull us to sleep with songs of egotistical love and idolatry of physical beauty: shake us, reproach, encourage, insult, brand the cowards, hail the martyrs, tell us that we have a great Duty to fulfill” (qtd. in Rikky Rooksby, *A. C. Swinburne: A Poet’s Life* for Emma Clough's marriage to H. H. Clough, 232).
Songs before Sunrise has been unfairly neglected by critics, as Stephanie Kuduk Weiner has argued, and she explores Swinburne’s achievement in “A Sword of a Song”: Swinburne’s Republican Aesthetics in Songs before Sunrise (Victorian Studies 43 [2001]: 253–78) and in Republican Politics and English Poetry, 1789–1874 (Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 157–76, which juxtaposes Songs before Sunrise with contemporary republican poems by George Meredith and James Thomson. While not seeking to downplay that achievement or send Songs before Sunrise into renewed exile, I do think Mazzini misses the way that Poems and Ballads performs precisely the kind of work he describes, reproaching and insulting on behalf of a revolutionary kind of cosmopolitanism that explores the complex interplay between body and spirit, physical attraction and repulsion, and fear and desire of the Other. In chapter 5, I demonstrate why what remains Swinburne’s signature work merits renewed attention as one of the most complex and dramatic interventions into Victorian debates over cross-cultural exchange.

56. Deirdre David argues compellingly that Barrett Browning’s resistance to communism makes her the purveyor of an essentially patriarchal “sage discourse” in which “[w]oman’s talent is made the attendant of conservative male ideals” (Intellectual Women and Victorian Patriarchy [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987], 98). I follow a number of subsequent commentators, however, in emphasizing how Barrett Browning also challenges those ideals—in part through her resistance to patriarchal notions of women’s domestic obligations, on both a personal and a national level. See, for instance, Marjorie Stone, Elizabeth Barrett Browning (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1995), 45–46.

57. Barrett Browning had preordained Romney’s demise, in a sense, in an April 1848 letter expressing concern over the threat to the French provisional government posed by communist revolutionaries in Paris that spring: “I quite tremble to think of the wild, rampant doctrines of some of those communists, which, if carried out, would destroy the individuality of men . . . & blunt the points of all energy & genius. Monastic & conventual institutions are not, as has again & again been proved, favorable to the evolvement of great faculties—nor do they make men purer in the mass” (Letters to Arabella, 1:165–66).


62. Carlyle coined the phrase “attenuated cosmopolitanism” in 1828 to describe the state of British poetry in the eighteenth century prior to the emergence of Robert Burns: “Even the English writers, most popular in Burn’s time, were little distinguished for their literary patriotism, in this its best sense. A certain attenuated cosmopolitanism had, in good measure, taken place of the old insular home-feeling; literature was, as it were, without any local environment; was not nourished by the affections which spring from

63. Charles Kingsley, “Mr and Mrs Browning,” *Fraser’s Magazine* 43 (1851): 175.


69. Determined to make the study of race coalesce with his other ideals of tolerance, cultural openness, and European unity, Arnold sometimes leads himself into dubious claims. Among the benefits of inquiring into Europe's racial origins and tendencies, according to Arnold, would be “the strengthening of the feeling in us of Indo-European-ism” (3:302)—a claim that begs the question of whether anyone, anywhere, has ever “felt” Indo-European. Frederic E. Faverty perhaps best captures Arnold's achievement and his limitations when it came to the study of race: “Even when his facts are wrong, or his premises unsound, or his conclusions questionable, his animating purpose is usually right. He desires not to divide races or nations, but to bring them together.” *Matthew Arnold: The Ethnologist* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1951), 11.

70. Arnold also applied this principle to artists themselves: “And yet just what constitutes special power and genius in a man seems often to be his blending with the basis of his national temperament, some additional gift or grace not proper to that temperament; Shakespeare's greatness is thus in his blending and openness and flexibility of spirit, not English, with the English basis” (3:358).


72. Tucker, for instance, sees a kind of racial retrenchment at work in Eliot's poem: “Gypsy and Jew and Christian and Moor alike find their identities and acts biologically foredoomed—and culturally policed, for good measures, within the embattled and racially polarized climate of Eliot's chosen milieu in late fifteenth-century Spain” (*Epic* 415).


74. This of course does not mean that there is little to learn from British encounters with Europe's margins, which is precisely the focus of Brian Dolan's *Exploring European
Frontiers: British Travellers in the Age of Enlightenment (Houndmills: Macmillan, 2000). As he reveals, British encounters with Russia, Eastern Europe, and Scandinavia “helped chart similarities and differences [between cultures] as perceived at the time. These in turn helped define what were considered shared, modern, European values or separate national achievements” (22).

75. In “Heinrich Heine,” commenting on his subject’s capacity to capture the contradictions of the German character, Arnold writes, “Is it possible to touch more delicately and happily both the weakness and strength of Germany;—pedantic, simple, enslaved, free, ridiculous, admirable Germany?” (3:123).

76. “Mr. Carlyle on the War,” The Times, November 18, 1870: 8.


78. Tucker also notes the beginning of a “fallow period” for the production of epic in the 1890s before the genre underwent something of a resurgence in the Edwardian era (Epic 1).

79. Such a study could also devote greater attention than I do here to Swinburne’s contemporaries Dante Gabriel and Christina Rossetti, who were, of course, themselves Anglo-European subjects and were deeply involved in translating between English and European poetic traditions.

80. Thomas Hardy, The Life and Work of Thomas Hardy, ed. Michael Millgate (London: Macmillan, 1984), 450. The book is Millgate’s reedited version of two earlier biographies, The Early Life of Thomas Hardy (1928) and The Later Years of Thomas Hardy (1930), largely written by Hardy himself but published under the name of Hardy’s second wife, Florence Emily Hardy.

81. The Dynasts forms Volume 4 and part of Volume 5 of The Complete Poetical Works of Thomas Hardy, ed. Samuel Hynes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982–95). Verse passages will be noted by part, act, scene, and line number. Prose passages are cited by volume and page number.

82. Kant, Political Writings, 48


Chapter 2

1. Frederick L. Mulhauser, ed., The Correspondence of Arthur Hugh Clough, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1957). Additional citations of Clough’s letters will be noted in the text; if the recipient or date of the letter is not clear from the context of the quotation, it is given in a note.

2. Clough to J. R. Lowell, January 20, 1858.

3. Clough in various comments on the poem warns against conflating Claude with himself, but clearly he dramatizes many of his own feelings and intellectual dilemmas through Claude. Thus, while it is important to be attuned to moments when Clough could be questioning Claude’s impressions, I do not think it is necessary to qualify Claude’s statements at every step. What Clough creates, in a sense, is an unreliable “unreliable narrator,” a protagonist capable of satirizing himself, attuned to many of his own flaws and biases. Clough in this way adds another layer to the poem’s trademark of
authoritative instability, a subject E. Warwick Slinn explores in his deconstructive reading of the poem in *The Discourse of Self in Victorian Poetry* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1991). Claude, he argues, “becomes subsumed within a discourse of dynamic, shifting, and textualised process” (91). The line between author and persona, like that between language and truth, is continuously in flux.

4. From a posthumous review in *Macmillan's Magazine* (August 1862) by David Masson, qtd. in Michael Thorpe, *Clough: The Critical Heritage* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1972), 150. With regard to the poem’s literary antecedents, J. P. Phelan remarks, “Clough’s employment of the epistolary form for this venture is . . . unique, but might possibly owe something to his small part in helping his friend Richard Monckton Milnes prepare the first edition of Keats’s *Life, Letters, and Literary Remains* in 1848” (introduction to *Amours de Voyage*, in *Clough: Selected Poems*, 77). Clough also might have been familiar with Joseph Addison’s “A Letter from Italy” (1701), which, like his poem, mixes travel with reflections on England’s role in European politics: “‘Tis Britain’s care to watch o’er Europe’s fate, / And hold in balance each contending state; / To threaten bold presumptuous kings with war, / And answer her afflicted neighbour’s pray’r” (*The Poetical Works of Joseph Addison* [London: Cooke, 1796], 59). Matthew Reynolds suggests Thomas Moore’s satirical *The Fudge Family in Paris* (1818) as another possible epistolary precedent (see *The Realms of Verse*, 152).


6. The poem’s epistolary format has received much less attention in comparison to its other distinguishing formal feature—the hexameter. One notable exception is Matthew Reynolds, who, following Habermas, has argued that the epistolarity of *Amours de Voyage* works to emphasize Claude’s inability to bridge public and private selves in meaningful ways: as a series of private letters exposed to the public, they underscore his absence from “the public field of narrative” and his failure to “achieve a sense of continuity between his own life and the processes of world history” (155). In an earlier article on Clough’s divergence from Romantic period Grand Tour poetry, I commented on how the conditions of modern tourism and the post undercut any possibility of a “personal” letter in the poem: “As suggested by Claude’s rapid-fire letters to Eustace, especially as he traces Mary Trevellyn’s footsteps across Italy, the traveler on the continent was now more than ever a correspondent.” In turn, “Trying to sound ‘original’ . . . becomes comically futile in *Amours de Voyage*” (“Beyond Where ‘Byron Used to Ride’: Locating the Victorian Travel Poet in Clough’s *Amours de Voyage* and *Dipsychus*,” *Philological Quarterly* 77, no. 4 [1998]: 385–86). By returning here to this subject, I hope to unpack the more pervasive ways that postal technologies inform notions of cosmopolitanism and identity in the poem.

7. The impact of the telegraph on communications and other aspects of nineteenth-century culture has been widely investigated, notably in Tom Standage’s *The Victorian Internet: The Remarkable Story of the Telegraph and the Nineteenth Century’s On-line Pioneers* (New York: Berkley Books, 1998) and, with greater historical depth, in Laura Otis’s *Networking: Communicating with Bodies and Machines in the Nineteenth Century* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001). As Otis claims, “Since the late 1840s, electronic communications networks have changed the way we see our bodies, our neighbors, and the world. For a century and a half, these networks have suggested webs, lead-
ing their users to think as though they were part of a net” (2). For all of its undeniable influence, however, the telegraph has perhaps misleadingly eclipsed postal reform in our historical understanding of Victorian communications revolutions. Even if it did not involve wires or electricity, postal reform was largely understood at the time as a technical innovation. In some sense, the telegraph and the penny post became twin technologies in the Victorian imagination, doing the same work of acceleration and consolidation of space. *Household Words,* for instance, in its inaugural issue, ran the first of what would become a series of approving articles on postal reform and the inner workings of the Central London Post Office. In “Valentine’s Day at the Post-Office,” Dickens and a companion follow the path of valentines they mailed earlier in the day: “As the visitors looked round they perceived their coloured envelopes—which were all addressed to Scotland—suddenly emerge from a chaotic heap, and lodge in the division marked ‘general,’ as magically as a conjurer causes any card you may choose to fly out of the whole pack” (Charles Dickens, with W. H. Willis, “Valentine’s Day at the Post-Office,” *Household Words,* 30 March 1850: 8). Around the same time, *Fraser’s Magazine* ran a similar piece that marveled over the Central London Post Office as the epitome of modern organizational technology, an institution where “order, ingenuity, and intelligence reign.” “The Post-Office” 41 (1850): 225.
13. Clough to A. P. Stanley, May 28, 1848.
15. Murray’s *Handbook for Travellers in Central Italy* (London: John Murray, 1843) advises readers, “Foreign letters are despatched on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.” It also suggests, “Letters from England not directed to the care of a banker at Rome should be plainly and legibly directed according to the foreign usage” (250–51).
16. Clough to F. T. Palgrave, August 7, 1849; Clough to Ann Perfect Clough, May 29, 1849.
18. Ibid., 105.
20. Ibid., 14. The popular uproar that ensued in 1844 after it was discovered that the Post Office had been forwarding some of Mazzini’s correspondence to the Home Office for inspection also gives some sense of how highly the privacy of the mails was regarded. See Robinson, *The British Post Office,* 337–52.
23. Ibid., 18.
24. Thomas Babington Macaulay, *Selected Writings*, ed. John Clive and Thomas Pinney (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 304–5. The post does not escape Macaulay’s attention either, as he stresses the evolutionary progress of the Post Office as an institution since 1685 (305–7). As he notes in good statistical fashion, “It is . . . scarcely possible to doubt that the number of letters now conveyed by mail is seventy times the number which was so conveyed at the time of the accession of James the Second” (307).


26. Thomas Shairp to Clough, November 1849.

27. The *Handbook for Travellers in Central Italy* cites Byron far more often than any other British poet. As James Buzard argues, “The abstracting of a Byronic spirit from the political and historical contexts that figured in Byron’s poetry enabled tourists to adopt Byronic gestures without any consideration of what might seem to us now the insistent political character of the verse.” *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to “Culture” 1800–1900* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 123.


30. Shairp seems to have been particularly bothered by this feature of the poem: “Why this superabundance of oaths and other sweary words? They weaken the lines, are in bad taste and not good for yourself, if I may say so” (October 31, 1849; 1:275). In another letter sent shortly after, Shairp reiterated his complaint: “Not that I dislike your roughness, but then it should be more rock-like ruggedness not so slip-slop—not so many Well’s and other monosyllables [sic], and not so many oaths above all” (November 1849; 1:277).

31. In a similar vein, Clough reassured his mother, “We are all quite safe and comfortable, with British flags hanging out of our windows, and Lord Napier, an attaché of the British Embassy at Naples, has been here and is at present I believe at Palo, a fort between this and Civita Vecchia, where the Bull-dog, H.M.S. is lying, and has arranged with Marshal Oudinot that his troops are to behave politely to us” (May 11, 1849; 1:254).

32. Clough’s own experience offers further testimony on this score. Frustrated with the anti-Roman bias shown by French and British newspapers, he decided to compose his own account of the destruction left by the bombardment of 22 June. Clough concluded, sardonically, that “however skillful French generals may be in their ménagement of bombs, I find French journals are still more so in their *ménagement* of facts” (see Patrick Scott, ed., *Amours de Voyage*, Appendix 2 [St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1974], 79–80). Clough sent the account to Palgrave, and his instructions to him are themselves telling: “do what you will with [it]. Edify a private circle or offer to an obscure corner of an obscure evening print” (July 6, 1849; qtd. in Scott 79 but not included in Mulhauser’s edition of Clough’s letters). Uncertain whether to regard his work as essentially private or public, Clough leaves the decision to his friend (who, apparently, did not attempt to publish it).


35. Ibid., 64.
39. Clough’s essay on foreign trade again anticipates the issue he would attempt to work out in Amours de Voyage. “Commerce has doubtless its benefits: It gives men if not so much in our times the enlarged and capacious mind free from narrow and exclusive prejudice” (207).
41. Clough to Edward Hawkins, February 28, 1849.
43. Martha C. Nussbaum, “Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism,” in For Love of Country, 15. I am also reminded in this context of Amanda Anderson’s insistence that “cosmopolitanism is a flexible term, whose forms of detachment and multiple affiliation can be variously articulated and variously motivated. In general, cosmopolitanism endorses reflective distance from one’s cultural affiliations, a broad understanding of other cultures and customs, and a belief in universal humanity.” “Cosmopolitanism, Universalism, and the Divided Legacies of Modernity,” in Cheah and Robbins, 267.
44. Robert Micklus offers the interesting possibility that Mary and Claude are too devoted to themselves, “too afraid of love—and life—to experience its consummation.” The poem thus ends as it should: “Mary and Claude are too temperamentally alike to make their marriage even desirable” (“A Voyage of Juxtapositions: The Dynamic World of Amours de Voyage,” Victorian Poetry 18 [1980]: 411). What I am suggesting here is that their independence of mind is also what draws them together and makes their final separation so difficult for them to cope with. While it may never reach Werther-like proportions, their uncertain longing for each other persists to the end of the poem.
45. Clough to F. J. Child, April 16, 1858.
46. If this interpretation seems like a stretch, it is worth recalling that Clough made a similar point in Dipsychus with even more suggestive language: “Verses! well they are made, so let them go. / No more, if I can help. / This is one way / The procreant heat and fervour of our youth / Escapes, in puff and smoke, and shapeless words / Of mere ejaculation, nothing worth” (2.2.21–25).
47. The poem’s absent auditor, as Dorothy Mermin suggests, in effect allows it to be read as a “dramatic monologue or sequence of monologues” (The Audience in the Poem: Five Victorian Poets. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1983), 112.

48. Siegert dwells at length on this concept and offers a letter from Franz Kafka as an example of a “letter reflecting on the (im)possibility of writing letters.” Kafka calls letters “an intercourse with ghosts, and not only with the ghost of the recipient but also with one’s own ghost which develops between the lines of the letter one is writing” (4).

49. Alfred, Lord Tennyson, In Memoriam, A. H. H., in Tennyson’s Poetry, 2nd ed., ed. Robert W. Hill (New York: Norton, 1999), 203–91. This passage also includes one of Tennyson’s more notable alterations to the poem—the decision to replace “his” with “the” in line 36 (See Hill, 263–64n7). The original conveys an even stronger sense of personal connection through the letter.

50. Armstrong’s chapter on Clough from her Victorian Poetry: Poetry, Poetics and Politics is entitled “The Radical in Crisis: Clough.” She focuses primarily on Clough’s free-wheeling experimentation with language and form in The Bothie, calling it “a study of the upper-class radical and intellectual” (178).

51. For Baudelaire, the flâneur, like the dandy, “is the last flicker of heroism in decadent ages” (“The Painter of Modern Life,” Baudelaire: Selected Writings on Art and Artists, trans. P. E. Charvet [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972], 421). Commenting on Baudelaire himself as an example, Chris Jenks writes that the flâneur “walks at will, freely and seemingly without purpose, but simultaneously with an inquisitive wonder and an infinite capacity to absorb the activities of the collective.” “Watching Your Step: The History and Practice of the Flâneur,” in Visual Culture, ed. Chris Jenks (New York: Routledge, 1995), 146.

52. Clough and Shairp exchanged these comments in letters written in October and November 1849.

53. The letter is of uncertain date. Mulhauser suggests August or September 1848.

54. At the beginning of Dipsychus, set in Venice, Clough would return to the same feeling: “The scene is different and the Place, the air / Tastes of the nearer north; the people too / Not perfect southern levity: wherefore then / Should those old verses come into my mind / I made last year at Naples[?]” (1–5).

55. Swinburne’s only published comments on Clough are actually quite negative, although as Michael Thorpe suggests, they are directed more at his admirers than at his poetry, “if, indeed, he had read it” (Clough: The Critical Heritage, 16). In an October 1891 article on “Social Verse” for the Forum, Swinburne remarked, “Literary history will hardly care to remember or to register the fact that there was a bad poet named Clough, whom his friends found it useless to puff: for the public, if dull, has not quite such a skull as belongs to believers in Clough” (qtd. in Thorpe, 340).

56. Fittingly, perhaps, the poem would not see print for a number of years and only then overseas, in the Atlantic Monthly, where it ran in serial from February to May 1858.

57. “The millenium, as Matt says, won’t come this bout,” Clough had written to Tom Arnold in February 1849, summing up their opinion on developments in France. “I am myself much more inclined to be patient and make allowance for existing necessities than I was” (1:243).

58. Arnold to Clough, March 21, 1853 (LMA 1:258).

59. Arnold to Clough, August 2, 1855 (LMA 1:322).

60. Arnold, of course, attempted to pay better tribute to their long-standing and
complex relationship in his elegy on Clough, “Thyris” (1866), and their clashes of opinion on poetry, culture, and politics have been variously investigated by biographers and critics. Clough, for instance, strongly identified with the work of Alexander Smith, but as Charles LaPorte suggests, Arnold’s condemnation of the spasmodic poet, an opinion reinforced by Clough’s American friends including James Russell Lowell, may have convinced him to abandon writing poetry altogether (“Spasmodic Poetics and Clough’s Apostasies” *Victorian Poetry* 42, no. 4 [2004]: 532). Other revealing recent studies of their relationship include Joseph Bristow’s, “‘Love, Let Us Be True to One Another’: Matthew Arnold, Arthur Hugh Clough, and ‘Our Aqueous Ages,’” *Literature and History* 4, no. 1 (1995): 27–49, and Joseph Phelan’s, “Clough, Arnold, Béranger, and the Legacy of 1848,” *SEL: Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 46, no. 4 (2006): 833–48.


Chapter 3

1. Barrett Browning to Mitford, November 5–8, 1846 (*BC* 14:38). Additional citations of Barrett Browning’s letters will be noted in the text; if the recipient or date of the letter is not clear from the context of the quotation, it is given in a note.

2. Barrett Browning to Hugh Stuart Boyd, June 9, 1832.


4. Jeanne Moskal quotes the *Observer* review in her introductory note to Shelley’s *Rambles in The Novels and Selected Works of Mary Shelley* (London: William Pickering, 1996), 8:53. Barrett Browning later loaned Shelley’s book to Robert, who was critical of it for different reasons, as I discuss in the next chapter. Shelley tentatively laid out her political aims in the preface: “When I reached Italy . . . I found that I could say little of Florence and Rome, as far as regarded the cities themselves, that had not been said so often and so well before, that I was satisfied to select from my letters such portions merely as touched upon subjects that I had not found mentioned elsewhere. It was otherwise as regarded the people, especially in a political point of view; and in treating of them my scope grew more serious” (8:65). Shelley nonetheless felt compelled to reassure readers, “my book does not pretend to be a political history or dissertation” (8:70).


6. Ibid., April 18, 1860, 226.

7. In this way, my study contributes to the ongoing critical discussion of Barrett Browning’s commitment to Italian nationalism, one launched in many ways by Sandra
M. Gilbert’s 1984 essay “From Patria to Matria: Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s Risorgimento,” in *PMLA* 99, no. 2 (1984): 194–211. More recent work includes Matthew Reynolds’s chapter on Barrett Browning in *The Realms of Verse*, which I discuss in relation to *Casa Guidi Windows*, along with other recent essays on the poem. Also noteworthy is Alison Chapman’s “The Expatriate Poetess: Nationhood, Poetics and Politics,” in *Victorian Women Poets* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2003), ed. Alison Chapman (57–77), which examines Barrett Browning’s work alongside that of other Victorian women poets in Italy, including Eliza Ogilvy and Theodosia Garrow Trollope. Chapman argues that the idea of the poetess in the nineteenth century is itself “predicated on foreignness: while Felicia Hemans and Joanna Baillie are seen as the epitome of the English poetess, her origins are given as the legendary figures of Sappho and Corinne.” Later poets capitalized on this hybrid identity to adopt a more radical stance on Italy’s behalf, with the poetess now “signifying her patriotism paradoxically through devotion to nations not her own” (59). As stated above, my aim here is to look more closely at how Barrett Browning comes to question even this form of exported Anglo-Italian patriotism, pursuing instead a cosmopolitanism that would be less dependent on forms of national allegiance.

8. Scott Malcomson, in “The Varieties of Cosmopolitan Experience” (Cheah and Robbins, 233–45), employs the phrase “actually existing cosmopolitanism” to denote less abstract forms of cosmopolitanism experienced by people whose way of life or economic circumstances compel them to move regularly between borders and cultures. Among such cosmopolites he includes some types of missionaries, merchants, and, above all, immigrants, who tend to show the most concern for negotiating different forms of cultural allegiance (238–39).


10. For another angle on the concept of citizenship in Barrett Browning, see Richard Cronin, “*Casa Guidi Windows*: Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Italy, and the Poetry of Citizenship” (in Chapman and Stabler, 35–50), where he notes that Barrett Browning, unlike most other Victorian poets, wholeheartedly embraced the ideals of the French Revolution and sought to adapt its notions of citizenship and civic responsibility to her own work. In *Casa Guidi Windows*, for example, “citizenship is realised in an unending process of negotiation by means of which the individual defines and redefines her place within the body politic” (41). Cosmopolitanism or “world citizenship,” as I explain above, represents a different kind of civic identity, one that I contend is only partially realized in *Casa Guidi Windows*.


12. As even a casual review of her letters reveals, this textual encounter with Europe had been well underway long before Barrett Browning actually took up residence on the
continent. She was a skilled reader and translator of ancient and modern languages alike, with a particular admiration for contemporary French novels. Once abroad, she continued to develop expertise as a reader of German and Italian and seems to have become relatively fluent in the latter, based on descriptions in her letters. For a fuller account of her reading, the best overall source probably remains Gardner B. Taplin’s biography, *The Life of Elizabeth Barrett Browning* (London: John Murray, 1957).


14. Largely ignored for much of the Barrett Browning revival of the past quarter-century, *Casa Guidi Windows* garnered significant new attention and praise from critics beginning in the 1990s. Steve Dillon and Katherine Frank’s “Defenestrations of the Eye: Flow, Fire, and Sacrifice in *Casa Guidi Windows*” (*Victorian Poetry* 35, no. 4 [1997]: 471–92) was the first of a number of critical investigations into the poem’s sophisticated use of visual metaphors. More recently, Esther Schor has taken up the poem’s melding of artistic and political goals, suggesting that “[b]y means of an analogy between poetic making and the making of Italy, Barrett Browning shrewdly examines the complimentary roles of self-conscious intention and inspiration in the making of both nations and poems” (“The Poetics of Politics: Barrett Browning’s *Casa Guidi Windows,*” *Tulsa Studies in Women’s Literature* 17, no. 2 [1998]: 309–10). Helen Groth, in “A Different Look—Visual Technologies and the Making of History in Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s *Casa Guidi Windows*,” argues that the daguerreotype “provides . . . an important discursive context for the aesthetic and political arguments” of the poem, “structurally and experientially enacting the political argument that Italy must bring past and present together to take possession of herself as a unified nation in the future” (*Textual Practice* 14, no. 1 [2000]: 33). In the latest of these sight-oriented readings of the poem, Isobel Armstrong describes it as an experimental effort to craft “a new genre of urban writing,” adding that “[t]o see a political event through a window is an experience peculiar to nineteenth-century modernity: intrinsic to this modernity is that the very act of looking through the window becomes part of the political experience itself” (“*Casa Guidi Windows: Spectacle and Politics in 1851,*” in Chapman and Stabler, 51).


16. Ibid., 109.

17. It is important that my claim here not be confused with charges made by earlier critics that *Casa Guidi Windows* was politically naive and not carefully conceived. See, for example, William Irvine and Park Honan, who labeled the poem “a signal instance of the way in which the use of verse pumps Elizabeth up beyond any possibility of coherent and rational discussion” (*The Book, the Ring, and the Poet: A Biography of Robert Browning* [New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974], 253–54). Their comments, in some sense, are a reminder of how admirably Barrett Browning has been served since by her defenders, beginning with Julia Markus’s 1977 introduction to the Browning Institute edition of the poem, in which she carefully refutes the charge that Barrett Browning was uninformed about political events of the day. Markus reiterates her defense in *Dared and


22. Martha Westwater quotes Mazzini’s letter to Dobell in *The Spasmodic Career of Sydney Dobell* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1992), 62. There is no record of Barrett Browning’s opinion of the poem, although she did write to Mitford, “Have you read a poem called the Roman, which was praised highly in the Athenaeum, but did not seem to Robert to justify the praise in the passages extracted. . . . Have you heard anything about it or seen?” (December 13, 1850; BC 16:246).


28. As Maria Frawley notes, Victorian women travel writers typically denied being motivated by any wish to contribute to more masculinized domains of knowledge such as political philosophy or science: “If perceived as being a means to an end, particularly a published end, then it [travel] attains the status of work—and becomes problematic.” *A Wider Range: Travel Writing by Women in Victorian England* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh-Dickinson University Press, 1994), 52.


31. Aurora’s mixed identity, of course, is also Barrett Browning’s way of paying homage to Corinne, a debt reexamined more fully by Linda Lewis in *Germaine de Staël, George Sand, and the Victorian Woman Artist* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003). Staël and Sand both provided Barrett Browning with role models of women intellectuals with a broadly European outlook and influence.

32. Barrett Browning’s effort to craft a novel-poem has been the focus of a good deal of critical commentary, most recently Meg Tasker’s “*Aurora Leigh*: Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s Novel Approach to the Woman Poet” (*Tradition and the Poetics of Self in Nineteenth-Century Women’s Poetry*, ed. Barbara Garlick [Amsterdam–New York: Rodopi, 2002], 32). While one should always be cautious when deploying Bakhtin’s comparison of the novel and epic, this is one case, as she reveals, where his claim that “the dialogic quality of the novel is a democratic one” bears out, especially in Barrett Browning’s dramatization of Marian.
33. Alison Chapman notes an intriguing echo of this passage in Barrett Browning’s later poem “A Musical Instrument”: “The lily metaphor is clearly that of the water lily, but here, as in ‘A Musical Instrument,’ there is also a reference to the Tuscan civic emblem of the lily, although of a different genus (the iris).” This connection lends an added political significance to the latter poem, with Pan’s careless destruction of lilies (see lines 1–6) being characteristic of “those poets chastised in Barrett Browning’s political poetry for creating an aestheticized nation of out Italy’s grief and pain.” “In Our Own Blood Drenched the Pen: Italy and Sensibility in Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s Last Poems (1862),” Women’s Writing: The Elizabethan to the Victorian Period 10, no. 2 (2003): 278.

34. Buzard, The Beaten Track, 6.

35. Marian, as Joyce Zanona carefully demonstrates, is “a new kind of muse, one who is fully integrated with the poet, a subject in her own right” (“The Embodied Muse: Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s Aurora Leigh and Feminist Poetics,” Tulsa Studies in Women’s Literature 8 [1989]: 243). In some sense, what I am doing here is expanding on Zanona’s insight into how Marian shapes the treatment of gender and class issues in the poem. Marian and Aurora’s status as displaced co-travelers creates an important point of identification between their characters; this shared identity is also what brings them together in terms of the plot, allowing for a seemingly chance encounter that, in reality, confirms the connection they had shared all along. In this way, travel functions as a bridge between two characters sharply separated by class, a bridge that facilitates the integration of poet and subject to which Zanona alludes.


37. Ibid., 108.

38. Review of Aurora Leigh, Literary Gazette (November 1856): 918.

39. Ibid., 917.

40. There is no single source for this objection, since almost every critical analysis of Aurora Leigh at some point attempts to untangle the complex way that the poem resolves itself. The two competing points of view are perhaps best exemplified, first, by Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar’s The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), which stresses how Barrett Browning, in a bow to Victorian patriarchy, undermines Aurora’s authority by making Romney the instigator and voice of her revitalized poetics. At the other end of the spectrum, Herbert F. Tucker argues that Romney, in effect, disappears within Aurora’s vocation as epic poet: “She herself becomes, in heralding its emergence, the dawning New Jerusalem, the city that may be of God and man but that is a woman. It is finally Aurora who ‘makes all new’” (“Aurora Leigh: Epic Solutions to Novel Ends,” in Famous Last Words: Changes in Gender and Narrative Closure, ed. Alison Booth [Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1993], 70). Jonah Siegel adds another pillar to the argument in support of Aurora’s marriage in Haunted Museum: Longing, Travel, and the Art-Romance Tradition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), noting that her union with Romney “may be read as a revision of the commitment to disappointment” that typifies earlier art romances such as Corinne: “by the end of the epic the poet will not only be recognized for her genius; she will be allowed to win the clear commitment and presence of Romney, the man she loves. Indeed, among the simple novelties of the text in the tradition is that Aurora will be allowed to live past the end of the story” (78).


42. I explore these efforts more closely in an earlier article, “He Shall Be a “Citizen

43. Barrett Browning to Arabella Barrett, April 12, 1858, in *The Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning to Her Sister Arabella* (2:347). Editor Scott Lewis directs the reader to other letters expressing similar sentiments, including one to her sister Henrietta avowing that “we must make our boys familiar with living languages . . . an intelligent man mustn’t be simply an Englishman or a Frenchman but a citizen of all countries” (qtd. in *Letters to Arabella*, 2:348n10).

44. As Barrett Browning predicted, and as noted in chapter 1, critics in England greeted the volume with hostility, earning her the label “denationalized fanatic” in the *Saturday Review*. Blackwood’s added, “we regret, for her sake, that she has fallen into the error of publishing anything so ineffably bad, . . . so strangely blind, if we look upon it as a political confession of faith—or so utterly unfair to England and English feeling” (“Poetical Aberrations,” *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* [April 1860]: 491). These negative reviews were inspired mostly by “A Curse for a Nation,” which many misinterpreted as being directed at England for not assisting Italy more vigorously. Barrett Browning later clarified in a letter to the *Athenaeum* that the poem was targeted more at the slave-holding United States. Like “The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim’s Point,” the poem reminds us that Barrett Browning’s global vision stretched across the Atlantic as well, although I am interested here primarily in Europe as the testing ground for her cosmopolitan poetics. For more on her connection to the transatlantic anti-slavery movement, see Marjorie Stone, “Elizabeth Barrett Browning and the Garrisonians: ‘The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim’s Point,’ the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society, and Abolitionist Discourse in the Liberty Bell,” in *Victorian Women Poets*, ed. Alison Chapman, 33–55.


47. Barrett Browning to Julia Martin, January 23, 1837.


**Chapter 4**

1. Browning to Isa Blagden, August 19, 1870, in *Dearest Isa: Robert Browning’s Letters to Isabella Blagden*, ed. Edward C. McAleer (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1951), 342. Further references to Browning letters in this chapter, unless otherwise indicated, are to this source and are cited parenthetically.


4. Examples of this kind of verse abound, but the most notorious in its day might have been John Edmund Reade’s *Italy* (1838), which *Fraser’s Magazine* panned as a “sort of metrical history of his travels. . . . The tourist in rhyme cannot, of course, stoop so low as to say anything about the existing state of society; but a picture or a statue always acts upon him like an extra-infusion of carbonic acid gas into a bottle of beer; he fizzes for a moment internally, and then out goes the cork with a crash!” (Review of *Italy* and *The Deluge*, by John Edmund Reade, *Fraser’s Magazine* 20 [1839]: 760). In a letter to Mary Russell Mitford that reveals her impressions of the *Fraser’s* critique, Barrett Browning, while expressing some sympathy for Reade, noted that he seemed “a phenomenon of unconscious imitation” (August 12, 1843; *BC* 7:279) and in a later letter referred to Reade’s poem sarcastically as the “Grecian column” (October 16, 1844; *BC* 9:188).


7. Gloria Anzaldúa’s *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, 3rd ed. (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 2007), theorizes borders in a way that can be helpful for understanding Browning, despite the authors’ different historical and cultural contexts. As she explains, “an Aztec word meaning torn between ways, *la mestiza* is a product of the
transfer of the cultural and spiritual values of one group to another.” The border subject, culturally speaking, lives in a state of simultaneous opportunity and anxiety: “Like others having or living in more than one culture, we get multiple, often opposing messages. The coming together of two self-consistent but habitually incompatible frames of reference causes un choque, a cultural collision” (100). Similarly, in Browning, the most revealing moments of cross-cultural engagement tend to take the form of disruptions—moments that challenge predisposed cultural assumptions and compel the poet to reexamine his own investment in those assumptions.

8. See Claire A. Simmons, *Eyes across the Channel: French Revolutions, Party History, and British Writing, 1830–1882* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 2000), 199–204. As much as a mile had been dug in each direction before work was abandoned in 1882. Browning was one of a number of prominent figures from across the political and social spectrum who signed an anti-tunnel petition prepared by James Knowles, the editor of *The Nineteenth Century*, which spearheaded opposition to the project (Simmons 204). The specific reasons that led Browning to sign are not clear, but isolationism was not necessarily the root cause of opposition. The staggering costs of the project and the potential for serious accidents were also among the concerns expressed by some. See also my comments on Swinburne’s opposition in the next chapter.

9. Gridley makes the connection to naturalism, suggesting that “in choice of subject, mode of analysis, attribution of motive, and characterization, Browning had created a kind of metrical naturalistic novel” (282). Brendan Kenny’s “Browning as Cultural Critic: Red Cotton Night-Cap Country” (*Browning Institute Studies* 6 [1978]: 137–62) stresses that Browning’s aim was to produce a “radical critique of French culture” (146), and that such a critique is best delivered by an outsider, one capable of “escaping the rigidities of an alien culture because, as an artist, he was consistently involved in fighting against the rigidities of his own” (160).


11. Since “contact zone” may more readily summon to mind the sorts of colonial encounters that form the focus of Pratt’s *Imperial Eyes*, it is worth recalling that she turns to this concept precisely to avoid slipping into the generalization that all such meetings were one-sided or simply coercive. She intends the concept to encompass as well the complex patterns of “copresence, interaction, [and] interlocking understandings” that emerge among travelers and those who inhabit their destinations (7).

12. As Matthew Reynolds reminds us in *The Realms of Verse*, Browning himself once said of his relationship with Italy that “one leans out the more widely over one’s neighbour’s field for being effectually rooted in one’s own garden” (*Browning to His American Friends: Letters between the Brownings, the Storys and James Russell Lowell 1841–1890*, ed. Gertrude Reese Hudson [New York: Barnes and Noble, 1965], 76; qtd. in Reynolds, 157). In glossing this remark, Reynolds suggests that Browning’s Italian poems embody precisely this kind of distancing: “The poems are thought of, not as creations of hybrid nationality, but as images of unmitigated Italianness, which ask English readers, as they incline over Browning’s pages, to lean out over their neighbor’s field” (158). In the France of *Red Cotton Night-Cap Country*, if Browning still does not cultivate a kind of Anglo-French hybridity, he does, I suggest, do more than lean over from a distance. With respect to France, it might be more fitting to imagine Browning standing at the border itself—becoming a part of what he observes, even if he does not undergo complete immersion.

14. Milsand’s piece on Browning was one of a three-part survey of contemporary English poetry, “La Poesie Anglaise depuis Byron: II—Browning” (*Revue des Deux Mondes* 11 [1851]: 661–89), with the first part devoted to Tennyson and the third to Barrett Browning. The depth of the Brownings’ gratitude is captured in a January 1852 letter Elizabeth sent to Milsand, in which she expressed her hope that he would become their “friend in the good warm sense of that word; the true enduring sense of it.” She added, “For my own part, long before you had been kind to me, I was bound to you as the critic who of all others, in or out of England, had approached my husband’s poetry in the most philosophical spirit and with the most ardent comprehension” (*BC* 17:239; qtd. in Bentzon [Blanc-Milsand], 112). For a more extended analysis of Milsand’s commentary on Browning, see Philip Drew, *The Poetry of Browning: A Critical Introduction* (London: Methuen, 1970), 375–82.

15. Bentzon [Blanc-Milsand], 117. Browning’s letters seldom refer to Milsand without some expression of devotion: “no words can express the love I have for him,” he wrote to Isa Blagden in March 1872, after one of Milsand’s many visits to his London residence; “he is increasingly precious to me” (376). Browning also dedicated two works to Milsand: the first reissue of *Sordello*, in 1863, and *Parleyings with Certain People of Importance in their Day* (1887), which Browning was completing when news of Milsand’s death reached him in September 1886.

16. As Browning’s biographers explain, he apparently had refused an offer of marriage from Louisa, Lady Ashburton made while he visited her estate in October of 1871 (see Irvine and Honan, 444–54). For more on Browning’s relationship with Thackeray, see Malcolm Hicks, “Anne Thackeray’s Novels and Robert Browning’s *Red Cotton Night-Cap Country,*” *Studies in Browning and His Circle* 8, no. 2 (1980): 17–45. Hicks points out that Thackeray’s *The Village on the Cliff* (1867) is set in Normandy and may explain why Browning cast her as an author prone to sentimentalizing the region (25).


18. On the cultural impact of the Bank Holiday Act, see Lena Lenček and Gideon Bosker, *The Beach: The History of Paradise on Earth* (New York: Viking, 1998), 109. As they note, even before the act’s passage, tourism industry pioneers such as Thomas Cook had begun to make visiting the seaside more affordable for people otherwise not used to the idea of vacation (119).

19. Lenček and Bosker, *The Beach*, 95. They add, “Where these Romantic poets led—and died—others followed. It is hard to overestimate the power of their example and their grip on the imagination of their contemporaries” (103).

20. Browning to William Wetmore Story and Edith Story, August 20, 1861, in *Browning to His American Friends*, 76.

21. Brendan Kenny, in “Browning as Cultural Critic,” was the first to give a definitive explanation of the importance of Milsand’s presence in the poem, stressing how he complements the kind of outsider authority Browning likewise seeks to establish: “being among the first reviewers to speak out in praise of Browning’s poetry, when Browning’s countrymen were almost universal in their disapproval, suggests his insight into English culture to be as keen as Browning’s into French” (157).

22. Browning was a member of the Cosmopolitan Club from 1863 to 1883, which counted among its regulars influential members from many walks of life, with a par-
ticular emphasis on artists and men of letters such as Browning. Anthony Trollope and Anne Thackeray’s father, William Makepeace Thackeray, were also members. See Martin Garrett, *A Browning Chronology: Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning* (Houndmills: Macmillan, 2000), for a brief account of Browning’s membership (130). What made the club “cosmopolitan” initially seems to have been its members’ worldliness and interest in the arts, but as it expanded, the club’s identity became more closely associated with empire, “promoting social intercourse among its members,” as one account describes, “and [affording] a place of occasional resort to gentlemen from the British Colonies, or in the service of the East India Company, or to such other persons not habitually living in London (Sir Algernon West, “The Cosmopolitan Club,” in *One City and Many Men* [London: Smith, Elder, 1908], 161–62). My point in citing Browning’s membership, I should stress, is not to make a simple equation between his poetry and what the Cosmopolitan Club stood for, but more to emphasize the social dimensions of cosmopolitanism as an identity, one that connoted a certain cultural privilege and access to power.


28. In *The Discourse of Self in Victorian Poetry*, for instance, E. Warwick Slinn argues, “There is no separate divine truth in the poem, no dramatised position that corresponds to the position of, for example, Milton’s God in *Paradise Lost*, no moment that escapes discourse. Unity, any singular truth, is deferred. A conclusive telos, towards which all events lead, is neither within nor outside the text; it is simply not available” (120).


Chapter 5

1. Review of *Poems and Ballads*, *London Review*, August 4, 1866: 130–31; repr. in
Swinburne: *The Critical Heritage*, ed. Clyde K. Hyder (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), 35. The reviewer writes that Swinburne “speaks of having been brought up in France” (35), but Hyder notes that this is probably a misinterpretation of Swinburne’s reference to France as “sweet mother-land” (91) in “To Victor Hugo.” Swinburne nonetheless did have close ancestral connections to France: “we were all Catholic and Jacobite rebels and exiles,” he told E. C. Stedman, in response to his request for biographical information (“To E. C. Stedman [A Memoir],” in *Major Poems and Selected Prose*, ed. Jerome McGann and Charles L. Sligh [New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004], 468). These expatriates included Swinburne’s grandfather Sir John Edward Swinburne (1762–1860), who lived in France until his twenties before inheriting an estate in England. Hence, in “To Victor Hugo,” Swinburne offers his thanks to “fair foster-mother France, that gave / Beyond the pale fleet foam / Help to my sires and home” (75–77).

2. See *Uncollected Letters of Algernon Charles Swinburne*, ed. Terry L. Meyers (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2005), 3:10n2, on Swinburne’s opposition to the tunnel project. As Parliament took up the subject again in the spring of 1890, Sir Frederick Maurice wrote to Swinburne asking him to reaffirm his opposition by signing a new protest.


4. *Notes on Poems and Reviews* (1866) offers Swinburne’s most extensive commentary on the need for poetry to probe all dimensions of human experience: “Literature, to be worthy of men, must be large, liberal, sincere; and cannot be chaste if it be prudish. Purity and prudery cannot keep house together. Where free speech and fair play are interdicted, foul hints and evil suggestions are hatched into fetid life. And if literature indeed is not to deal with the full life of man and the whole nature of things, let it be cast aside with the rods and rattles of childhood.” *Notes on Poems and Reviews*, in *Major Poems and Selected Prose*, 358.

5. Ibid., 356. “When England has again such a school of poetry . . . as France has now,” he added later in *Notes*, “when all higher forms of the various arts are included within the larger limits of a stronger race; then, if such a day should ever rise or return upon us, it will be once more remembered that the office of adult art is neither puerile nor feminine, but virile” (359).


8. Lawrence Venuti, “Translation as Cultural Politics: Regimes of Domestication in English,” *Textual Practice* 7, no. 2 (1993): 210. Saclav Bercovitch also reflects insightfully on translation as a “hermeneutics of nontranscendence,” one that leads potentially to an “insight [that] is problematic, provisional, and nourished by a frustrating sense of boundaries.” The aim of translation, he writes, should be not “to harmonize ‘apparent’ differences . . . but on the contrary to highlight conflicting appearances, so as to explore the substantive differences they imply” (“Discovering America: A Cross-Cultural Perspective,” in *The Translatability of Cultures: Figurations of the Space Between*, ed. Sanford Budick and Wolfgang Iser [Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1996], 150). In applying the tools of translation theory to other kinds of cultural “translations,” I am in part following the lead of David Simpson, who has recently suggested that translation forms the best description for many of the kinds of cross-cultural ex-
changes taking place in the nineteenth century, especially during the Romantic period, on which he focuses. Thomas Moore’s *Lalla Rookh* (1817), for instance, and other “encyclopedic epics,” with their extensive historical and political endnotes, cast readers “out into an unknown world where the balance of familiar and unfamiliar, acceptable and unacceptable, has always to be discovered and can never quite be settled. Reading itself, in its rush to closure, is profitably hobbled by small print” (“The Limits of Cosmopolitanism and the Case for Translation,” *European Romantic Review* 16, no. 2 [2005]: 150). *Poems and Ballads* forms a different kind of reading dynamic and translation, but it still depends upon such disruption—or reading as frustrated, interrupted desire—and configures translation “not as the fantasy of diologism but as the impasse of blocked communication” (151). Like the verse Simpson describes, Swinburne’s *Poems and Ballads* also makes innovative use of notes and other framing devices, some of them written in French, that compel readers into complex acts of interpretation and translation.

9. Angela Flury speaks eloquently toward this notion of Europe as translational space, where “to be outside of one’s national boundaries among others is, in fact, to become European” (“Discovering ‘Europe’ in the Process of Repatriation: Primo Levi’s *La Tregua*,” in Fendler and Wittliner, 67–68). Flury focuses her analysis on the cultural displacements and upheavals that followed the Second World War: “The series of camps that make survival possible for Levi and others map out a European topography that creates possibilities of negotiations on a small scale.” In turn, “The camp emerges as a synecdoche of Europe” (71).

10. To truly appreciate the variety and depth of Swinburne’s dialogue with European poetics, there is no substitute for simply reading *Poems and Ballads* at length. Kenneth Haynes’s detailed annotations for the Penguin edition, often small essays in themselves, provide invaluable insight into Swinburne’s sources and allusions.

11. As Richard Sieburth suggests, what made Swinburne threatening to contemporaries was his “refusal . . . to observe the segregation of high and low, pure and impure, sacred and obscene” in his work (“Poetry and Obscenity: Baudelaire and Swinburne,” *Comparative Literature* 36, no. 4 [1984]: 345). Indeed, one of the tasks Buchanan set for himself, essentially, was to recover the pornographic body from *Poems and Ballads* and display it more openly to the public. Thaïs Morgan has written several important articles exploring transgressions of sexual boundaries in Swinburne, which I cite in reference to her readings of specific poems. Overall, she sees in Swinburne a pattern of “[m]ixed metaphor, mixed genre, mixed gender . . . a threat to the language, the literature, and the social body of England.” “Mixed Metaphor, Mixed Gender: Swinburne and the Victorian Critics,” *Victorian Newsletter* 73 (1988): 18.

12. Buchanan corresponded with Browning on several occasions, complaining in one letter of “that conscienceless & miserable inanity, little Swinburne:—verses which brooded, with a feminine fiendishness, over the prospect of physical suffering & torture to the subject” (December 7, 1870). My source for this letter is Patrick Regan’s fine website devoted to Buchanan’s life and work, which includes Buchanan’s letters to Browning, among other valuable materials. “Robert Williams Buchanan,” http://www.robertbuchanan.co.uk (accessed November 12, 2008).


16. Buchanan intersperses passages from three different Baudelaire poems. The first two lines, which Buchanan slightly misquotes— the original has “tes dents” and “te faut”—are from “Tu mettras l’univers entier dans ta ruelle” (3–4). The three lines cited next, and the last line, are from “Le Serpent qui danse” (13–15, 19). “Le froide majesté . . .” appears in “Avec ses vêtements ondoyants et nacrés” (14). The exclamation points are Buchanan’s addition. My source for Baudelaire’s poetry is the French–English edition translated and edited by James McGowan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).


18. Writing in *The Poetry of the Period* (1870), Austin adds that “Mr. Swinburne’s own real genius is of anything but a classic, and, least of all a Greek turn” (qtd. in Hyder, 103). Austin takes it upon himself to stem the feminine drift he perceives in English poetry. Swinburne performs a “travesty” on his Greek sources “[b]y eliminating all that was masculine—and what a masculine epoch it was!—and intensifying and exaggerating what was not masculine by aid of his modern feminine lens” (97).


21. Ibid., 217.


24. Opening up another revealing way that these poems cross borders of gender and sexuality, Thaïs Morgan argues that Baudelaire and Swinburne establish a proxy space for “male-male desire through the lesbian body” (“Male Lesbian Bodies: The Construction of Alternative Masculinities in Courbet, Baudelaire, and Swinburne,” *Genders* 15 [1992]: 40). While highly transgressive for the time, “male lesbianism,” Morgan cautions us, “may be seen as an attempt on the part of an all-male avant-garde to explore an enlarged range of pleasures and subjectivities without forfeiting the sociocultural privileges long accorded to a masculinity faithful to the hegemonic model for men’s gender and sexuality established by hetero-patriarchy” (41). At the same time, I would caution that we not lose sight of the primary agency of the poems in bringing these identities into being: a male lesbian body is not so much appropriated as invented in a way that initiates border crossing and dialogue that otherwise would not take place. Kathy Alexis Psomiades makes a similar point in *Beauty’s Body: Femininity and Representation in British Aestheticism* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1997): “Swinburne’s poems often mention details of Beauty’s body—eyelids, breasts, thighs, lips—but these items are seldom subjected to intense visual scrutiny or described in terms of what they look like” (59). She adds that “the sensational eroticism of *Poems and Ballads, First Series* . . . is never primarily a matter of the gaze” (70).

25. Baudelaire’s poem itself performs this kind of shift in attitude. “Femmes Damnées” is actually two poems, the first ending with the descent into Hell that Swinburne describes and with the author joining in the chorus of damnation: “Make out your destiny, you poor disordered souls, / And flee the infinite you carry in yourselves” (103–4). The second “Femmes Damnées,” however, rather than focusing on two specific lovers,
presents a general reflection on forbidden, hidden desires and does more to fuse the author's desire and sympathy with the condemned women. The poem closes with the lines “Poor sisters, let me pity and approve—. / For all your leaden griefs, for slakeless thirsts, / And for your hearts, great urns that ache with love!” (26–28). The poem envisions a kind of community of “disordered” love that Swinburne readapts in his own way in Poems and Ballads.

26. William Michael Rossetti, Swinburne’s Poems and Ballads: A Criticism (London: John Camden Hotten, 1866); repr. in Hyder, 81.
27. Ibid., 80.
29. Hazard Adams, The Offense of Poetry (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007), 24. In words that no doubt would have pleased Swinburne—who, incidentally, is not part of Adams’s study—he writes, “I argue that poetry’s main value is, in fact, its offensiveness, that some of the principal or usual characteristics of poetry are in themselves offensive, and that in our time poetry should be defended as offensive” (3).
32. One could also draw an analogy here to the kind of “double vision” Jerome McGann attributes to Swinburne in Swinburne: An Experiment in Criticism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972). In the guise of “Mrs. Clara Watts-Dunton,” McGann writes, “His verse is remarkably rich in boundaries—in images, poetic forms, and prosodic devices which can suggest a point of limits” (171). His poetry strives to reveal the “intimate relationships between the many worlds which border each other, because the boundary point is difficult to find and even more difficult to hold” (172). In Swinburne’s landscape poems, Sarah Eron detects a similar tendency to place opposing elements in relation to each other, favoring settings in “On the Cliffs” and “Evening on the Broads” that create the “sensation of being physically in the middle of worlds and two states.” “Circles and the In-Between: Shaping Time, Space, and Paradox in Swinburnian Verse,” Victorian Poetry 44, no. 3 (2006): 295.
33. Richard Dellamora, Masculine Desire: The Sexual Politics of Victorian Aestheticism (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 69. Morgan, as I discuss above in relation to her reading of “Femmes Damnées,” calls Swinburne’s poem “an urgent but finally problematic attempt to create a positive place for male–male desire through the analogy of lesbianism” (“Male Lesbian Bodies” 40). She remains troubled by how Swinburne, like Baudelaire, creates “transgressive female figures that carry the weight of masculine desires, values, and conflicts, while eliding questions about the cultural position of female subjects” (52).
34. Swinburne here reflects the broader “anti-Olympian topos” that Margot Louis detects in Victorian poetry at large, which tends to favor the more connected, anthropomorphic personae of mystery deities such as Dionysus and Proserpine (“Gods and Mysteries: The Revival of Paganism and the Remaking of Mythography through the Nineteenth Century,” Victorian Studies 47 [2005]: 342). The Olympian gods and the Christian deity merge in Swinburne as centers of indifference to human suffering: “separating themselves from mortals, they also force division and separation upon us” (345).
35. In his commentary on Swinburne’s medieval love poetry, Anthony Harrison notes a kind of universalist, transhistorical inclination in Swinburne as regards the complications of human desire: “Finally and most important, for Swinburne, as for his contemporaries, the age of faith was also the age of love literature, and so the poet in his medievalist works could fill out his philosophical vision that held Love—whether erotic, fraternal, or spiritual—to be the presiding albeit fatal impulse in all human lives and the power ultimately governing all activity in the world.” *Swinburne’s Medievalism: A Study in Victorian Love Poetry* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), 19.


37. Yopie Prins makes a similar argument on behalf of the poem in *Victorian Sappho* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999). In his *Notes on Poems and Reviews*, Swinburne claimed that he had “striven to cast [his] spirit into the mould of hers, to express and represent not the poem but the poet” (351). For Prins, this leads to a unique kind of poetic transference, one where “the Sapphic body emerges in Swinburne’s poetry as a rhythmicized, eroticized form . . . an embodiment of the rhythm of eros itself, a scattering movement too diffuse to be contained within any single body” (112–13).


39. This is the same point that Swinburne makes in his commentary on the strangely passionless affair between Lancelot and Guinevere in Tennyson’s *Idylls of the King*: “Wishing to make his central figure the noble and perfect symbol of an ideal man, he has removed not merely the excuse but the explanation of the fatal and tragic loves of Launcelot and Guenevere” (*Under the Microscope* 36). Swinburne adds, “Remove in either case the plea which leaves the heroine less sinned against indeed than sinning, but yet not too base for tragic compassion and interest, and there remains merely the presentation of a vulgar adultress” (37).

40. I have chosen this translation, provided by Cecil Y. Lang in his anthology *The Pre-Raphaelites and Their Circle* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), because I think it best captures the medieval cadence and tone of Swinburne’s French (521).

41. Harrison sees a more unqualified affirmation of pagan eroticism in the poem: “Tannhäuser’s ‘entrapment’ by Venus is ultimately a mode of self-willed liberation, one that is, during the monologue, merely delayed by temporary lapses of his Venerean faith” (*Swinburne’s Medievalism* 61).

42. Henry Morley, in an otherwise sympathetic review for the *Examiner*, September 22, 1866, 597–99; repr. in *Hyder*, 44.


45. In a later essay, Swinburne opined that “Chaucer borrowed most from abroad, and did most to improve whatever he borrowed. I believe it would be but accurate to admit that in all his poems of serious or tragic narrative we hear a French or Italian tongue speaking with a Teutonic accent through English lips” (*The Complete Works*, 14:98; qtd. in Harrison, *Swinburne’s Medievalism*, 12). The description, of course, could also be applied to Swinburne himself, who likewise sought to craft a pan-European voice that critically engaged and adapted other cultures. Note as well the contrast to Buchanan’s more safely unadulterated Chaucer.

47. Ibid., 262.

48. In what could have been one of the great literary hoaxes of the nineteenth century, Swinburne almost got the Spectator to publish his 1862 review of “Les Abîmes. Par Ernest Clouët,” whose tone and style anticipated many of the attacks that would later be leveled at Swinburne himself. He is perhaps at his best when he “quotes” a sample of Clouët’s unrestrained flights of decadence: “Le mal a pour moi quelque chose de mystérieux et de saint (evil holds something mysterious and holy for me)” (New Writings by Swinburne, ed. Cecil Y. Lang [Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1964], 100; my translation). I am reminded here as well of Dennis Denisoff’s study of the importance of parody to the aesthetic movement overall, whether inflicted self-intentionally or by critics: “Even if they fully believed in essential configurations of human desire and attraction, parodists who turned to a sexualized discourse to undermine aestheticism and the dandy-aesthetes were also catalysts for the denaturalization of gendered and sexual norms” (Aestheticism and Sexual Parody 1840–1940 [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001], 2). Hence, perhaps, some of the added enjoyment Swinburne seems to derive from parody, as if he were paying tribute to his critics—recognizing the vital role they were playing in drawing attention to the larger cultural stakes in debates over poetic obscenity.


50. Ibid., 59; translation, 61.

51. Swinburne to Matthew Arnold, October 9, 1867, in Uncollected Letters, 1:111. Arnold had written earlier to Swinburne, “I am rather proud of my discernment in having grasped and said that you were yourself the French critic; not that the French is not worthy of the best of French critics, but something in the way you brought the quotations in gave me a suspicion” (October 10, 1867; Swinburne Letters, 1:169).

Chapter 6

1. Buzard, Disorienting Fiction, 304. News from Nowhere is likely to remain Morris’s best known work, and, as such, it will perhaps always be a struggle to decouple him from a comforting, pastoral vision of English national identity. As Michelle Weinroth reveals in her study of political efforts to co-opt Morris’s legacy in the twentieth century, many activists on the left, rather than attempting to dispel this image, exploited it toward their own political ends. Morris, in effect, became a “symbolic treasure-house of Englishness” (Reclaiming William Morris: Englishness, Sublimity, and the Rhetoric of Dissent [Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1996], 9). Only recently has this perception begun to change, thanks in part to Regenia Gagnier’s plenary lecture at the fiftieth anniversary conference of the William Morris Society in July 2005, published later under the title “Morris’s Ethics, Cosmopolitanism, and Globalisation” (Journal of William Morris Studies 16 [2007]: 9–30). Gagnier offers an overview of Morris’s career that argues for his continuing relevance toward theoretical discussions of these issues in our own time. She calls him “the great writer of pilgrims, travellers, and refugees,” and
adds that “his wanderers are asking just this: what do we share, if anything, as human beings distinctly imbedded in thick but always interdependent environments?” (20).

In this chapter, I apply this question more directly toward Morris’s poetry, which she touches on only briefly in her wide-ranging piece. Additionally, I develop the role that race must play in any full consideration of how Morris engages cosmopolitan ideas.


8. Dentith, *Epic and Empire in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, 75. Dentith argues along the same lines in an earlier essay, “*Sigurd the Volsung*: Heroic Poetry in an Unheroic Age,” in *William Morris: Centenary Essays*, ed. Peter Faulkner and Peter Preston (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1999), 60–70. He notes, for instance, that “the heavily stressed rhythm, predominantly anapestic before the caesura in each line, goes with a diction that seeks to mark its distance dramatically from the rhythm, not only of prose, but of the more ‘natural’ English rhythms of the iambic line” (66). Richard Firth stipulates that Morris’s prosody gestures toward two types of medievalism: one Ruskinian—committed to accurately re-presenting the unique social and artistic environment of the time—the other aesthetic or Pre-Raphaelite—interested more in “the subversively erotic elements in medieval literature and art” (“The Worship of Courage: William Morris’s *Sigurd the Volsung* and Victorian Medievalism,” in *Beyond Arthurian Romances: The Reach of Victorian Medievalism*, ed. Loretta M. Holloway and Jennifer A. Palmgren [London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005], 118). The poem’s meter “proves surprisingly capable of modulation to deal with the varied materials of the story. It also serves, however, to emphasize the antiquity and strangeness of the poem’s subject matter” (126).


11. In *Dark Vanishings: Discourse on the Extinction of Primitive Races, 1800–1930* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), Patrick Brantlinger writes, “Paradoxically one end point of extinction discourse, from the late nineteenth century on, was widespread anxiety about the degeneration or even extinction of the white race” (15). This concern
was also evident in earlier influential commentaries on race, including Robert Knox’s *The Races of Men* (1850) and his French counterpart the Comte de Gobineau’s *Inequality of Human Races* (1853–55). In Gobineau’s view, as Robert J. C. Young explains in *Colonial Desire*, the “Aryan races are impelled by a civilizing instinct to mix their blood with the very races that will bring about their downfall” (108).


14. Kingsley, for example, writes, “To amalgamate the two races [Roman and Teuton] would have been as impossible as to amalgamate English and Hindoos. The parallel is really tolerably exact. The Goth was very English; and the over-civilized, learned, false, profiliate Roman was the very counterpart of the modern Brahmin” (*The Roman and the Teuton: A Series of Lectures Delivered before the University of Cambridge* [London: Macmillan, 1864], 126). In *On the Study of Celtic Literature*, Arnold recalls, “I was taught to think of Celt as separated by an impassable gulf from Teuton; my father, in particular, was never weary of contrasting them; he insisted much oftener on the separation between us and them than on the separation between us and any other race in the world” (3:299–300). These ideas inform his father’s negative view of France in *Introductory Lectures on Modern History* (1845).

15. It is also worth noting, as Amanda Hodgson explores in “The Troy Connection: Myth and History in *Sigurd the Volsung*,” that the myths of Troy and Sigurd were linked under Max Müller’s influential “solar thesis,” which insisted that Sigurd and Achilles showed traces of an early form of sun worship common across Europe (in Faulkner and Preston, 74).

16. Hence Morris’s consciously Chaucerian *The Aeneids of Virgil*, published in 1875, a year before *Sigurd*. The fact that he was working on a translation of this Latin material in the midst of his enthusiastic work on the North warns us again not to read too much into his distinctions between North and South. He drew on classical sources as well for *The Life and Death of Jason* (1867) and, as late as 1887, published a new translation of *The Odyssey*.


22. This exchange typifies how “a warm welcome is used as a marker of a good society” for Morris, according to Marcus Waithe in *William Morris’s Utopia of Strangers: Victorian Medievalism and the Ideal of Hospitality* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2006), 66.
Hospitality, he argues, is a theme that permeates Morris's writings and art and is even enshrined in the design of Red House, his home from 1859 to 1865 (34–50). Although Waithe chooses to omit the poem from his analysis, the rights due to host and guest become significant social themes as well in *Sigurd the Volsung*.


25. Jeffrey Skoblow stresses another significant feature of this earlier draft: “The ballad presents itself as a raw object, as if delivered from within its fourteenth-century world, rather than projected back” (*Paradise Dislocated: Morris, Politics, Art* [Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993], 113). By reframing the ballad as the imagined utterance of an “idle” singer of the nineteenth century, Morris draws more attention to his own creative intervention in the history he depicts.


27. Ibid., 50.

28. In a letter to Swinburne, Morris praised “The Lovers of Gudrun” at the expense of the rest of the volume: “I am delighted to have pleased you with the Gudrun; for the rest I am rather painfully conscious myself that the book would have done me more credit if there had been nothing in it but the Gudrun, though I don’t think the others quite the worst things I have done—yet they are all too long and flabby—damn it!—” (December 21, 1869; in *Collected Letters*, 1:100).


30. Ibid., 110.

31. In the same letter, Morris said of the Volsunga Saga, “it is a wonderful poem, entirely free from any affectation or quaintness, as simple and direct as the finest classical poems” (110). Of “The Lovers of Gudrun,” R. C. Ellison laments that “in trying to give clearer expression to the stark tragedy he evidently felt so deeply Morris loses all that the saga had, without replacing it with anything which carries conviction. The more he strives to express feeling, the emptier and more sentimental it seems” (“The Undying Glory of Dreams: William Morris and the ‘Northland of Old,’” in *Victorian Poetry*, ed. Malcolm Bradbury and David Palmer [London: Edward Arnold, 1972], 164). Andrew Wawn’s recent analysis of the poem is more forgiving of how Morris transforms his source material, although he does at times adopt a biographical angle that perhaps diminishes Morris’s achievement: “It is certainly tempting to look for links between Morris’s domestic woes and the series of sagas about love and romance that he translated.” *The Vikings and the Victorians: Inventing the Old North in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2000), 263.

32. In the Laxdaela Saga, Gudrun says, “I want to go abroad with you this summer, and that would make up for your hasty decision [made without consulting her]; for I am not happy here in Iceland.” Kiartan quickly overrules this wish: “Your brothers haven’t settled down yet and your father is an old man, and they wouldn’t have anyone to look after them if you leave the country. So wait for me instead for three years” (Laxdaela Saga, trans. Magnus Magnusson and Hermann Pálsson [Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969], 142). In her introduction to the tale, Boos highlights this scene as an example of how Morris’s Kiartan is more prone to “ambivalence and reflection” than his saga prototype (2:282).
33. The saga king is also not quite so tyrannical as he appears in Morris. Kiartan says of him, “The first time I set eyes on the king, I was so impressed by him that I realized at once that he was a man of outstanding qualities, and this has been confirmed on every occasion I have seen him since in public. But never have I been so impressed by him as I was today, and now I am sure that all our welfare depends on our believing that he whom the king proclaims is the true God” (Laxdaela Saga, 148).

34. In the original saga, Gudrun’s son Bodli (under the variant spelling Bolli) also travels to Constantinople: “He had not been there long before he joined the Varangian Guard; we have not heard of any other Norseman entering the service of the Byzantine Emperor before Bolli Bollason did. He stayed in Constantinople for several years, and was considered exceptionally valiant in every hazard and was always in the forefront” (Laxdaela Saga 227–28).


36. Ibid., 238.

37. Sigurd the Volsung, which I will cite by page number, appears in Volume 12 of the Collected Works.


39. In his introduction to the critical anthology Writing on the Image: Reading William Morris (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), Latham also captures, I think, how interdisciplinarity is itself a form of cosmopolitanism, reflective of the same commitment to the value of different modes of expression and critical inquiry in Morris: “It is the interdisciplinary nature of Morris’s work that prohibits anyone from ever reaching the boundaries of Morris’s literature, decorative, book design, politics, etc., ‘et-cetera’ being a word on which I would never end an introduction for any other figure but Morris” (15–16).

40. Michie and Thomas, introduction to Nineteenth-Century Geographies, 9.


42. This is another place where it is important to distinguish between Morris’s enthusiasm for Icelandic sagas and the strongly pro-German sentiments of figures such as Carlyle and Kingsley. As Wawn discusses in The Victorians and the Vikings, the subject of how much England owed culturally and racially to Germany, as opposed to Denmark and Scandinavia, was very much open to debate, as was the overall effort to determine what “Anglo-Saxon” actually signified. George Stephens, for example, the translator of the influential Old Northern Runic Monuments of Scandinavia and England (1866), insisted that “German nationality is not ours; certainly its faults are not our faults. Their speech is not ours; their body, and mind, and soul, and tendencies are far from being ours, which are altogether cast in the Northern mould, in our opinion one much purer and more noble. . . . [O]ur nearest homeland is Denmark; our furthest kin-land is Germany” (“‘English’ or ‘Anglo-Saxon,’” Gentleman’s Magazine 36 [1852]: 475; qtd. in Wawn, 239). For those concerned about Germany’s growing influence in Europe, attempts by German scholars such as the Grimm brothers to establish through linguistics that English and German were part of the same Teutonic race, separate from
Scandinavia, seemed to go hand in hand with German imperial politics (Wawn 257). Morris’s negative comments on Wagner may betray something of where his own feelings stood, although Sigurd in some ways sidesteps this debate by avoiding racial and national monikers altogether and drawing on both the German (Das Nibelungenlied) and the Scandinavian (Volsunga Saga) sources of the poem.

43. Tompkins offers some additional insight into Regin’s status as a dwarf: “They belong to a life still immersed in nature. They create and enjoy, but have no sense of good or evil, of pity or regret. They are shape-changers” (270). He adds that “Regin, the master-craftsman, moves among men, benefitting them, in their generations, by his inventions. This comes from the restlessness of his mind; his heart is cold and grim. He waits for a hero, whom he can use as his tool, to kill Fafnir and retrieve the gold” (271).

44. Morris’s politicization of Sigurd is indeed dramatic and has been noted by critics going back at least to the mid-twentieth century. For Margaret Grennan in William Morris: Medievalist and Revolutionary (New York: King’s Crown Press, 1945), Sigurd stops just short of becoming a socialist: “the concern for his own times is unmistakably present. To call that ‘socialism’ . . . is perhaps premature, unless we are willing to agree with Morris that men of good will have always been socialists at heart. . . . But from Sigurd the Volsung on, his impulse to ‘straighten the crooked’ became more difficult for him to deny” (44). Charlotte Oberg also sees Sigurd as a political prophet, the embodiment of a lost golden age preceding the final apocalypse or Ragnarok of Norse mythology: “his words and deeds constitute a guide for mankind in a cosmos where all is ordered by the Norns, or the forces of destiny.” A Pagan Prophet: William Morris (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1978), 90.


47. Ibid., 176.


49. Ibid.

50. If Sigurd lacks high political ambitions, one could argue that this very lack underscores Morris’s conviction that a new narrative of social and political progress was needed. Socialism, therefore, or progressivism of some kind would be the next logical step in his career. Grennan endorses this trajectory, as noted above, as does Goode, for whom Sigurd ends in a state of political and artistic impotence, “a sepulchre within which the lost echoes of the values of the past reverberate.” Goode continues, “Socialism enables Morris to envisage its [the creative mind’s] withdrawal not merely as responsive but as capable of becoming a possible social experience” (“William Morris” 246). Boos reminds us that Morris composed the poem as he underwent his first real political awakening, brought on by the “Eastern Question” and the possibility of Britain’s military intervention on behalf of Turkey. While Sigurd never raises its head above the violence—“there is something obsessive about its Old-Norse-set-piece-arias of butchery and conflagration”—it is notable that Morris “never again wrote in this vein from 1878 to his death.” “Dystopian Violence: William Morris and the Nineteenth-Century Peace Movement,” The Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies 14 (2005): 29, 30.
Chapter 7


2. Jason Howard Mezey, “Ireland, Europe, the World, the Universe: Political Geography in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*,” *Journal of Modern Literature* 22 (1998–99): 135. Mezey argues that Stephen does not as yet see or understand how his status as a colonial subject will shape his future artistic priorities.

3. “Rooted Cosmopolitanism” is the title of the concluding chapter to Appiah’s *The Ethics of Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005). See especially his discussion of the overlap between nationalism and cosmopolitanism as types of imagined community (237–46). Appiah explores some of the same issues in “Cosmopolitan Patriots,” his contribution to *Cosmopolitics*: “the cosmopolitan patriot can entertain the possibility of a world in which everyone is a rooted cosmopolitan, attached to a home of his or her own, with its own cultural particularities, but taking pleasure from the presence of other, different, places that are home to other, different, people” (Cheah and Robbins, 91).

4. The philosophical roots of Hardy’s concept have been variously explored, including Walter F. Wright’s *The Shaping of The Dynasts* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967), 38–55, and, more recently, G. Glen Wickens’s *Thomas Hardy, Monism, and the Carnival Tradition: The One and the Many in The Dynasts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002). J. Hillis Miller’s commentary on the Immanent Will in *Thomas Hardy: Distance and Desire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970) for me remains the clearest and most insightful description available, and I offer it here as a sort of working definition for my analysis of the Will in this chapter: “The Immanent Will . . . is a version of the inherent energy of the physical world as seen by nineteenth-century science: an unconscious power working by regular laws of matter in motion. Though what happens is ordained by no divine law-giver, the state of the universe at any one moment leads inevitably to its state at the next moment. Existence is made up of an enormous number of simultaneous energies each doing its bit to make the whole mechanism move. If a man had enough knowledge he could predict exactly what will be the state of the universe ten years from now or ten thousand. All things have been fated from all time” (14). The Immanent Will, then, contains within itself a contradiction that allows for the possibility of progress: history is fated but also predictable. The poem explores the possibilities for achieving this wider knowledge.

5. I explore this subject briefly here and later with respect to *The Trumpet-Major* in order to illustrate the broader, more European perspective Hardy assumes in *The Dynasts*. For a closer investigation into the complexities of location, geography, and regional identity in Hardy’s novels, see Ralph Pite, *Hardy’s Geography: Wessex and the Regional Novel* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002) and Simon Gatrell, *Thomas Hardy’s Vision of Wessex* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).


7. Ibid., 171.

8. Ibid., 167.

10. *The Woodlanders* was published shortly before Hardy’s own first extended tour of the Continent in 1887, an experience that may have convinced him, as a poet, to be less tied to Wessex and more open to the Continent as the focus of future works. During his journey he began work on a travelogue of eleven “Poems of Pilgrimage,” later included with *Poems of the Past and Present* (1901). Especially in “At the Pyramid of Cestius near the Graves of Shelley and Keats” and “Lausanne: In Gibbon’s Old Garden: 11–12 P.M.,” Hardy, one could argue, attempts to negotiate a space for himself among other Anglo-European poets and authors.


12. Ibid., 355. Little Father Time, of course, hails from Australia. As Sue Bridehead reflects after first meeting him, “It is strange, Jude, that these preternaturally old boys almost always come from new countries” (294).


17. Keith Wilson, “We Thank You . . . Most of All, Perhaps, for *The Dynasts*: Hardy’s Epic-Drama Re-evaluated,” *Thomas Hardy Journal* 22 (2006): 236. Herbert F. Tucker offers more unqualified praise of Hardy’s poem and, like Isobel Armstrong, gives it pride of place as the capstone to his study of nineteenth-century poetics. Tucker calls it “one of the few masterpieces this long book has been lucky to touch on: a work commensurately vast in original conception, thorough in execution, and pervasive in contemporary relevance” (*Epic* 549). Among other recent commentaries on the poem, Trevor Johnson stresses the importance of grappling with *The Dynasts* if one is to understand the development of some of Hardy’s key concepts, especially his pessimism (“Thomas Hardy Birthday Lecture 2004,” *Thomas Hardy Journal* 20, no. 3 [2004]: 160–76). The poem’s global perspective is taken up by James S. Whitehead, whose essay on “Hardy and Englishness” is the first to feature *The Dynasts*, rather than the Wessex novels, in arriving at a full appreciation of how Hardy understood national identity: “while reflecting Englishness in action,” he notes, the poem nonetheless “is geared towards engagement with contemporary, radical European thought” (*Thomas Hardy Studies*, ed. Phillip Mallett [Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004], 214). Whitehead stresses the importance of Hardy’s reading of *War and Peace* as he conceived *The Dynasts* and his support of Tolstoy’s subsequent efforts on behalf of world peace (211–14).


21. Ibid., 5:391.

22. Isobel Armstrong is one exception, arguing in *Victorian Poetry: Poetry, Poetics, and Politics* that the poem’s “technique of montage, fragmentation and juxtaposition
without cupola looks forward to the poetic forms of high modernism” (488). Donald Davie’s groundbreaking *Thomas Hardy and British Poetry* (London: Routledge, 1973), in contrast, mentions *The Dynasts* only in passing, calling it “ill-starred and premature” (36). Likewise, Paul Zietlow in *Moments of Vision: The Poetry of Thomas Hardy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974) diplomatically suggests that Hardy’s “achievement is most evident in his more than nine hundred brief poems” (ix). John Paul Riquelme’s more recent essay, “The Modernity of Hardy’s Poetry,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Hardy*, ed. Dale Kramer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), again mostly bypasses *The Dynasts*, except to remind readers of Armstrong’s “brief but important” commentary on the poem (211). That Riquelme and Armstrong deal only briefly with *The Dynasts* is itself telling, perhaps, a sign that the poem clearly bears some affinity to the aims of modernist literature but may offer little to work with for an extended study of the poem along these lines. In fact, *The Dynasts* may provide more evidence for the kind of anti-modernism Peter Howarth discovers elsewhere in Hardy’s poetry in *British Poetry in the Age of Modernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). Hardy’s Immanent Will and fascination with poetic forms and meter betray, he suggests, a vision at odds with the modernist insistence on individual expression and a radical break with aesthetic tradition: “It is almost irresistible to see Hardy’s predetermined forms as an expression of exactly such a determining Will, which acts without regard for the conscious pain or pleasure of its subjects. No matter what shape the material world would take if left to its own devices, the form will have its way, and Hardy’s insistent rhythms, the very arbitrariness of his preplanned verse skeletons, would testify to the casual, blind forces of an Immanent Will in which chance and destiny come to mean the same thing” (157). What the divergent paths taken by these critics finally reveal, I am arguing, is that the poem’s engagement with “the modern,” whether in general or in a specifically literary sense, is inexorably—and deliberately—ambiguous: Hardy engages in a complex effort to look backward and forward, to be ancient and modern, as reflected in the poem’s philosophical underpinnings and in the commentary of its spirit Overworld.


25. This is not to say, however, that an enterprising filmmaker should not make an attempt to bring *The Dynasts* to the screen. In many ways, the technology of filmmaking is only now catching up to Hardy’s poetic cinematography in *The Dynasts*, with its quick movements between landscapes and slow zooms from celestial points of view to action on the ground. Advances in computer-animated footage could also make filming Hardy’s X-ray exposure of the “will web” much more feasible.

26. Emmanuel, the Count de las Cases, *Memoirs of the Life, Exile, and Conversations of the Emperor Napoleon* (London: Henry Colburn, 1836), 3:165, 166. In a subsequent conversation with Las Cases, Napoleon continued along the same lines: “Then, perhaps, by the help of the universal diffusion of knowledge, one might have thought of attempting, in the great European family, the application of the American Congress” (4:104). On Hardy’s overall use of Las Cases, see Walter F. Wright, *The Shaping of The Dynasts*, 267 and 322.

27. Matthew Arnold’s response to Las Cases’s Napoleon is also worth noting here, since it captures some of Hardy’s own efforts to represent him fairly vis-à-vis English
national interests: “The inability of the English of that time in any way to comprehend him, & yet their triumph over him—& the sense of this contrast in his own mind—there lies the point of the tragedy. The number of ideas in his head which ‘were not dreamed of in their philosophy,’ on government and the future of Europe, and yet their crushing him, really with the best intentions—but a total ignorance of him—what a subject!” (Arnold to his mother, Mary Penrose Arnold, May 7, 1849, in LMA 1:148).


30. According to a review of the production in the *Times Literary Supplement*, “the retreat to Corunna . . . was magnificently done, with all the players not drilled into their parts but drawn into them, inspiring each other to a climax. We have never seen anything so well done by professionals, though the same scene was good enough in London” (“‘The Dynasts’ at Oxford,” *Times Literary Supplement*, February 19, 1920: 113). Of the production overall, the review concluded that “at Oxford *The Dynasts* was received as it was meant, not as a flattery to England past or present, not as a song of victory or a requiem, but as a statement of the truth about England at war. The audience, boys who had fought themselves, saw the truth and welcomed it with laughter or silence or cheers, as was meet” (114).

31. Ibid., 113.

32. H. G. Wells, *The War of the Worlds*, ed. Martin A. Danahay (Peterborough, ON: Broadview, 2003), 41. Comparing himself to the clergyman, Wells’s narrator remarks, “[W]e had absolutely incompatible dispositions and habits of thought and action, and our danger and isolation only accentuated the incompatibility. At Halliford I had already come to hate his trick of helpless exclamation, his stupid rigidity of mind” (150). Later, the clergyman finally breaks down and charges madly at one of the Martians, shouting, “The word of the lord is upon me! . . . I must bear my witness! I go! It has already been too long delayed” (155).

33. The Immanent Will and natural selection do nonetheless share some affinities, the focus of much of Katherine Kearney Maynard’s discussion of the poem in *Thomas Hardy’s Tragic Poetry: The Lyrics and The Dynasts* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1991): “in Hardy’s mind the development of the will’s consciousness is an evolutionary operation, analogous to the natural processes Darwin describes in his researches. The gradual development of complex life forms would reflect the operation of the will as it achieves greater consciousness of itself” (76). She does, however, warn against simply equating the two concepts, especially as regards the ultimate ends of both forces: “An openness to new ideas and the refusal to accept the doctrinaire, whether religious or scientific, characterized Hardy’s thought throughout his life. In Darwin’s work . . . Hardy primarily found a means to clear away the dogmatic concepts that blind human beings to many realities of existence” (76).


Chapter 8


4. Tucker, Epic, 341. See also Michael Wheeler’s Heaven, Hell, and the Victorians (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 83–109, which analyzes Bailey’s efforts alongside other Victorian poetic visions of apocalypse and judgment, including Pollok’s The Course of Time and Browning’s Christmas Eve and Easter Day.

5. Tucker, Epic, 345.

6. Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough, February 24, 1848 (LMA 1:82).


8. “Locksley Hall” is not a direct critique of Festus, it should be noted, which Tennyson did not read until it appeared in its second edition, several years after Tennyson’s poem was published. Like many contemporaries in the 1840s, Tennyson admired Festus more generally, writing to Edward FitzGerald on November 12, 1846, “I have just got Festus; order it and read. You will most likely find it a great bore, but there are really very grand things in Festus.” The Letters of Alfred Lord Tennyson, ed. Cecil Y. Lang and Edgar F. Shannon, Jr. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 1:265.


10. As Walter D. Mignolo remarks in “The Many Faces of Cosmopolis: Border Thinking and Critical Cosmopolitanism,” in Breckenridge et al., 157–87, “when Kant thinks in terms of ‘all nations of the earth’ he assumes that the entire planet eventually will be organized by the terms he has envisioned for Western Europe and will be defined by his description of national characters” (173).

11. These concerns were renewed most recently during the Beijing Summer Olympics of 2008, when many skeptics wondered whether China was opening itself to the world or whether its leaders—quick to jail dissidents and cordon off any protest—were merely cloaking their own personal and national self-interests under the guise of international friendship. Readers may also recall that on the opening day of the games, Russia invaded the neighboring republic of Georgia even as Russia’s de facto premier, Vladimir Putin, sat among the foreign dignitaries invited to watch the opening ceremonies.

12. Rodolphe Gasché, Europe, or the Infinite Task: A Study of a Philosophical Concept (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2009), 9. Gasché also reveals how competing “intellectual” and “spiritual” visions of European identity continued to evolve in complex ways into the twentieth century. See especially his juxtaposition of Edmund Husserl’s commitment to Europe as the seat of a “universal rational science” with Jan Patočka’s insistence that, beginning with ancient Greece, “the care of the soul” had always been the driving motivation behind European philosophical inquiry (212–13).


15. Ibid., 29.